WASHINGTON'S
EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DISTRICTS:

Design for an Evaluation

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Executive Summary

The 1993 Washington Legislature, in ESHB 1211, directed the Washington State Institute for Public Policy to develop "....recommendations for the design of a comprehensive study of the role and performance of educational service districts." This report, submitted to the Education Committees of the Washington State Senate and House of Representatives, presents recommendations to assess the role and performance of Educational Service Districts (ESDs) in Washington's K-12 education system.

Part One of the report is the recommended evaluation design. Four major evaluation questions make up the framework of the proposed study, including: evaluation perspectives, issues to examine, methodology/cost options, and recommendations. **Part Two** largely answers the first evaluation question and gives comparative information on ESD activities in two time frames: 1981-82 and 1991-92.

Major Evaluation Questions

1. What are the roles and functions of ESDs in Washington and how have they changed? A ten-year comparative perspective on the changing roles of ESDs in Washington makes up **Part Two** of this report.

2. How effective are ESDs and what is the quality of their services? Important components of ESD effectiveness include: participation rates, cost-effectiveness, and assessment of administrative costs and major services, with a focus on staff development and curriculum innovation services. As each ESD in Washington has unique features, a comprehensive evaluation should include all nine ESDs.

3. What should be the role of ESDs in current state education reform efforts? The Washington Legislature's 1993 education reform legislation is being implemented. The role of ESDs should be part of the discussion of the future shape of Washington's educational system.

4. What should be the future role(s) of ESDs? Beyond the immediate issues associated with education reform, the issues of future roles, the level of state funding, the relationship between an ESD and, respectively, urban, suburban and rural school districts should all be reviewed.

Cost of the Evaluation

Cost estimates range from $86,000 for the low-cost option, which would cover all questions, but include only three ESDs, to $176,000 for the high-cost option, which would assess activities and programs in all nine ESDs. Limiting the number of questions and issues addressed, as well as the number of ESDs, could reduce costs further. Additional options can be created from the "menu" provided in the evaluation design.

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PART ONE: DESIGN

Background

Two bills passed the 1993 Washington Legislature related to studies of Educational Service Districts (ESDs). In ESHB 1211, the legislature directed the Washington State Institute for Public Policy (WSIPP) to submit a report with recommendations for the design of a comprehensive study on the role and performance of ESDs by January 10, 1994. This report lays out a recommended *design* for an evaluation of Washington's Educational Service Districts.

In the operating budget bill, the legislature requested the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) and State Board of Education (SBE) to conduct a study of ESD boundaries to develop a more cost-effective and efficient service delivery system for educational service districts. A reorganization proposal shall be presented to the SBE for implementation by July 1, 1994. Under the reorganization proposal, the legislature assumes there will be $400,000 in savings obtained from the ESDs' 1993-95 appropriation.

This study design:

- Proposes how to assess the effectiveness of the performance of ESDs.
- Examines what roles ESDs should have in the future.
- Summarizes how their roles have changed over the last ten years.
- Offers funding options and estimates the costs associated with a comprehensive study of ESDs.

ESHB 1211 also expanded the ESD roles to provide any cooperative and informational services (not in conflict with law) requested by local school boards. This legislation was patterned after a similar authorization granted to school districts in 1992.

Two additional proposals introduced, *but not enacted*, in the 1993 Legislature were:
1) initial operating budget language to reduce the number of ESDs in western Washington from five to four, and a request to SPI to study how to reduce the number of ESDs in eastern Washington; and 2) House Bill 1656, to permit large school districts to provide their own professional development services and apply to SPI for their proportional share of professional development funds that their respective ESD receives.

MAJOR EVALUATION QUESTIONS

I. What are the roles and functions of ESDs in Washington State and how have they changed?

II. How effective are ESDs and what is the quality of their services?

III. What should be the role of ESDs in the current state education reform efforts?

IV. What should be the future role(s) of ESDs?

The following sections offer evaluation perspectives, issues to examine, methodology and cost options, and recommendations for the four research questions, followed by a breakdown of cost estimates *(pages 12 and 13)*:

I. What are the Roles and Functions of ESDs and How Have They Changed?

A. Perspective

ESDs originated from a system of county school offices overseeing the establishment of local school districts for the state. In the mid 20th century, they developed into large media distribution centers and served as financial advisors for local schools. Today they are both regional service providers and brokers among schools, businesses, and governments for a wide variety of school administrative functions and children's education, health and social services. Although each of Washington's 9 ESDs provides a state-mandated "core of services" (see Appendix A for a definition of core services), there are significant differences in the range of other services they provide. The direct state appropriation to ESDs for these core services is a very small percent of the overall K-12 budget. The total budget for all 9 ESDs (which comes from federal, state, and local revenue sources) for FY 92 was $86 million, plus an additional $63 million for insurance cooperatives. *(As a comparison, Oregon's 27 ESDs had a total FY 92 budget of $250 million.)*

B. Issues to Examine

1. The origin of ESDs

How have ESDs evolved over time through legislative mandates and local service requests? How many school districts do they serve? What is the size of these school districts?

2. A 10-year comparison (1982-1992)

How have ESD staffing, revenue/expenditure, and service patterns changed over time?

3. A review of past ESD studies

What studies have been conducted on ESDs in Washington and nationally? What are their major conclusions?

C. Methodology and Costs

Much of the documentation to answer these questions is available through written materials from the ESDs, SPI, and the Legislative Budget Committee (LBC) and some select interviews. In Part Two of this report, the Washington State Institute for Public Policy provides a descriptive report to address the above issues. Additional information may be gathered from the SPI's study of ESD boundaries due in January 1994.

No additional costs should be incurred to collect this information.

D. Recommendations

ESDs should work with their state association to develop an annual report that profiles each ESD and shows their actual revenues and budgets, services provided (noting any changes from the previous year), and any information on the impact of their programs.

II. How Effective are ESDs and What is the Quality of Their Services?

A. Perspective

ESDs provide services that reflect the needs of their local school districts. They frequently provide regional services that would cost a local school district more to provide on its own. Yet many people have no idea what an ESD is or does. The performance of individual ESDs is uneven — some have developed a large clientele and array of services, others are much more narrowly focused and have a smaller clientele. A review of staff development (for teachers and paraprofessionals) and curriculum development in this evaluation design is critical because local school districts need these services to begin making changes in how they educate their students. Recent education reform legislation in Washington provides expanded roles for ESDs to assist in educator training and assistance programs as well as technology support.

ESDs' accountability to their local school districts occurs through a local school district's decision whether or not to use an ESD service and through the ESD board. Smaller school districts are more likely than larger school districts to depend upon ESDs for selected services. ESDs' accountability to the state, and specifically to SPI, is more tenuous. The direct impact of state funding, as distinguished from other funding sources, is difficult to assess—ESDs combine state funds for core services with other funds they receive. While ESD direct state funding is modest, ESDs claim that it contributes to their ability to continue programs that would not be possible without this funding base.

B. Issues to Examine

1. Participation Rates

What kinds of ESD services do different-sized school districts participate in? How do they differ? How much do the different-sized districts contribute financially to each of the ESD programs in which they participate?

2. Cost-effectiveness of Regionalized Services

a) What is the effectiveness of ESD regionalized services (e.g., insurance pools, data processing, computer repair and maintenance, bulk purchasing, and printing) compared to their alternatives (e.g., using as a benchmark other government agencies and the private sector who provide similar services)? Analysis will draw upon both cost and program effectiveness comparisons. Some indicators should include: unit costs, number of staff administering the programs, and product quality.

b) What are some alternative models for providing the regionalized services (such as those described above) that the ESD provides?

c) Do ESDs duplicate services provided through local school districts or other entities? What is the effect (both cost and administrative) of this duplication?

3. Assessment of ESD Administrative Costs

a) What percent of ESD costs are spent on administration for each service category? What percent of the ESD budget is for travel, both in-state and out-of-state?

b) How are the ESD staff funded (e.g., which funding sources)? How do salary levels of ESD staff compare with those of educational professionals in comparable positions elsewhere in Washington State?

4. Assessment of ESD Services

a) How have patterns of ESD services changed over the last ten years and why?

b) What is the assessment of the quality of ESD services by various stakeholders? What is the depth of the services provided?

c) What kind of assessments (e.g., self-studies, client evaluations, independent evaluations) are ESDs conducting regarding their services?

d) Do individual school districts drop out of ESD cooperatives? Describe and evaluate the reasons.

e) Are the scope and range of services that each ESD provides appropriate? Why have some changed and some remained the same?

5. Assessment of ESD Services for Staff Development and Curriculum Development

a) Do school districts, buildings, and teachers receive the latest national research information and techniques about effective schools, innovative programs for staff development for teachers and para-professionals, and curriculum development? What role do ESDs play in disseminating the latest research to school districts? Central? Ancillary? Peripheral?

b) What kinds of staff development/curriculum services do ESDs provide in areas such as special education, technology, and early childhood education? How in-depth are these services? What kinds of requests do ESDs receive from local school districts for staff development and curriculum services? What services do ESDs initiate on their own? To what extent does grant money dictate the kinds and amount of staff development and curriculum services offered?

c) What impacts do these services have on teachers and other staff? Does the ESD follow up and assess the impact of its staff development and curriculum services? How is this assessment conducted? What are the impacts of this assessment?

C. Methodology and Costs

1. Participation Rates

A matrix would be prepared to look at the differences in programs, dollars, and district size. An analysis would follow describing the reasons why the school districts participate at different levels (both in terms of programs and financial contributions) based upon their size. School districts can be divided into several different sizes based on student enrollment as follows, for example: under 1,000; 1,000-4,999; 5,000-9,999 and 10,000 or more. This distinction seems more useful than separating the districts into first and second class size.

Low and high cost options are the same: $3,000

2. Cost-effectiveness for Regionalized Services

A systematic and detailed cost analysis would be carried out on 3 services (provided to at least 5 or more school districts) in at least 3 or as many as 9 ESDs. The cost analysis would include: comparative costs between the ESD and a private entity or other governmental agency who provides the same service; the level of service provided; and the outcomes of the service.

Low cost option (examining 3 ESDs): $18,750
High cost option (examining all 9 ESDs): $42,750

3. Assessment of ESD Administrative Costs

A definition of “administration” would need to be developed, followed by a review of the ESD budget documents. Selected interviews would be conducted with ESD fiscal officers.

Low cost and high cost options are the same: $6,000

4. Assessment of Services

The assessment would look at three major categories of ESD services: management, direct instruction, and instructional support. To obtain information on the quality and depth of the services provided, interviews with school district and ESD staff and school district and ESD boards, would be conducted. Evaluations of individual programs conducted by each ESD would also be sampled.

Low cost option (based on 45 interviews in 9 ESDs and examining evaluation reports in 3 ESDs): $30,300

High cost option (based on 70 interviews in 9 ESDs and Olympia groups and examining evaluation reports in all 9 ESDs): $55,800

5. Assessment of Specific Services for Staff Development and Curriculum Development

An assessment of staff development and curriculum development would be acquired through case studies that described what services ESDs provided specifically in these areas. Also, the quality, depth, impact and innovative quality of the services would be analyzed. These services could be compared across ESDs since each provides some level of service in each of these categories.

Low cost option (based on a review in 3 ESDs): $7,500
High cost option (based on a review in 9 ESDs): $27,500

D. Recommendations

Because each ESD in Washington has unique features and serves a distinctive mix of school districts, an evaluation design that examines all of the ESDs is strongly recommended. However, the above cost options provide a low-cost option to assess a minimum of 3 ESDs as an alternative to examining all 9. If funds for an evaluation are limited, the most critical issues that should be assessed are:

How Effective are ESDs and What is the Quality of Their Services?:

- ***Issues to Examine: Participation Rates***
- ***Issues to Examine: Assessment of ESD Services for Staff Development and Curriculum Development***

Both of these issues currently lack strong analytical data to guide policy decisions about what roles ESDs should have in the future.

III. What Should Be the Role of ESDs In Current State Education Reform Efforts?

A. Perspective

The implementation of educational reform through this decade will also presumably require a new look at how Washington's K-12 system functions both organizationally and administratively. The role of ESDs should be a part of this reassessment of our state's educational system.

B. Issues to Examine

What role should educational service districts play in educational reform in addition to those stated for educator training and technology? If ESDs assume new roles, are changes needed in statutory directions, in mission, in structure, and/or in governance?

C. Methodology and Costs

These questions would be a part of the focus group discussions. Additional interviews would be conducted with SPI staff. An examination of how other states are using ESDs in education reform efforts would also be undertaken.

Low and high cost options are the same: $3,000

D. Recommendations

All of the questions asked in Sections III and IV *(page 7 and 8)* could provide information on what policy options should be pursued for the future roles of ESDs.

IV. What Should Be the Future Role(s) of ESDs?

A. Perspective

Funding patterns and services available through ESDs have changed considerably over the last ten years. An increasing demand for services from local school districts, and a reduction in core state funding, has encouraged ESDs to seek funding from a wide range of sources. Moreover, the high cost of services (such as insurance and new educational technologies) for local school districts has created opportunities for cost-effectiveness through regional provision of services. Despite these changes, the basic ESD mission and core services have remained fairly constant.

B. Issues to Examine

1. Role, Services, and Funding

Should the state continue to fund a core set of services? Should the directions and purpose of these core services be changed for the future? Should the state funding allocation formula be modified? Should there be a change in the balance of state versus local policy directions about the kinds of roles or services ESDs provide? *Are ESDs the appropriate regional broker for the wide variety of children's services outside the field of education (e.g., child care, health, mental health, social services)?*

2. Urban School Districts

What are the reasons for and against the inclusion of urban school districts as part of a regional system of educational service agencies?

C. Methodology and Costs

Three separate focus groups would be held in each ESD consisting of: 1) ESD staff and board members, 2) local school district staff and school board members (from a variety of different sized districts), and 3) principals, teachers/paraprofessionals, and social service agency staff. Three other focus groups would be conducted consisting of: 1) ESD superintendents, 2) SPI staff, and 3) state educational associations and legislative staff.

Low cost option: $6,000
High cost option: $15,000

D. Recommendations

Same as in Section III *(page 10)*.

Figure 1

Cost Estimates by Task

QUESTIONS	TASKS	METHODOLOGY	LOW COST	HIGH COST
I. What are the roles and functions of ESDs and how have they changed?	Origin of ESDs, 10 year comparison, who ESDs serve, review of previous studies	Interviews and review of past studies	None: Tasks completed under WSIPP and OSPI studies	None
II. How effective are ESDs and what is the quality of their services?	1. Participation rates of different sized school districts	Review ESD documents and select interviews	$3,000	$3,000
	2. Cost-effectiveness	Review ESD documents and select interviews	For 3 ESDs: $12,000	For 9 ESDs: $36,000
	a) Examine 3 services		$5,250	$5,250
	b) Examine alternative models	Selected interviews and literature review	$1,500	$1,500
	c) Examine duplication of services	Selected interviews	$6,000	$6,000
	3. Assessment of ESD administrative costs	Document review and select interviews	$300	$300
	4. Assessment of services			
	a) Review patterns over last 10 years based on WSIPP report	Review data and ask as part of selected interviews in 4 b.		
	b) Assess ESD services, why districts leave cooperatives, and scope and range of ESD services through structured interviews.	Structured interviews	For 45 interviews in 9 ESDs: $22,500	For 70 interviews in 9 ESDs: $33,000
	c) Evaluate ESD assessments of their programs	Sampling document review, possible interviews	For 3 ESDs: $7,500	For 9 ESDs: $22,500

QUESTIONS	TASKS	METHODOLOGY	LOW COST	HIGH COST
	5. Assess ESD services for staff development and curriculum development	Case studies	For 3 ESDs: $7,500	For 9 ESDs: $27,500
III. What should be the role of ESDs in state education reform efforts?	Examine what other states have done with regional agencies and education reform efforts as well as what Washington will be doing under ESHB 1209.	Focus groups	Discuss under #4 above and also look into other states and do some additional inter-views at SPI: $3,000	$3,000
IV. What should be the future roles of ESDs?	Examine what, if, and how ESDs should function in the future through a series of focus groups.	Focus groups	For 3 ESDs using 3 focus groups of local school district staff plus SPI/ESD Sups/Associations focus groups: $6,000	For 9 ESDs using similar method-ology as in low cost option: $15,000
Subtotal Costs:			**$74,550**	**$153,050**
Indirect Costs at 15%:			**$11,183**	**$22,958**
TOTAL COSTS:			**$85,733**	**$176,008**

PART TWO: WHAT ARE THE ROLES AND FUNCTIONS OF ESDs AND HOW HAVE THEY CHANGED?

This section addresses the elements outlined in the evaluation design for ESDs for the first evaluation question dealing with "roles and functions."

A. Mission and Function

Each of Washington's nine ESDs is distinct in both size and types of programs provided. ESDs range in geographic size from 4,000 square miles to 14,000 square miles. *(See Figure 2, page 12.)* The total number of students enrolled in the schools served by each ESD varied from 36,200 to 340,115 for the 1991-92 school year. The number of school districts served for each ESD ranged from 15 to 59. *(See Figure 3, page 13.)*

Before Educational Service Districts (ESDs) were created, there were 39 county superintendent offices and county school boards. Their initial responsibility in the territorial and early statehood days was to oversee the establishment and operation of local school districts. As the years went by two added functions were: 1) establishing and operating a lending library of audio visual equipment and films; and 2) collecting fiscal and enrollment data on individual school districts for the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI).

In 1969 the legislature consolidated the 39 county offices into 14 regional bodies called Intermediate School Districts. As a part of this consolidation, a greater emphasis was placed on providing services to local school districts than on the original mission of the county superintendent serving as a regulatory arm of the state. Most ESD services were provided to second class school districts (those with 2,000 or fewer students) that lacked the staff to implement state requirements for financial and other reports.

During the 1970s a number of changes redefined ESDs and emphasized a greater service orientation to local school districts. The legislature renamed the Intermediate School Districts in 1975 as Educational Service Districts and reduced their members in 1977 from 14 to 9 across the state. Three statutory missions are provided under RCW 28A.310.010:

1) Provide cooperative and informational services to local school districts.

2) Assist the Superintendent of Public Instruction and the State Board of Education in administration of the state system of schools.

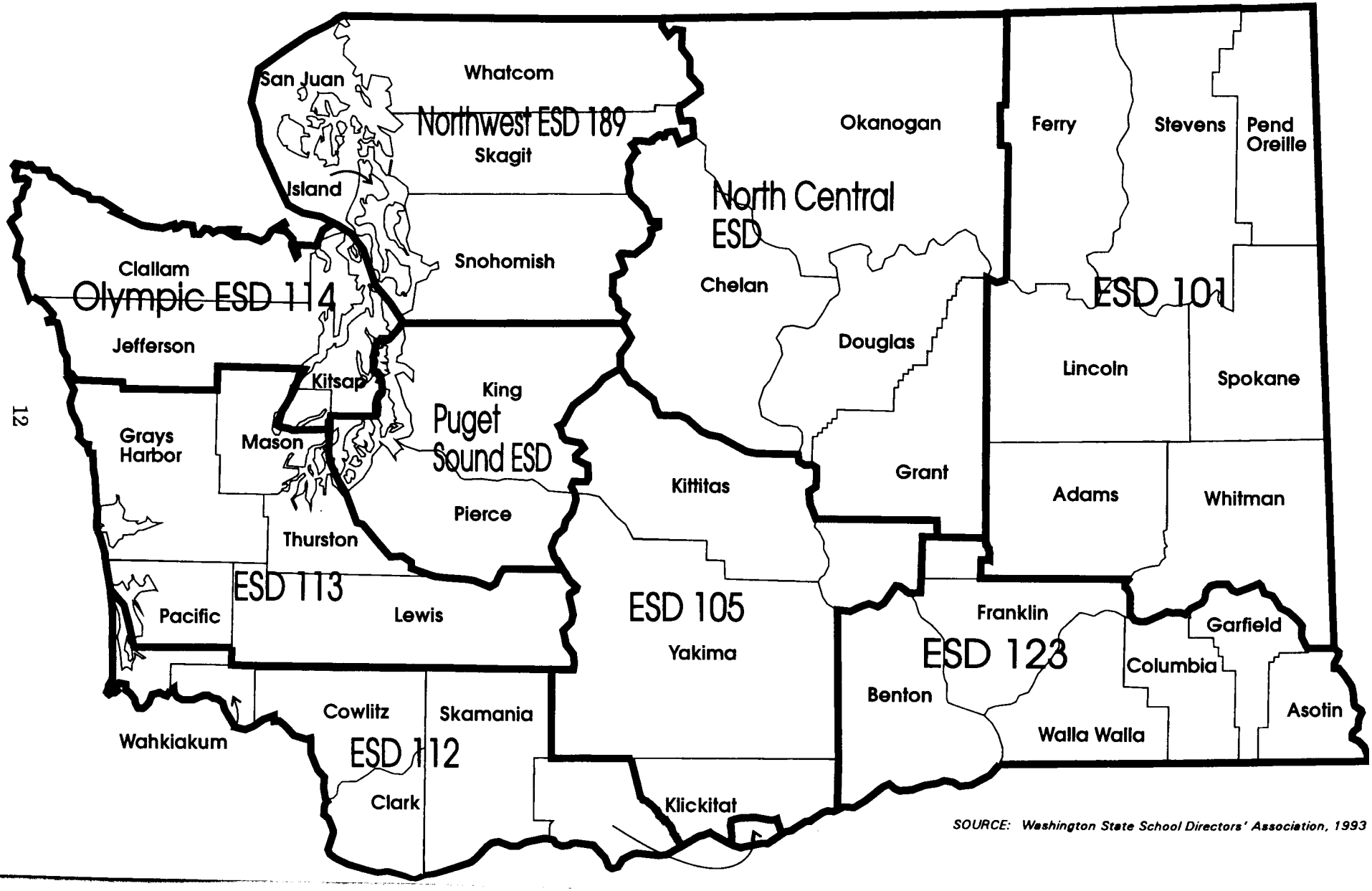
3) Provide services to school districts and state schools for the deaf and the blind to assure equal educational opportunities.

The method of electing ESD boards to carry out these missions was also changed from allowing all voters within an ESD district to vote for ESD board members to authorizing all local school board members in each ESD area to vote for their ESD board members.

The Legislature also passed a law (RCW 28A.310.350) defining core services that the state wanted ESDs to provide with state funding. These core services included: ESD administration, fiscal services, grants management, special education, transportation services, personnel services, learning resource services, cooperative and curriculum services. For a complete list of ESD statutory responsibilities see Appendix A.

Figure 2

Washington State's Educational Service Districts



SOURCE: Washington State School Directors' Association, 1993

Figure 3

WASHINGTON STATE EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DISTRICTS

Student Enrollment - State Allotment Chart

1991 - 1992

ESD	Non-High Districts[1]	First Class Districts[2]	Second Class Districts[2]	Total Number of Districts	Student Enrollment	First Class Districts: Number of Students Served	Second Class Districts: Number of Students Served	State Allotment
ESD 101	12	9	38	59	87,323	67,606	19,717	$817,272.41
ESD 105	3	8	14	25	50,567	36,323	14,244	519,480.80
ESD 112	7	7	16	30	70,204	57,221	12,983	609,991.36
ESD 113	11	**9**	25	45	65,320	44,962	20,358	701,310.36
Olympic ESD (114)	2	**6**	7	15	52,105	43,837	8,268	431,688.52
Puget Sound ESD (121)	2	**27**	6	35	340,115	332,434	7,681	542,511.62
ESD 123	5	7	11	23	49,387	40,961	8,426	522,744.31
North Central ESD (171)	4	3	22	29	33,215	18,814	14,401	612,138.15
Northwest ESD (189)	3	16	16	35	129,761	110,299	19,462	610,486.08
TOTAL	**49**	**92**	**155**	**296**	**877,997**	**752,457**	**125,540**	###########

1 Non-High districts are those without high schools.
2 First Class Districts are Districts with over 2,000 students; Second Class Districts are districts with less than 2,000 students.

SOURCE: Washington Association of Educational Service Districts, 1993

The federal government in 1977 also passed P.L. 94-142, the "Handicapped Education Act" (renamed the "Individuals with Disabilities Education Act" during the 1990 reauthorization) which guaranteed all students with disabilities the right to a free and appropriate education. As this Disabilities Act was implemented, the ESDs began to receive federal and state funding to assist with special education programs.

In the 1980s, each ESD developed additional programs to serve local school districts. These programs differed significantly from ESD to ESD. Many of these programs were developed on a cooperative basis, which enabled local school districts to pay the ESD a certain amount to administer a cooperative program. The cooperative program was expected to either yield cost savings on a regional basis and/or to provide a service that could not be provided locally. Each school district has the ability to withdraw or join an ESD cooperative program annually depending upon their satisfaction with the ESD's service.

Today ESD services can be broken down into three categories: management, direct instruction, and instructional support. Larger school districts (those with over 5,000 students) tend to choose fewer ESD services. Usually the kinds of services they participate in are management services, such as purchasing and equipment repair, where they contribute a large dollar volume of business. The smaller school districts depend more upon a wide range of different ESD services. These include management services for budgeting and accounting and insurance pools; direct instruction for specific student populations, such as the disabled and the gifted; and instructional support in areas such as math/science, drug and alcohol prevention, educational technology and staff development.

Over the last ten years, however, there has been an increase in new ESD activity across the state, defined as activities in which three or more ESDs offer services. These service categories are as follows:

1) Management Services

- Cooperative bulk purchasing (e.g., buses, computers)
- Employee benefits
- Workman's compensation pools
- Coordinated insurance services
- Public information (e.g., newsletters, bulletins)
- Asbestos removal
- Clock hours (for teachers' continuing education requirements)
- School construction assistance
- Intergovernmental coordination of children's services with other state, local, and private agencies
- Printing

2) Direct Instructional Services

- Students with disabilities
- At-risk students
- Gifted students
- Early childhood education students
- Distant learning (satellite communication classes)
- Juvenile detention centers
- Alcohol and drug treatment

3) Instructional Support

- Educational technology centers
- Fair start
- Academic contests
- AIDS education
- Information to private schools
- Math/science
- Native American education
- Migrant health
- Migrant education
- Special education training
- Health education
- Environmental education
- Drug and alcohol abuse prevention
- Child abuse prevention
- Curriculum for gifted students
- Paraprofessional training (a growing area of staff development)

Many of the ESD programs are tailored to the needs of their local communities; others provide programs of statewide or national reputation for excellence. Examples of unique programs in each ESD are:

ESD 101 in Spokane has a nationally recognized satellite telecommunications educational programming network to reach out to rural communities to offer classes in science, math, and foreign languages.
ESD 105 in Yakima has developed a migrant education program to assist local school districts working with large numbers of migrant students.
ESD 112 in Vancouver has a child care consortium to offer care at school sites for children with working parents.
ESD 114 in Bremerton runs an alcohol and drug treatment program at two school sites.
ESD 189 in Mount Vernon operates a statewide data processing cooperative.
ESD 121 in Burien has a comprehensive early childhood education program.
ESD 171 in Wenatchee runs a migrant health program.
ESD 123 in Walla Walla has a staff wellness coordinator.
ESD 113 in Olympia runs a personnel cooperative for hiring teachers for several school districts.

As the 1990s unfold, ESDs are taking on new roles in paraprofessional training and coordinating intergovernmental children's health and social services with the local school districts. The 1993 Legislature passed Engrossed Substitute House Bill 1211, which allows ESDs to undertake any service that is not in conflict with their statutes, upon the written request of the directors of a local school district or districts. *

* Appendix B shows a ten-year comparison of ESD services between 1982 and 1992. The depth and level of activity in each category is not measured in this table, but could be part of a more extensive evaluation.

B. Funding

County funding for ESDs was phased out and additional state funding was provided in the late 1970s. State funds were reduced in the early 1980s, forcing ESDs to seek funds from different sources. During the mid 1980s the required local school district contributions were also phased out. As a result ESDs sought categorical state and federal grants and charged fees to pay for programs that local school districts wanted.

The direct state appropriation to ESDs, developed in the mid 1970s, was based upon a funding formula that provided core services. This core funding is no longer tied to a set of FTEs providing core services, nor do ESDs account separately for this state core funding. The funding formula is currently based on the number of second class school districts in each ESD area and their distances from the central ESD office. These two factors determine the budget for: ESD staff salaries and benefits, ESD board expenses, maintenance and operation, facilities, and travel. There is some question about the relevancy of the formula with new methods of communications (fax, modem, teleconferencing) and changing types of student populations. An examination of the relevancy of these current funding criteria could be helpful.

Total general revenues for ESDs for the fiscal year ending in August 1992 were $86.1 million. Another $62.6 million in contributions for insurance pools (unemployment, workers compensation, and risk management) was collected during FY 91-92.

The ESD direct appropriation from the Legislature was $5.4 million. The percentage of the state direct appropriation for each individual ESD ranges from 3 percent to 16 percent of their general revenue sources, depending upon how much they rely upon other fund sources.

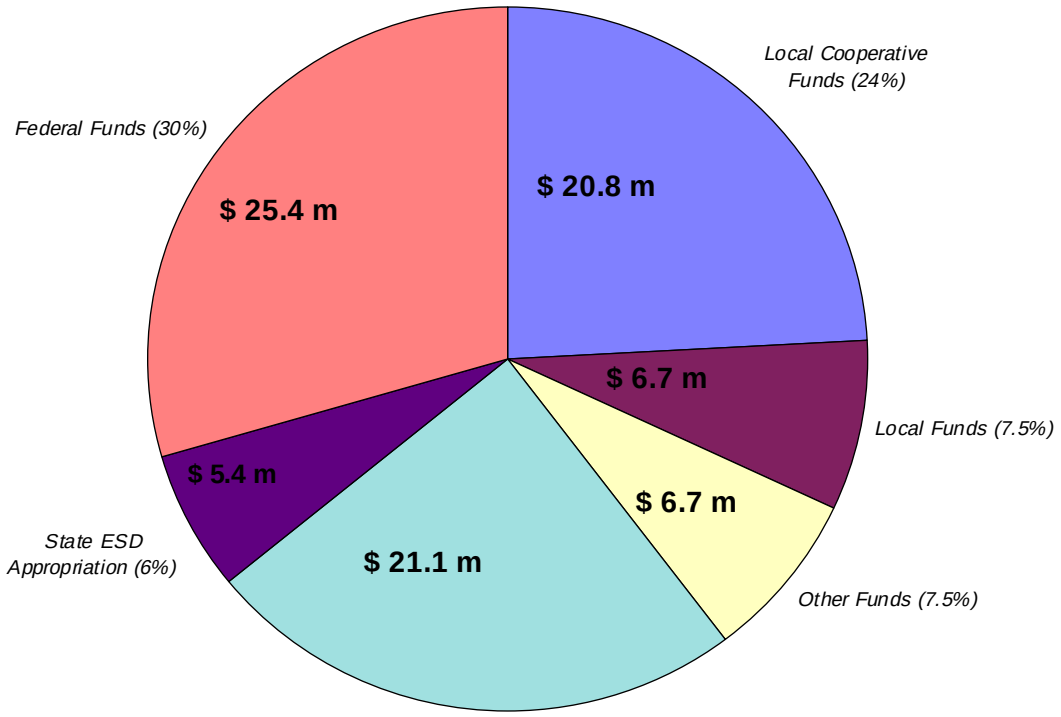
Three major sources of ESDs revenues (excluding insurance contributions) in 1991-92 were: Federal $25.4 million (30 percent of the total revenues), state (excluding the ESD appropriation) $21.1 million (25 percent of the total revenues), local school district cooperatives $20.8 million (24 percent of the total revenues). *(See Figure 4, page 17.)*

The major categories of ESD expenditures in 1991-92 *(see Figure 5, page 17)* were:

- ESD Operations $12.6 million (15 percent of total expenditures)
- Debt Principal $0.5 million (0.5 percent of total expenditures)
- Instructional Support $51.8 million (62 percent of total expenditures)
- Noninstructional Support $18.2 million (23 percent of total expenditures)

Figure 4

Statewide Summary of ESD Revenues for General Expense Fund 1991 - 1992



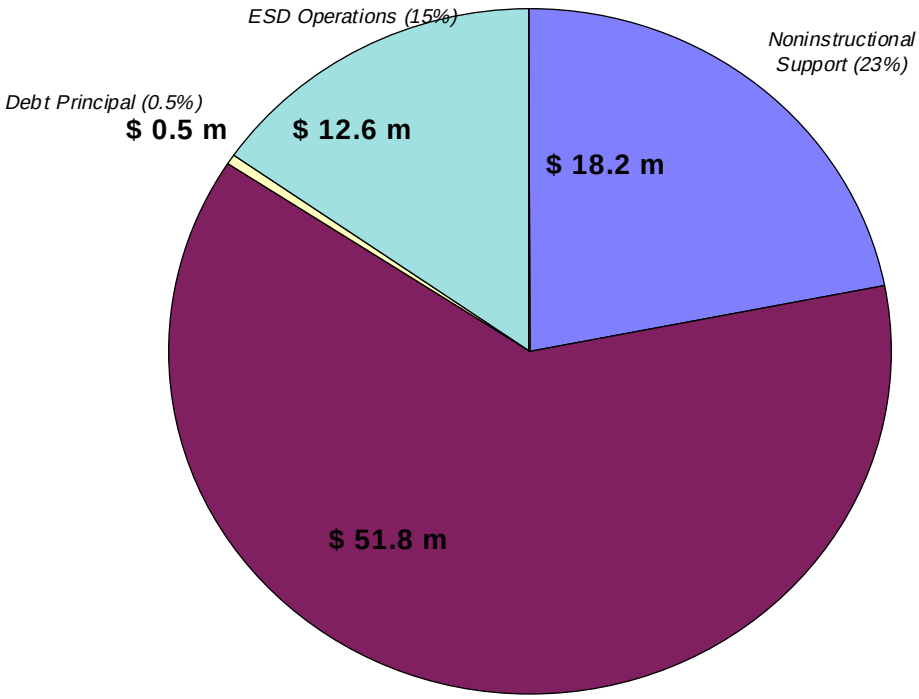
Washington State Institute for Public Policy, 1994

Total = $86.1 million

** excluding ESD appropriation*

Figure 5

Statewide Summary of ESD Expenditures for General Expense Fund 1991 - 1992



Washington State Institute for Public Policy, 1994

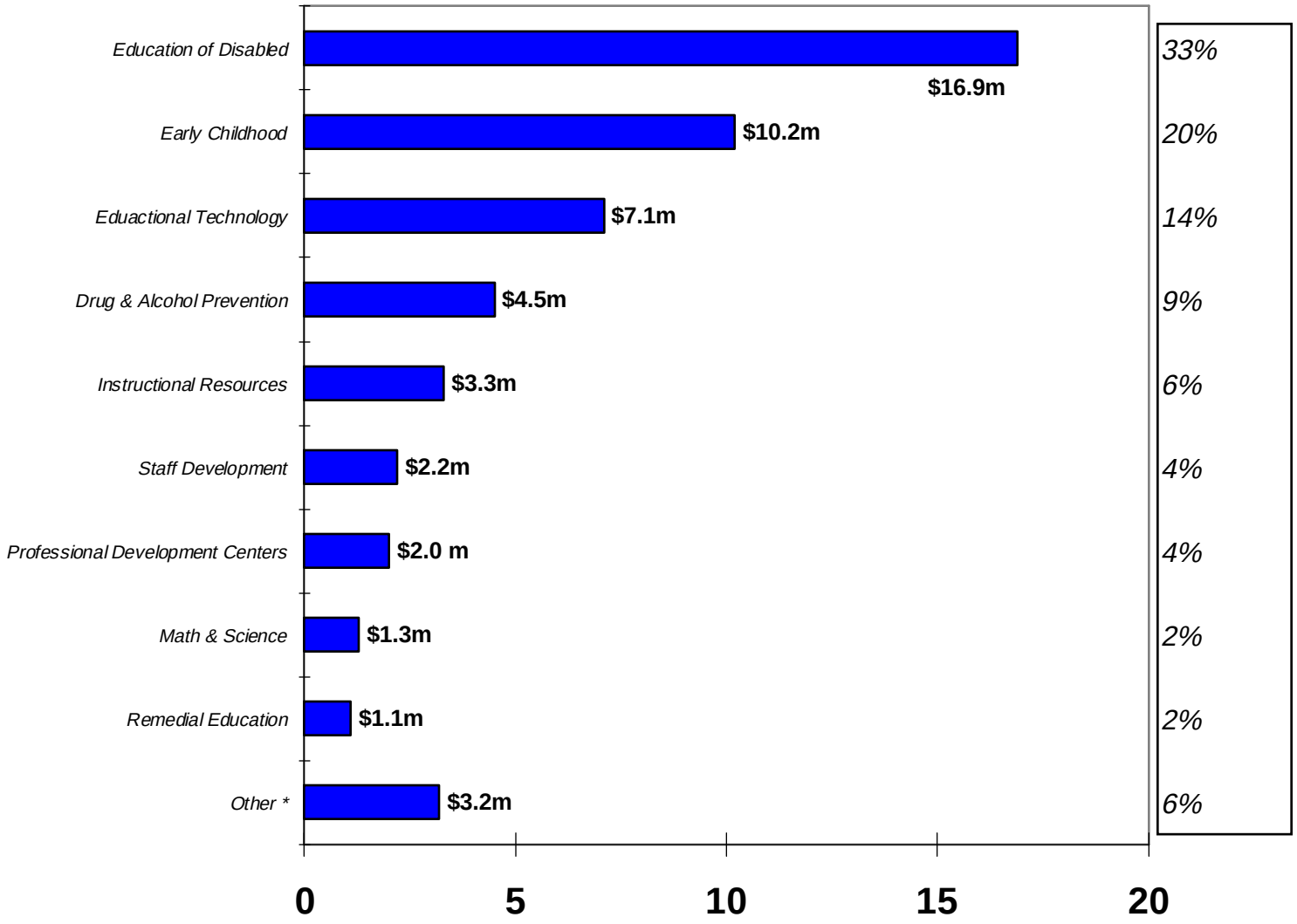
Total = $83.1 million

SOURCE: SPI Statewide Summary Fiscal Reports on ESDs for 1992.

During 1991-92 the largest expenditures for all ESDs under instructional support (which is 62 percent of the total ESD budget) were: education of children with disabilities $16.9 million, early childhood $10.2 million, and educational technology $7.1 million. *(See Figure 6 below.)*

Figure 6

Statewide Summary of ESD Expenditures for Instructional Support



SOURCE: SPI Statewide Summary Fiscal Reports on ESDs for 1992.

** "Other" includes: traffic safety, math and science, art education, environmental education, gifted education, vocational skills, student retention, student counseling, juvenile detention centers, child abuse prevention, and health education.*

Over the past ten years ESD staff have increased 54 percent, *(see Figure 7 below)* and their revenues have increased 167 percent (or 81 percent, adjusted for inflation). In 1982 ESD administration accounted for 10 percent of their total expenditures; in 1992 ESD administration accounted for 15 percent of their total expenditures.

Figure 7

A Ten-Year Comparison of Educational Service District Staff, Revenue, and Expenditures

Category	1981-1982[1]	1991 - 1992	% Change	% Change When Adjusted for Inflation[3]
STAFF (FTE)	609	937	54%	—-
REVENUE (in millions)				
Local	$ 1.4m	$ 6.7m		
Cooperatives		$20.8m		
State	$ 5.1m	$26.5m		
Federal	$ 9.4m	$25.4m		
Other	$16.3m	$ 6.7m		
TOTAL REVENUE	**$32.2m**	**$86.1m**	**167%**	**81%**
EXPENDITURES				
ESD Administration	$ 2.7m	$12.6m		
Other[2]	$24.5m	$70.5m		
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	**$27.2m**	**$83.1m**	**206%**	**107%**

[1] Fiscal year 1981-1982 was on a July-June cycle and fiscal year 1991-1992 was on a September-August cycle.

[2] The categories used in 1982 for expenditures were not comparable to those used in 1992. To avoid inaccurate comparisons, all expenditures except ESD Administration were lumped into one category called “Other,” which includes: core services, inservice training, cooperatives, and special services.

[3] Consumer Price Index, 1982-84 = 100, used as a measure of inflation.

SOURCES: SPI Fiscal Reports, Legislative Budget Committee Performance Audit on Educational Service Districts, 1982.

C. Studies

1. Washington State

- There have been three major studies of ESDs in Washington State: “Intermediate Units in the State of Washington” (1975) by Barbara Dunlap, an intern for the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction; “LBC Performance Audit on ESDs” (1982) by Ron Perry; and “A Study of the Effectiveness of Educational Service Districts in the State of Washington” (1986) a Ph.D. Thesis (Seattle University) by Gary Reul. A summary of these studies is in Appendix C.

- The **Dunlap study** provided an excellent history and some criteria for examining how to determine appropriate regional ESD boundaries. The study did not make specific recommendations, nor did it evaluate ESD services and funding.

- The **LBC study** inventoried all the services that the different ESDs provide for the first (and only) time. It also examined funding patterns. The LBC chose two ESDs to study in depth. The main problems uncovered in one ESD related to personnel practices. The LBC did not conduct a major assessment on the impact of the products/services delivered by all ESDs nor did it examine how those services differ between small or large school districts. The LBC found that ESDs were in compliance with the laws and recommended that their structure remain the same.

- The **Reul study** surveyed 2,500 participants/users of ESD services. Not surprisingly, ESD personnel thought their services were highly effective. Most teachers had not heard of the ESD services and could not rate them. This study was an opinion survey and contained no quantitative assessment of the cost-effectiveness of ESD services. Recommendations included: improve ESD communications so that more people are aware of their services, develop ways ESDs can serve large districts more effectively, and examine whether ESDs should be regulators under SPI or service providers to local school districts.

  As a group, these studies provide some insight into the roles of ESDs. However, no thorough review has been conducted of roles and performance of the ESDs.

2. Other States

Glen Fielding’s “Education Service Districts in Oregon” is a state study worth noting. There are 27 ESDs in Oregon with an annual budget of $250 million. The mission of Oregon’s ESDs is to provide excellence in education, equity, and local responsiveness. The ESDs use a resolution process to determine what services they will offer. Services within an ESD area must be approved annually by two-thirds of the local school boards, and these boards must represent at least 51 percent of the students. The two-thirds majority provision protects the smaller school districts, and the simple majority protects the interests of those districts with larger populations.

The passage of Measure 5 in Oregon requires the state to pick up local funding for education. Oregon’s ESDs are examining ways to consolidate and change their funding structure, which has been based on local property taxes (50 percent of their revenues) and contracts/grants (50 percent of their revenues) from state and federal agencies. At present, they have reduced the number of ESDs from 29 to 27 through several mergers. See Appendix D for further information on this study.

3. National Studies

Several national studies also assess the role of Educational Service Agencies. Glen Shaw's 1993 Ph.D. dissertation at the University of Minnesota is on "Characteristics of Effective ESAs." Bob Stephens and Walter Turner conducted a study for the American Association of Educational Service Agencies entitled "Approaching the Next Millennium: Educational Service Agencies in the 1990s." See Appendix E for summaries of these studies.

Glen Shaw used a group of eight national "ESA experts" to identify eight key characteristics that define effectiveness for these educational service agencies. These characteristics are: 1) service orientation, 2) quality of services, 3) high quality professionals, 4) cost-effectiveness, 5) child orientation, 6) support of local school districts, 7) programs jointly developed and assessed by ESA and local district(s), and
8) being on the cutting edge of research and development for educational programs.

The Stephens/Turner report describes three kinds of Educational Service Agencies: special district, regional education service agencies, and cooperatives. There are twenty-six states with Educational Service Agencies (ESAs) that fall into one of these three categories. Washington (along with 12 other states) is in the most common category: a special district ESA that fulfills a hybrid of state and local functions. The number of ESAs in each state ranges from a low of 6 in Connecticut and Massachusetts to 88 in Ohio. Oregon has 27 ESDs. Washington has the second lowest number (9 ESDs). Stephens/Turner note that several states have realigned their ESA boundaries, two states have abolished their ESAs, and four states have created new or additional ESAs.

Six states (Georgia, Nebraska, Ohio, Oregon, Texas, and Wisconsin) now require ESAs to complete an accreditation process which includes a self-study and on-site review by an external panel of experts. When the results are issued, there can be penalties for poor performance or recognition of exemplary status. These penalties and rewards have not yet been tried.

Stephens and Turner trace the expanded ESA roles over time. In the 1970s, ESAs focused on direct services (e.g., students with disabilities, bilingual students), indirect services (e.g., staff development) and management services (e.g., data processing). In the 1980s, ESAs assumed core services related to state priorities, accreditation programs, staff development, and cooperative purchasing services. Finally, in the 1990s Stephens/Turner anticipate that ESAs will expand their role in: 1) new direct services for the at risk, gifted, and early childhood students; 2) new support services in areas such as distant learning and computer skills; and 3) new management services in areas such as student performance assessment and coordination with other human service organizations. Washington's ESDs already provide services in many of these areas.

Appendix A
Educational Services Districts: *Statutory Responsibilities*

RCW CITATION	FUNCTION
28A.310.350	**Core Services** • ESD administration • abolish sex and race bias • fiscal services • grants management • special education • transportation • certification of personnel • learning resources • cooperative curriculum • special needs of school districts
28A.310.010 and 28A.310.340	**Cooperatives** • Cooperative and informational services to local school districts
	Assist State Education • Assist the OSPI and SBE in the performance of their statutory or constitutional duties
	Equal Opportunities • Provide services to school districts and to the school for the deaf and the school for the blind to ensure equal educational opportunities
28A.310.180	**Depository and Distribution Center** • Provide depository for films, tapes, charts
	Cooperative Services and Joint Purchasing • Establish cooperative programs and joint purchasing
	Direct Student Services • Establish direct student services including a state-funded pupil transportation program
28A.310.190	**Teachers Institutes**
	Special Aid for Handicapped
	Statistical Data · Certify data for apportionment
28A.310.200	**Maps** • Retain Boundary Maps of School districts and Director districts
28A.310.280	**Records and Reports** • Perform record keeping and liaison information with local school districts
28A.310.290	**Administer Oaths**

28A.310.300	**School District Budgets**
	• Assist school district in preparing their budgets
	Enforce Compulsory Attendance
	Non-High School Districts
	• Assist with capital fund aid
	School District Organization
	• Create new school districts and transfers of territory
28A.310.440	**Self-Insurance**
28A.310.470	**Delegation to ESD of SPI Programs**
28A.310.480	**Delegation of ESD to SBE Programs**
28A.415.010	**Center for Improvement of Teaching**
28A.415.125 and	**Student Teaching Centers**
28A.415.130	
28A.505.060	**School Districts Budget**
	• File copy of budget with ESD
28A.510.260	**ESD Apportionment**
	• ESDs apportion to local school districts SPI funds
28A.315.180 and	**New or Alternate School District**
28A.315.110	• ESD superintendent shall make order to establish new school district or terms of adjustment of bonded indebtedness
28A.650.020	**Regional Educational Technology Support Centers**
	• ESDs shall establish educational technology centers for network planning and distance learning, etc. *(House Bill 1209, Section 705, 1993 Session)*
28A.415.270	**Principal Internship**
	• ESDs shall assist in the principal internship program *(House Bill 1209, Section 404, 1993 Session)*
28A.310.210	**ESD Enhanced Authority**
	• ESDs can provide any cooperative or informational service requested by a local school district that is not in conflict with the law *(Engrossed Substitute House Bill 1211, Section 1, 1993 Session)*

Appendix B
ESD Services Provided to Local School Districts: *10-Year Comparison*

CATEGORY OF SERVICE	1982 Number of ESDS Providing Service	1992 Number of ESDS Providing Service
A. MANAGEMENT SERVICES		
Core Services		
Abolition of sexual and racial bias	0	2
Administration	9	9
Fiscal Services	9	9
Grants Management	9	9
Personnel certification	9	9
Special Education administration services	7	9
Transportation route surveys, state transportation information	5	5
Other Services		
Asbestos removal	0	4
Capital asset financing	0	1
Child care referral	0	2
Clock hours	0	9
Cooperative purchasing	1	7
Coordinated insurance services	1	4
Emergency communications	7	4
Employee benefits	0	4
Equipment repair	3	3
Fingerprinting	0	2
Intergovernmental coordination of children's services	0	9
Legal services	0	1
Printing	0	3
Public information	2	4

NOTE: In some cases, these general headings reflect more than one kind of service.

CATEGORY OF SERVICE	1982 Number of ESDS Providing Service	1992 Number of ESDS Providing Service
Public transportation	0	1
School construction assistance	0	3
School district boundaries and organization	9	9
State information dissemination	9	9
State reports and record keeping	9	9
Unemployment insurance	9	9
Workman's compensation	1	9

B. DIRECT INSTRUCTION/SERVICE		
Adult literacy	0	2
Alcohol and drug treatment	0	3
At risk students	0	6
Child care services	0	2
Distant learning classes	0	7
Driver's education	1	2
Early childhood education	1	7
Gifted students	0	5
Juvenile detention center school	0	3
Students with disabilities	7	8
Vocational/technical	0	1

CATEGORY OF SERVICE	1982 Number of ESDS Providing Service	1992 Number of ESDS Providing Service
C. INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT		
Academic contests	0	9
AIDS Education	0	6
Art/Artists in the schools	2	5
Child abuse prevention	0	3
Curriculum development	9	9
Drug and alcohol abuse prevention	2	9
Education technology centers (computers, etc.)	0	9
English as a Second Language	1	2
Environmental education	2	7
Fair Start	0	9
Gifted students	3	4
Health education	1	5
Information on effective schools	0	9
Math and science	0	6
Media and library	9	9
Migrant education	1	3
Migrant health	1	3
Native American education	1	3
Private school assistance (information/training)	0	6
Professional development centers	0	9
Special education support	9	9
Special education training	1	7
Student learning objectives	0	1
Student teaching centers	0	9
Student testing and assessment	3	4
Traffic safety	5	4
Violence in the schools	0	2
Vocational education	1	3
Youth employment training	4	3

Appendix C
Educational Service Districts: *Washington State Studies*

Performance Audit on Educational Service Districts.
The Legislative Budget Committee (Olympia, Washington), July 1982.

The Legislative Budget Committee audit sought to examine:

- ESD compliance with the laws
- effectiveness and efficiency of ESD operation
- staff utilization
- types of services different ESDs provide
- local school district utilization of services
- impact of new funding methodology
- examples of ESDs cost savings
- ability of other public or private entities to perform ESD functions
- effect of terminating or modifying ESDs

An ESD is a political subdivision of the state, but not a municipal corporation or state agency.

Findings

- There is overall compliance with the laws.

- Each ESD has an individual character with programs and services that differ beyond the core services (extensive service inventory list with a potential of 168 basic services; 25 cooperative programs; and 30 federal programs — ESDs provide an average of 245 services each).

- The level of ESD budgets tends to relate directly to the number of school districts in each ESD.

- There is little consistency in salary levels among all 9 ESDs except for clerical and classified positions. There is a need for standardizing position descriptions.

- ESD 105 (Yakima area) serves its region well, providing services that benefit the local school districts (unemployment and insurance cooperatives and fiscal services). There is a need to strengthen its planning and review process.

- ESD 113 (Olympia area) has some school districts that do not extensively use their curriculum services. Local school district superintendents gave the ESD fiscal services high marks. There appear to be some questionable personal service contracts. Cost savings have been achieved through self-insurance, personnel, and film library cooperatives. There is no process for planning and reviewing the ESD's goals and objectives.

- The future strength of ESDs appears to be in the continuation and expansion of cooperatives.
- The structure of ESDs should be retained.

Intermediate Units in the State of Washington.
Barbara Dunlap, August 1975.

The purpose of this report was to provide the Washington State Board of Education with a rationale to study the function and structure of the intermediate school districts.

Overview

The first Territorial Legislature in 1854 outlined the duties of the county superintendents to over see the establishment of schools in the Territory. A 1909 law emphasized the regulatory responsibilities of county superintendents and their boards. State funds were first appropriated to the county superintendents in the 1957-59 biennium to provide supplemental services to local school districts and cooperative programs among counties. Through the late 1950s and 1960s the Association of County Superintendents proposed that the Legislature reduce the number of county school units. In 1969 the Legislature passed a bill to replace the county school units with intermediate school districts. The State Board of Education created 14 intermediate school districts. Changes were made in 1971 to emphasize the service functions and eliminate the regulatory functions of intermediate school districts. In 1974 the Legislature passed a law, drafted by the Joint Committee on Education, which phased out county responsibility and funding of intermediate school districts. In 1975 the Legislature changed the name of the Intermediate School Districts to Educational Service Districts.

Criteria for Determining the Boundaries of Intermediate School Districts

- Student enrollment
- Size
- Budget
- Number of local school districts
- Assessed valuation
- Institutions of higher education
- Program
- Staff
- Geography
- Climate
- Highways
- Population (size, ethnicity, location)

Specific Issues

- Intermediate school district budgets vary considerably due to size, enrollment, availability of categorical funds, and payments from local school districts for cooperative services.

- Intermediate schools which serve a large number of first class school districts have a more difficult time establishing a clientele.

A Study of the Effectiveness of Educational Service Districts in the State of Washington.
Gary Reul, Ph.D. Thesis (Seattle University), 1986.

The purpose of this thesis was to examine the effectiveness of the nine ESAs through a survey to 2,500 participants/users of ESD services which include: ESD staff, SPI staff, local school district superintendents and central office staff, individual school principals and staff. Among the general findings:

- 48 percent of the respondents felt that the ESDs were effective
- 21 percent of the respondents felt that the ESDs were ineffective
- 31 percent of the respondents were unable to rate the effectiveness
- ESD staff rated their effectiveness the highest. SPI and local school superintendents also gave ESDs high ratings. Principals were aware of ESD services but often couldn't rate them. Teachers and educational associates were the most unaware of the ESD services.
- Small school districts tend to use ESD services more often than the large school districts.
- Larger school districts provide many of the same services that their ESD offers. Personnel in large school districts were less familiar with ESD services.
- Some ESDs lack effective communication to inform potential clients about the services they offer.

Questions asked focused on how effective ESDs are overall and for specific programs (in service training, information on current research and innovations in curriculum, etc.). Answers could range from "always effective" to "not at all effective," plus "unaware of service." Many services were rated, but there is no overall summary which makes its hard to draw conclusions about the effectiveness of the different services.

Reul's Recommendations:

1. Improve ESD communications so that people will be more aware of their services;
2. Develop ways that ESDs cans serve large school districts more effectively; and
3. Examine what role of ESD should fulfill: one of regulator or one of service provider

Appendix D
Oregon Study: *Educational Service Districts*

Education Service Districts in Oregon.
Glen Fielding (Salem, Oregon), October 1991.

Five background features of this study:

- Broad scope and fast pace of educational change
- Measure 5 (state will assume local costs for schools)
- Optimum size and number of educational service agencies
- Growing emphasis on interorganization coordination in delivery of education and other human services
- Current knowledge of educational service agencies is fragmented

County school districts evolved into rural school districts, then intermediate education districts, and finally education service districts. One role these districts had that was different from Washington's ESDs is that they were required to provide equalization of school costs within their county. During the 1960s and 1970s the ESDs in Oregon moved away from their strong regulatory role and assumed a much greater role in providing services, particularly in the area of special education.

There were 29 ESDs in Oregon, but two ESDs have recently consolidated. The total ESD budget for FY 92 was $250 million. Revenues come from local property tax (50 percent) and state/ federal contracts (50 percent) although the local tax source is being phased out under Measure 5. The ESD mission is to provide excellence in education, equity, and local responsiveness.

The three basic functions of the ESDs are: service, leadership, and interorganization communication/coordination. There is considerable variation across ESDs in the type and number of services offered, as well as the in-depth assistance provided for the services offered. The ESDs use a resolution process to determine what kinds of services they will offer. Once a year services must be approved by two-thirds of the local school boards and these school boards must represent at least 51 percent of the students. The two-thirds majority provision protects the smaller school districts and the simple majority protects the interests of the schools with larger populations.

Appendix E
Educational Service Agencies: *National Studies*

Approaching the Next Millennium: Educational Service Agencies in the 1990s. Robert Stephens and Walter Turner, American Association of Educational Service Agencies (Arlington, Virginia), February 1991.

Major themes surrounding educational issues of the 1990s

1. An acceleration of rural school challenges (e.g. lack of funding and specialized classes) to providing a quality education.

2. Lack of political consensus for resolving long-standing equity and quality issues (e.g., funding) in metropolitan area school districts.

3. New pressures for education reform.

4. New pressure on state education agencies to create performance accountability systems.

5. Interest in interorganizational collaboration.

Twenty-six states have one or more of the following kinds of Educational Service Agencies (ESAs) ***(See Tables 1 and 2)***

1. Special District: established through the designation of a legally constituted unit of school government between the state education agency and a collection of local school districts. ESAs provide services to the state and to local school districts. (Washington is one of 13 states with this kind of ESA.)

2. Regional State Education Service Agency: established as regional branches of the state educational service agency. ESAs serve as arms of the state to deliver services of the state to school districts. (Eight states have this kind of structure.)

3. Cooperative: formed by the sponsorship of two or more school districts to share services. (Six states have this kind of structure.)

Governance

The special district ESAs tend to be the only ESAs, with elected boards and these are most often elected from local school boards.

There is a new governance shift: increased use of general advisory groups composed of consumers of the services of the agencies, and granting these groups more review over budget and program decisions.

In the 1980s there were three state-initiated requested reductions in the number of special district networks:

- Wisconsin reduced its number of ESAs from 19 to 12.
- Michigan reduced its number of ESAs from 58 to 57.
- Iowa is considering reducing its number from 15 to 12 or less.

These three states have experienced major population declines in their rural regions over the last 25 years.

Four states formed new statewide networks of ESAs (Arkansas, Illinois, Indiana, and Louisiana), and two states phased out ESA systems (Alaska and New Jersey).

Realignment criteria for adjusting ESA boundaries include:

1. Maximum travel time from the service center to a majority of local districts to be served by the unit (outer limit of one and a half hours).

2. Maximum population of students served: 30,000 to 40,000 in rural areas to 50,000 to 75,000 in more densely populated areas.

3. Coterminous boundaries with other regional health and social service providers.

Mission and Role

Original and current missions of ESAs

1. Improve educational opportunities in the schools of the state, particularly for rural districts.

2. Improve the equality of education in regions of the state with services to handicapped children.

3. Improve the quality of education in the schools of the state.

4. Promote cooperation among local school districts.

5. Provide those services desired by local districts.

The trend in the 1980s was for ESAs to provide a set of core programs and services related to statewide priorities.

Anticipated Missions of ESAs in the 1990s:

1. Achieve the cost-effective delivery of new priorities for state school systems.

2. Provide information on the condition of education in sub-state regions.

3. Assist in coalition-building among education, community, and other human services providers.

Programmatic Focus of Special District ESAs

Traditional Focus

1. Direct instructional services to students (disabilities, bilingual)
2. Instructional support (pupil diagnoses, staff development)
3. Management services (data processing)
4. Services for state education agency and non-public schools

1980s Focus

1. Core services
2. Staff development
3. Cooperative purchasing
4. Accreditation programs

1990s Focus

1. New direct services (at risk, gifted, early childhood)
2. New support services (distant learning, computer skills)
3. New management services (student performance accountability, coordination with other human service organizations)

Six states (Georgia, Nebraska, Ohio, Oregon, Texas, and Wisconsin) have required ESAs to complete an accreditation process which includes self-study, on-site review by an external panel, and the use of standards that reflect both compliance with state law and norms of good practice. Once the results are issued there can be sanctions for poor performance, or recognition of exemplary status.

Table 1

Dominant Patterns of Types of ESAs with Regard to Four Central Characteristics

		Four Central Characteristics		
Type of ESA	**Legal Framework**	**Governance**	**Program and Services**	**Fiscal Support**
Type A: Special District ESA	tends to be highly structured in legislation and/or SEA regulations	tends to be lay control	tends to be determined by member LEAs and the SEA or by statute	tends to be a mix of local, regional, state, and state/federal
Type B: Regionalized SEA/ESA	tends to be structured in SEA regulations only	tends to be professional advisory only	tends to be almost exclusively determined by SEA	tends to be almost exclusively state and state/federal
Type C: Cooperative ESA	tends to be general (i.e., intergovernmental regulations and statutes) and/or permissive legislation	tends to be composed of representatives of member LEAs	tends to be almost exclusively determined by member LEAs	tends to be almost exclusively local and state/federal

ESA = Educational Service Agency
SEA = State Education Agency
LEA = Local Education Agency

SOURCE: *Major Policy Issues Surrounding the Educational Service Agency Movement and a Proposed Research and Development Agenda* (1979), Burtonsville, MD: Stephens Associates, p. 3.

Table 2

Major Statewide Networks of ESAs, Year of Establishment and Status in 1979-80 and 1989-90

State	Title of Units	Year Initially Established	Status in 1979-80[3]		Status in 1989-90	
			Number of Units in Network	Designation	Number of Units in Network	Designation
Alaska	Regional Resource Center	1976	5	cooperative	—	—
Arkansas	Educational Service Cooperatives	1985	-	special dist.	15	cooperative
California	Office of County Sup't of Schools	1859	58	special dist.	58	special dist.
Colorado[1]	Boards of Cooperative Services	1965	17	cooperative	17	cooperative
Connecticut	Regional Educational Svc. Center	1972	6	cooperative	6	cooperative
Georgia	Cooperative Education Svc. Agency	1966	16	cooperative	16	special dist.
Illinois	Educational Service Regions	1975	58	special dist	57	regional SEA
Illinois	Educational Service Center	1985	-	-	18	special dist.
Indiana	Education Service Center	1973	4	cooperative	8	cooperative
Iowa	Area Education Agency	1975	15	special dist	15	special dist.
Louisiana	Regional Service Centers	1988	-	-	8	regional SEA
Massachusetts	Regional Education Center	1966	6	regional SEA	6	regional SEA
Massachusetts[1]	Educational Collaboratives	1966	44	cooperative	32	cooperative
Michigan	Intermediate School District	1963	58	special dist.	57	special dist.
Minnesota	Educational Cooperative Svc. Unit	1973	9	cooperative	9	cooperative
New Jersey	County Superintendent of Schools	1906	21	regional SEA	21	regional SEA
New Jersey	Educational Improvement Center	1977	4	regional SEA	-	—

State	Title of Units	Year Initially Established	Status in 1979-80[3]		Status in 1989-90	
			Number of Units in Network	Designation	Number of Units in Network	Designation
New York[1]	Board of Cooperative Ed. Services	1948	44	special dist.	41	special dist.
North Carolina	Regional Education Center	1971	8	regional SEA	8	regional SEA
Ohio[2]	County Office of Education	1914	87	special dist.	88	special dist.
Ohio	Special Education Regional	1967	16	regional SEA	16	regional SEA
	Resource Center					
Ohio	Field Service Area Coordinator	1966	13	regional SEA	31	regional SEA
Oklahoma	Regional Education Service Center	1974	20	regional SEA	21	regional SEA
Oregon	Education Service District	1963	29	special dist.	29	special dist.
Pennsylvania	Intermediate Unit	1971	29	special dist.	29	special dist.
Texas	Regional Educational Svc. Center	1967	20	special dist.	20	special dist.
Washington	Educational Service District	1975	9	special dist.	9	special dist.
West Virginia	Regional Education Service Agency	1972	8	cooperative	8	special dist.
Wisconsin	Cooperative Education Svc. Agency	1965	19	special dist.	12	special dist.

[1] Not statewide in scope; however, at least three-fourths of LEAs are included in a service region.

[2] Statewide in scope, but city and exempted village school districts are excluded (slightly less than one-half of Ohio's 601 LEAs in 1989-90).

[3] Data for 1979-80 status drawn from: "*Education Service Agencies: Status and Trends*" (1979), ESA Study Series Report No. 1, Burtonsville, MD: Stephens Associates, pp. 31-32.

Characteristics of Effective Educational Services Agencies: A Study Using the Nominal Group Technique and Delphi Methodology.
Glen Shaw, Ph.D. Thesis (University of Minnesota), April 1993.

Using the nominal group technique eight board members or administrators of educational service agencies from different states identified and ranked a series of variables that make an effective ESA. Their top eight key effective characteristics are (in rank order):

- service-oriented
- high quality personnel
- cost-effective
- child-oriented
- support of local school districts
- programs jointly developed and assessed by ESA and local district(s)
- on cutting edge of research and development for educational programs
- vision, mission, goal-oriented

Local school districts are best able to assess ESAs.

The size of an ESA which is most conducive to effectiveness: less than 6,000 square miles; 30,000-69,999 students; and 25-49 school districts.