

Characteristics of State Educational Service Agencies

November 2011

Alicia N. Garcia, J.D.
Lisa Shimmel
Sara Wraight, J.D.



REL Midwest
1120 East Diehl Road, Suite 200
Naperville, IL 60563-1486
866-730-6735
<http://edlabs.ed.gov/RELmidwest/>

This publication was prepared for the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) under contract ED-06-CO-0019 by Regional Educational Laboratory Midwest, administered by Learning Point Associates, an affiliate of American Institutes for Research. The content of the publication does not necessarily reflect the views or policies of IES or the U.S. Department of Education nor does mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. government. This document is not verified as meeting IES standards and is not intended for public distribution.

1455_11/11

Contents

	Page
Introduction	1
Background: ESAs	1
Key Statutory Provisions	2
Governance Structure	4
Funding Sources	7
Geographic Distribution	9
Services Provided	11
Number of Districts Served	15
References	17
Websites for ESA Organizations in the Midwest Region	20
Additional Resources	21

Introduction

In response to requests from stakeholders throughout the Midwest region for information about educational service agencies (ESAs), REL Midwest produced this brief in order to identify and describe characteristics of ESAs in the Midwest. The brief examines the following ESA characteristics: key statutory provisions; governance structure; funding sources; geographic distribution; services provided; and number of districts served. It also includes a list of resources for further inquiry. The brief is intended to be descriptive in nature; it does not speak to the effectiveness of particular policies or practices.

This brief was informed to a large extent by a recent report by Great Lakes East and Great Lakes West Comprehensive Centers (Peters & Svedkauskaite, 2008). That report summarized characteristics of the ESA systems in Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, and Wisconsin based upon information reported by ESA leaders. Other information was obtained through searches of the state legislature websites, the state education agency websites, and the websites for state and national ESA organizations (see “Websites for ESA Organizations in the Midwest Region”).

Background: ESAs

ESAs play a role in education systems in the majority of states, including each of the seven states served by REL Midwest. The Association of Educational Service Agencies (AESAs) defines ESAs as “public entities created by state statute, to provide educational support programs and services to local schools and school districts within a given geographic area” (AESAs, n.d., p. 2).

ESAs have varying identifiers throughout the Midwest region:

- Illinois: Regional Offices of Education (ROEs) and Intermediate Service Centers (ISCs)¹
- Indiana: Educational Service Centers (ESCs)
- Iowa: Area Education Agencies (AEAs)
- Michigan: Intermediate School Districts (ISDs)²
- Minnesota: Regional Service Cooperatives
- Ohio: Educational Service Centers (ESCs)
- Wisconsin: Cooperative Education Service Agencies (CESAs)

¹ ISCs are a subset of ROE 14 and serve the Chicago area.

² Intermediate School Districts (ISDs) are also referred to as Regional Educational Service Agencies (RESAs) or Regional Education Service Districts (RESDs). For the purposes of this brief, they will be referred to as Intermediate School Districts throughout the remainder of this document.

Key Statutory Provisions

ESAs are established by state statute. Table 1 lists the key sections of formally adopted state policy establishing the ESAs in the Midwest region states. Particular sections of the statutes and regulations will be discussed in further detail in the sections on specific characteristics of the ESAs.

Table 1. Key Statutory Provisions Establishing ESAs in the Midwest Region States

State	Statute/Administrative Code Sections Establishing ESAs
Illinois	<p>Two sections of the Illinois School Code apply to ROEs, one addressing the Regional Superintendent of Schools (105 ILCS 5/3-0.01 et seq.) and the other addressing Educational Service Regions (105 ILCS 5/3A-1 et seq.). The section addressing the Regional Superintendent of Schools describes the eligibility requirements for an individual to become a Regional Superintendent and the process of being elected to the office. It also describes the services the Regional Superintendent must provide to districts in the region and the reporting requirements to the Illinois State Board of Education. The section addressing the Educational Service Regions describes the geographic distribution of the Educational Service Regions and the process of selecting an advisory board.</p> <p>The Illinois Administrative Code has a part devoted to ROEs and Intermediate Services (23 Ill. Admin. Code part 525). These regulations provide additional information and guidance regarding the structure of ROEs and ISCs and the services provided by these organizations.</p>
Indiana	<p>Indiana Code Section 20-20 addresses ESCs as a part of programs administered by the state. It describes the governance, funding and geographic distribution of these organizations. It also outlines the programs and services to be provided by Educational Service Centers.</p> <p>The Indiana Administrative Code also has a section devoted to ESCs (511 Ind. Admin. Code 4-4). This section describes the purpose of the ESCs and which districts are eligible to participate in each center. It also states that each center must submit an annual plan to the Indiana State Board of Education identifying the services and programs that the ESC plans to implement in the following year.</p>
Iowa	<p>The 2009 Iowa Merged Code and Supplement, Title VII, Subtitle 6, Chapter 273 establishes the codes governing AEAs. The code defines the power and responsibilities, the governing structure, the funding structure, the accreditation, and the creation and dissolution of AEAs. Chapter 256B establishes regulations related to special education and includes the AEAs, and Chapter 257 defines school aid funding and includes funding to AEAs.</p>
Michigan	<p>Michigan Revised School Code, Act 451 of 1976, Section 380 defines the purpose and powers of ISDs as well as outlines aspects of the ISDs, such as the following: the governing structure, reporting requirements, budget requirements, taxing authority, services an ISD may provide upon request, and the consolidating, annexing, or disbanding of ISDs.</p>

State	Statute/Administrative Code Sections Establishing ESAs
Minnesota	<p>In 2001, the Minnesota Service Agency was established through the Joint Exercise of Powers Act, Minnesota Statue 471.59, with the goal of creating the Minnesota Service Cooperatives. Section 123A.21 of the Minnesota Code is devoted to the Service Cooperatives. This section outlines the details of a Service Cooperative: geographical boundaries, governance, programs offered, and funding support.</p>
Ohio	<p>The Ohio Revised Code, Chapter 3311 establishes a definition for ESCs and addresses the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How multiple educational service centers may combine to become one center and how the new service center will be governed • How a governing board is selected • How school district territory may be annexed or transferred to a different service center • The creation of a county school financing district or other taxing districts • Other instances in which a service center may play a role such as the formation of a joint vocational school district <p>The Ohio Revised Code, Chapter 3312 establishes that ESCs will be a part of the education regional service system and also mandates that ESCs “shall implement state or federally funded initiatives assigned to the service centers by the general assembly or the department of education” (3312.01).</p>
Wisconsin	<p>The Wisconsin CESAs are established in the Wisconsin Statute Chapter 116. The statute covers the purpose, legal status, and governance structure of CESAs and the contracting of services, revision of boundaries, consolidation, and funding of the CESAs.</p>

Governance Structure

Governance structures for ESAs vary from state to state. Most ESAs are governed by a board of directors (Burford, 2010, citing AESA, 2009). The most common arrangements are those in which the ESA boards comprise local education agency (LEA) superintendents (22 states) or those in which the LEA boards elect the ESA boards (16 states). In five states, the ESA boards are elected through a public election.

Table 2 describes the governance structures for ESAs in the Midwest region states.

Table 2. Governance Structures for ESAs in the Midwest Region States

State	Governance Structures for ESAs
Illinois	<p>The leader of an ROE is a Regional Superintendent of Schools. The Regional Superintendent is an elected official serving four-year terms, which begin on July 1 after the election. To be eligible to be elected a Regional Superintendent, the individual must: be of good character; have a master’s degree, at least 20 hours of graduate education, a valid Illinois educational certificate (multiple options to fulfill requirement), and four years of teaching experience; and must have spent two of the last four years as a teacher, administrator, or a Regional Superintendent (105 ILCS 5/3-1). The Regional Superintendent may employ an Assistant Superintendent with approval from the County Board (105 ILCS 5/3-15.10). The Regional Superintendent has specific duties to oversee personnel carrying out services, provide information to the advisory board, oversee distribution of funding, oversee implementation of the Regional Improvement Plan, and provide requested information to the State Superintendent (23 Ill. Admin Code § 525.100).</p> <p>In addition, regions outside of Cook County have an advisory board, which is made up of nine members. Each member must have education certification in Illinois and be currently employed in a position requiring the certification. These individuals are nominated by statewide teacher and administrator organizations. The Regional Superintendent selects the members from those nominated (105 ILCS 5/3A-16; 23 Ill. Admin. Code § 525.10).</p>
Indiana	<p>Each ESC is governed by a local administrative board. As described in the Indiana statute (Ind. Code § 20-20-1-7), this board is selected by an assembly comprised of the Superintendents (Superintendents may send a designee if they choose) from each participating school corporation. Vacancies on the board are filled by appointment by the remaining members of the board (Ind. Code § 20-20-1-8). The board may employ an Executive Director for the ESC and any other personnel the board considers necessary to carry out the functions of the center (Ind. Code § 20-20-1-9). In addition, each board has an advisory council made up of teachers, elementary principals, secondary principals, members of the governing body of participating schools (i.e., school board members), and parents of students (Ind. Code § 20-20-1-10).</p>

State	Governance Structures for ESAs
Iowa	<p>The 2009 Iowa Merged Code and Supplement, Title VII, Subtitle 6, Chapter 273.3, 273.4, and 273.8 provides that AEAs are governed by a board of directors and that each agency has an administrator. Chapter 273.8 establishes that the boards will have a minimum of five members and a maximum of nine members. Members are elected for four-year terms by representatives of the local school boards in the AEA’s service area. Chapter 273.3 stipulates that the board is responsible for establishing policies and procedures, providing advisory committees as needed, producing reports for the department of education, preparing an annual budget, and meeting annually with local school district boards if requested. According to Chapter 273.4, the administrator is responsible for working with the local school district board and submitting program plans to the department of education. Chapters 273.10 and 273.11 also establish guidelines for the accreditation of AEAs and the procedures for AEAs that do not meet accreditation standards.</p>
Michigan	<p>Michigan Revised Code Section 380 provides that ISDs are governed by boards of education. The statute provides that board members may be elected in local elections and allows for boards of five to seven members (380.611). Elections are held every two years (380.614). Only three board members may also serve as members of boards for school districts served by the ISD (380.612). Boards are required to hold an annual meeting, and ISDs must produce an annual report that is publicly available (380. 613, 380.620). In addition, boards must submit an annual budget to the county clerk offices for the counties in which the ISDs provide services (380.624). A superintendent acts as “the executive officer of the intermediate school board” and has specific duties such as ensuring state and board policies are implemented, making written recommendations for employees, and auditing school district records if required (380.653).</p>
Minnesota	<p>Section 123A.21 of the Minnesota Code provides for the governance structures for the Regional Service Cooperatives. Each Service Cooperative is governed by a Board of Directors, which is made up of 6 to 15 members. A majority of the members shall be school board members of participating school districts. These members shall be elected by all current school board members of the participating districts. The remaining members of the Board of Directors may be appointed by the board or elected by other participating agencies (cities, counties, etc.). The Board of Directors shall select its officers: chair, vice-chair, clerk, and treasurer. No two officers may be from the same participating agency. In addition, the board may employ a central administrative staff and other necessary personnel for the operations of the Service Cooperative. The board is responsible for submitting an annual plan and evaluation report and has various duties such as entering into contracts and appointing advisory committees.</p>

State	Governance Structures for ESAs
Ohio	<p>In 2006, HB 211 created the Educational Region Service System (ERSS), in which Ohio was divided into 16 service regions. These regions are composed of a regional alliance advisory board, regional advisory councils and subcommittees, fiscal agents, and the regional service providers, including the ESCs. The ERSS was formalized in Ohio Revised Code Chapter 3312. According to Ohio Revised Code Chapter 3312, the ERSS must also have regional advisory councils that have representatives from the ESCs, the local school districts, the SERRC, the ITC, higher education institutions, and a fiscal agent in the region. These councils are responsible for identifying needs in the region, establishing policies for coordinating services, providing recommendations for expenditures, ensuring the implementation of initiatives, and creating an evaluation system for the council. The councils must establish school improvement, education technology, professional development, special education, and information technology center subcommittees.</p> <p>In addition, pursuant to Ohio Revised Code 3311.056, the individual ESCs are governed by a board that is locally elected and can consist of five to nine board members. The ESC board is permitted to have some positions that are appointed by the elected board members.</p>
Wisconsin	<p>Wisconsin Statute 116.02 establishes the governance structure for the CESAs. Each CESA is governed by a board that is elected by delegates from the school boards of the districts served by the agency. For each CESA, an annual meeting is held in which the delegates vote on the members of this “board of control.” The annual meeting also provides the opportunity for the delegate members to establish the bylaws for the agency. The board of control for each agency appoints an agency administrator. The board of control is responsible for authorizing expenditures, establishing policies for the agency, determining the local share of the funding, and determining salaries for employees among other duties deemed necessary (Wisconsin Statute 116.03). The board also appoints the agency administrator (Wisconsin Statute 116.04). Wisconsin Statute 116.05 also requires that each agency form a professional advisory committee with the administrator from each school district in the service area serving on the committee, and it allows for the creation of additional advisory committees if needed.</p>

Funding Sources

Like schools and districts, ESAs may be funded by a combination of federal, state, and local sources. With regard to local funding, districts may be required to “buy in” to the ESA. Depending on the particular program, the ESA may charge constituents for particular supports or resources.

For additional details about funding sources for Midwest ESAs, see Peters and Svedkauskaite (2008). The study report includes information regarding the percentage of funding ESAs receive from local, state, federal, and other sources based on surveys of ESA representatives.

Table 3 describes the funding sources for ESAs in the Midwest region states. Information about funding sources was obtained from state statute and administrative code.

Table 3. Funding Sources for ESAs in the Midwest Region States

State	Funding Sources for ESAs
Illinois	<p>The ROEs apply to the Illinois State Board of Education for funds. In this application, the ROEs outline the specific programs they plan to implement in the coming year. The application must include a detailed budget (23 Ill. Admin. Code §525.130). The State Superintendent then allocates funds to each ROE based on the following criteria: “a) the total appropriation of state funds identified with a particular program; b) the amount of federal grant funds applicable to particular programs to be provided through the Regional Office of Education or Chicago Intermediate Service Center for programs and services to be provided pursuant to Section 525.110 of this Part; c) the level of each Regional Office of Education’s or Chicago Intermediate Service Center’s need for support, including levels of expenditure and experience from prior years, as evidenced in its annual application to the State Board of Education; and d) the need to assure the delivery of services on a statewide basis”(23Ill. Admin. Code § 525.150).</p> <p>Each Regional Superintendent’s salary is dictated by statute and paid from the Common School Fund. However, the appropriate County Board may choose to supplement the Regional Superintendent’s salary with county funds (105 ILCS 5/3-2.5).</p>
Indiana	<p>Indiana statute provides that ESCs may solicit and rely on donated funds, federal funds and other local funds. All funds from federal sources must follow all applicable federal rules and guidelines (Ind. Code § 20-20-1-11).</p> <p>In addition, the administrative code permits Educational Service Centers to bill for services rendered. All board-approved ESCs are eligible to receive funds appropriated by the Indiana General Assembly. Each ESC determines its funding sources; therefore, not all ESCs require members to pay a membership fee. However, members may be billed for specific services rendered (511 Ind. Admin. Code § 4-4-7).</p>

State	Funding Sources for ESAs
Iowa	According to the 2009 Iowa Merged Code and Supplement, Title VII, Subtitle 6, Chapter 273.9, the AEAs are to be paid by the local school districts they serve. For special education services, Chapters 256B.9 and 257 establish the formula for funding for the provider of these services, which includes AEAs. Special education service and media center service funds may not be paid until the administrator has submitted the program plans and said plans are approved by the director of the Department of Education.
Michigan	The Michigan Revised School Code Section 380 establishes that ISDs have the power to levy taxes for the purposes of supporting special education, vocational education, and other general operating expenses and may borrow or issue bonds by majority vote. ISDs may also charge fees and contract with districts and schools to provide services.
Minnesota	Section 123.21 of the Minnesota Code provides that financial support for the Service Cooperative will be provided by participating members. The Service Cooperative may also use private, state, and federal funds to supplement the financial support as available. The board of directors may assess a share of the Service Cooperative’s expenses to each participating member. This assessment will be proportionate to the level of participation by the entity.
Ohio	Ohio Revised Code Title 33 establishes the methods by which ESCs may be funded. Chapter 3317 provides the formulas that are used to determine the amount of funding ESCs receive from the state as well as the amount of money deducted from and transferred to the ESCs from the payments provided to school districts that receive services from them. Chapter 3313.844 allows that ESCs may enter into contracts with community schools to provide services for fees. Chapter 3312.13 mandates that the department of education will consider regional needs when allocating funds to the fiscal agent for each ERSS region for statewide initiatives. ESCs are not able to generate funds through taxes and “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” (OESCA, 2011).
Wisconsin	Wisconsin Statute Chapter 116 establishes a variety of funding mechanisms for the CESAs, including the ability to apply for loans. The state will provide up to \$25,000 in aid to an agency, and districts served by the agency must provide funds based on a formula using the amount of state aid and average daily membership. In addition to this, CESAs may apply for state and federal grants and can contract with districts and schools for services (116.08 & 116.09). The agencies do not have taxing authority.

Geographic Distribution

ESA services typically cover a specified geographic area comprised of a particular group of districts or counties. In some cases, the ESAs are grouped together into larger regions. For example, Ohio is divided into 16 regions as part of the Educational Resource Regional System (ERRS), which was established to provide for the more efficient provision of services. Each ERRS region has multiple Education Service Centers as well as a regional advisory board, regional advisory councils and subcommittees, a fiscal agent, and other regional service providers (OESCA, 2008).

Table 4 describes the geographic distribution of ESAs in the Midwest region states. A map of the ESA system is referenced for each of the states.

Table 4. Geographic Distribution of ESAs in the Midwest Region States

State	Geographic Distribution of ESAs
Illinois	<p>Illinois has 48 ROEs. These offices are distributed by regions, which are generally defined by counties. In most cases, each county has its own ROE. However, some ROEs serve multiple small counties. Illinois law allows for the voluntary consolidation of counties and demands mandatory consolidation if a region has fewer than 43,000 residents (105 ILCS 5/3A-4). Recently, ROE 14 was dissolved and converted to regions 5, 6, 7, 15, 19, and 31. The former duties of ROE 14 are now provided by ISCs 1, 2, and 4.</p> <p>A map of Illinois’s ROE system can be found here: http://www.iarss.org/directory/state-map.html (Illinois Association Regional Superintendents of Schools, 2002a).</p> <p>The state also has 10 state-funded regional service providers—RESPROS. These providers operate in designated geographical areas to provide technical assistance to districts in need of improvement (Peters & Svedkauskaite, 2008).</p>
Indiana	<p>Indiana has nine geographic regions for ESCs. The geographic boundaries are determined by considering the following factors: physical, socioeconomic, educational, and existing cooperative efforts and agreements (Ind. Code §20-20-1-4). According to Indiana Administrative Code, the 9 ESCs are established as membership units, and counties are assigned to one of the ESCs (511 Ind. Admin. Code § 4-4-2).</p> <p>A map of Indiana’s ESC system can be found here: http://www.doe.in.gov/htmls/esc.html (Indiana Department of Education, n.d.).</p>
Iowa	<p>Iowa has nine regions for the AEAs. The regions are composed on contiguous areas and contain multiple counties but do not necessarily follow county boundaries. Iowa law allows for AEAs to reorganize or dissolve (Iowa Merged Code, Title VII, Subtitle 6, Chapter 273.21 and 273.24).</p> <p>A map of the Iowa AEAs can be found here: http://www.iowaaea.org/files/_WCLrA_/e6fc3d76e3eafb5f3745a49013852ec4/aeamap.pdf (Iowa Area Education Agencies, n.d.).</p>

State	Geographic Distribution of ESAs
Michigan	<p>Michigan ISDs are distributed into 57 regions throughout the state, and each region consists of multiple school districts. ISDs are required to publish updated boundary maps every two years if their boundaries have changed (Michigan Revised School Code 380.626).</p> <p>A map of the ISD system can be found here: http://www.michigan.gov/cgi/0,4548,7-158-52927_53037_12540_13084-29765--,00.html (Michigan.gov, 2004).</p>
Minnesota	<p>Although Minnesota law allows for 10 Service Cooperatives, some consolidations have occurred, and the total number is now 9. Minnesota Code Section 462.385 specifies the development regions for the state and follows boundaries outlined by an order from the governor.</p> <p>A map of the Service Cooperative system can be found here: http://www.mnservcoop.org/map.htm (Minnesota Service Cooperatives, 2011).</p>
Ohio	<p>Fifty-six ESCs are part of the 16 Educational Regional Service System regions. In most cases, the ESC serves one county or a multiple county area that is contiguous; however, if ESCs have been annexed, Ohio law provides that an ESC's territory may be noncontiguous (Ohio Revised Code, 3311.06).</p> <p>A map of the ESC system may be found here: http://www.oesca.org/pages/uploaded_files/ESC%20Region%20Map%20and%20Representatives%202009-2010.pdf (OESCA, n.d.).</p>
Wisconsin	<p>The CESAs are divided into 12 regional areas, and each CESA serves a varying number of districts, staff, and students within in their territory. According to the Wisconsin Association of CESA Administrators (n.d.), the number of staff at each CESA also varies.</p> <p>A map of the CESA system may be found here: http://dpi.state.wi.us/lbstat/newmap2.html (Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2008).</p>

Services Provided

As previously explained, ESAs may provide several types of services to students, schools, and districts in the state. Common supports include professional development, school and district improvement planning, cooperative purchasing, and shared administrative services. More recently, ESAs have moved into new areas of support in response to changing needs. For example, some ESAs provide technology and infrastructure resources in connection with online coursework. Others have implemented alternative certification programs for teachers (Williams & Alsop, 2008).

Table 5 describes the services provided by ESAs pursuant to state statutes and regulations as well as materials published by the ESA organizations. Where the survey by Peters and Svedkauskaite (2008) provided additional detail of services provided, that information was included.

Table 5. Services Provided by ESAs in the Midwest Region States

State	Services Provided by ESAs
Illinois	Pursuant to Illinois law, ROEs “may arrange for or conduct district, regional, or county institutes, or equivalent professional educational experiences” (105 ILCS 5/3-11). The ROEs are mandated to provide computer technology education, staff development in fundamental learning areas, professional development for administrators through the Illinois Administrators’ Academy, and a directory of consultants (23Ill. Admin. Code § 525.110). The Illinois Association of Regional School Superintendents divides the duties of ROEs into five different categories: Education Administration; Cooperation Management; Financial; Health and Life Safety; and Public Relations (Illinois Association of Regional Superintendents of Schools, 2002b). The duties highlighted in these sections include teacher institute and in-service days, transportation programs, general equivalency diploma (GED) programs, professional growth, compliance in evaluation and recognition of schools, assistance with cooperatives (e.g., special education cooperatives), audits, budget reviews, and the disbursement of funds for the districts served by the ROE. In addition, the ROEs provide alternative education, assistance with curriculum development and alignment, school improvement, and assessment and accountability (Peters & Svedkauskaite, 2008).
Indiana	Indiana Educational Service Centers provide the following programs and services: curriculum development, pupil personnel and special education services (defined in the Indiana Administrative Code section), in-service education, state and federal liaison services, instructional materials and multimedia services, services for career and technical education, assistance with financial planning and management, needs assessment services, assistance with computer use, and research and development services (Ind. Code § 20-20-1-2). The Educational Service Centers also engage in evaluation and accountability practices for school improvement (Peters & Svedkauskaite, 2008).

State	Services Provided by ESAs
Iowa	<p>Iowa law specifies the services that AEAs must provide. The Iowa Merged Code and Supplement, Title VII, Subtitle 6, Chapter 273.5 provides that the AEAs must have a division that provides the special education services to local school districts and that there must be a director of special education who ensures that state and federal requirements are addressed. Chapter 273.6 establishes the services that the media centers are required to provide such as a lending library, a professional library, and a curriculum laboratory. AEAs may provide additional services if local school boards request the service and the boards represent 60 percent of the population served by the AEA (Chapter 273.7). An AEA may also contract with local school districts to provide services such as personnel services, business management services, specialized maintenance services, and transportation services (Chapter 273.7A).</p>
Michigan	<p>Services provided by the ISDs vary based on the local needs and resources of the regions that they serve. The ISDs provide services in seven main areas, including teaching and learning, specialized student services, early childhood, administrative services, partnership development, technology services, and customized services (Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators [MAISA], 2006). More specifically, some of these services include assisting schools with meeting new state or federal requirement, providing professional development, providing information about best practices, providing career technical education, providing alternative education, providing parent education, conducting pupil audits, and providing distance learning opportunities (MAISA, 2006).</p> <p>Section 380.601a of the Revised School Code establishes that ISDs have the power to do the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educate students from preschool to adulthood • Provide for the safety and welfare of pupils • Administer property, facilities, equipment, and technology • Hire, contract for, schedule, supervise, or terminate employees • Manage ISD money from local, regional, state, or federal sources • Enter into cooperative arrangements with other entities • Serve as a fiscal agent or administrative entity

State	Services Provided by ESAs
Minnesota	<p>The Minnesota Service Cooperatives Organization (2011) outlines the services to be provided by the Service Cooperatives as follows: professional development, cooperative purchasing, insurance programs, academic enrichment programs, and technology services. The statute provides a more detailed list: “(1) administrative services; (2) curriculum development; (3) data processing; (4) distance learning and other telecommunication services; (5) evaluation and research; (6) staff development; (7) media and technology centers; (8) publication and dissemination of materials; (9) pupil personnel services; (10) planning; (11) secondary, postsecondary, community, adult, and adult vocational education; (12) teaching and learning services, including services for students with special talents and special needs; (13) employee personnel services; (14) vocational rehabilitation; (15) health, diagnostic, and child development services and centers; (16) leadership or direction in early childhood and family education; (17) community services; (18) shared time programs; (19) fiscal services and risk management programs, including health insurance programs providing reinsurance or stop loss coverage; (20) technology planning, training, and support services; (21) health and safety services; (22) student academic challenges; and (23) cooperative purchasing services” (Minn. Code § 123A.21). The statute also provides that, if possible, Service Cooperatives “make technical assistance for long-range planning available to school districts upon request and shall establish a common database for local and regional decision making” (Minn. Code § 123A.21).</p> <p>According to Section 123A.21 of the Minnesota Code, each cooperative must submit an annual plan to its members identifying the programs and services suggested for implementation during the following year. The annual plan should also contain components of a long-range plan for the participants as determined by the Service Cooperative.</p>
Ohio	<p>The ESCs are required to provide certain services through the Ohio Revised Code and any additional services that are mandated by federal or state initiatives; they can also provide additional contracted services in the areas of improving student performance, improving operations, providing professional development, and recruiting and retaining staff (Ohio Revised Code 3312.01).</p> <p>Mandatory services include activities such as the following: serving on a joint vocational education board, providing services for children with disabilities, and providing supervision to districts within the center’s territory (Burford, 2010). The Education Service Centers provide services in six general areas, including the following: special education, student programs, cooperative endeavors, professional development, federal and state regulations, and community partnerships (Burford, 2010). More specifically, the ESCs provide services such as school psychologists, occupational and physical therapy, gifted and talented programs, alternative schools, insurance consortia, curriculum and assessments, and background checks (Burford, 2010).</p>

State	Services Provided by ESAs
Wisconsin	<p data-bbox="358 262 1404 493">Wisconsin law provides that CESAs are “designed to serve the educational needs in all areas of Wisconsin by serving as a link both between school districts and between school districts and the state. [CESAs] may provide leadership, coordination and education services to school districts, University of Wisconsin System institutions and technical colleges. [CESAs] may facilitate communication and cooperation among all public and private schools, agencies and organizations that provide services to pupils (Wisconsin Statute 116.01).</p> <p data-bbox="358 541 1429 735">The services provided by the CESAs vary by region, but some common service areas are instruction, technology, special education, alternative or vocational education, student programs, and professional development. A survey of CESAs conducted by Parker and Svedkauskaitė (2008) found that CESAs self-report, providing services such as cooperative purchasing programs, teacher licensing, lending libraries, alternative schools, distance education and e-learning, and grant writing.</p>

Number of Districts Served

For the most part, ESAs serve the schools and districts in their geographic region. As described in connection with the section on funding sources, districts may have the option to either buy in to services or to choose not to be served by the ESA.

In some cases, the ESA may provide programming and supports that extend beyond the geographic borders of the ESA region. Some of the ESAs may provide support or expertise in connection to a particular content area to outside schools or districts (or other ESAs). This can happen through informal or formal arrangements.

Table 6 describes the number of districts served by Midwest region ESAs. In cases where policies governing a district’s ability to opt in or out of services were found, those policies are listed in Table 6 as well.

Table 6. Number of Districts Served by ESAs in the Midwest Region States

State	Districts Served by ESAs
Illinois	The Regional Offices of Education serve all districts in the state. According to the 2009 Illinois State Report Card, there are a total of 868 districts in Illinois (Illinois State Board of Education, 2011). The schools come under a Regional Office’s jurisdiction through mere geography. The school may not choose their agency, nor do they have to buy into the agency to use its services. 105 ILCS 5/3A-1.
Indiana	School districts are not required to participate in an ESC. They may voluntarily cooperate with a center pursuant to a resolution passed by the district’s governing body, the school board (511 Ind. Admin. Code § 4-4-4). However, ESCs are currently serving 304 school districts (Peters and Svedkauskaite, 2008). When an Indiana school district chooses to use an ESC, it is encouraged, but not required, to use the center serving the district’s geographic region. However, a district may not participate in more than one Educational Service Center at one time (511 Ind. Admin. Code § 4-4-4).
Iowa	According to the Iowa Department of Education (2010), there were 361 school districts in the 2009–10 school year. The student enrollment in the AEA regions varies greatly, from 30,326 in the Loess Hills AEA to 132,225 in the Heartland AEA (Iowa Department of Education, 2010).
Michigan	According to a survey of ISDs conducted by Peters and Svedkauskaite (2008), Michigan ISDs serve 554 districts, 5,450 schools, 99, 662 teachers, and 1,823,433 students. Local school districts do have the option to elect not to participate in vocational education services provide by their regional ISD if the district provides this service (Michigan Revised School Code 380.690).

State	Districts Served by ESAs
Minnesota	<p>Services are provided to public and nonpublic schools serving 825,000 students. Also, services are provided to 155 municipalities, 46 counties, and 89 other governmental and nonprofit entities (Sullivan, 2003).</p> <p>According to Section 123A.21 of the Minnesota Code, districts may belong to one or more Service Cooperatives, and participation is discretionary. Furthermore, districts may be required to pay to participate in the Service Cooperative. The board of directors may assess a fee to each participating entity. The fee will be proportionate to the entity's participation in the Service Cooperative.</p>
Ohio	<p>In the 2007–08 school year, approximately 583 school districts received services from the ESCs (OESCA, 2009).</p> <p>According to Ohio Revised Code 3312.01, districts and schools are not mandated to pay for services from their local Education Service Center, but they are required to receive services that have been mandated by the Revised Code. In addition, districts and schools have the flexibility to contract with and pay for services from Education Service Centers that are not their local provider (Ohio Revised Code 3313.843, 3313.844, 3313.845).</p>
Wisconsin	<p>The number of school districts, staff, and students that an individual CESA serves depends on the region in which it is located. According the Wisconsin Association of CESA Administrators, CESA 2 serves 75 school districts compared with CESA 12, which only serves 18. The highest number of students is served by CESA 1, with CESA 12 serving the fewest (Wisconsin Association of CESA Administrators, n.d.). The survey of CESAs conducted by Parker and Svedkauskaite (2008) found that, in total, the 12 CESAs serve 427 school districts, 3,188 schools, 74,319 teachers, and 951,962 Grades K–12 students.</p> <p>School districts served by their regional CESA must pay the agency based on the amount of state aid the agency has received and their average daily membership. However, Wisconsin Statue 116.065 allows school districts to withdraw from an agency and therefore no longer owe dues to the agency. If a district withdraws from an agency, it has the option to join a different agency but it is not required to do so.</p>

References

- Association of Educational Service Agencies (AESA). (n.d.). *Questions asked about educational service agencies*. Arlington, VA: Author. Retrieved November 30, 2011, from <http://www.aesa.us/Q&ABro04.pdf>
- Burford, C. (2010). *Ohio's educational service centers: An overview* [Presentation]. Columbus: Ohio Educational Service Center Association. Retrieved November 30, 2011, from <http://education.ohio.gov/GD/DocumentManagement/DocumentDownload.aspx?DocumentID=84191>
- 23 Illinois Administrative Code part 525. Retrieved November 30, 2011, from <http://www.ilga.gov/commission/jcar/admincode/023/02300525sections.html>
- 105 Illinois Compiled Statutes Act 5 Article 3. Retrieved November 30, 2011, from <http://www.ilga.gov/legislation/ilcs/ilcs4.asp?DocName=010500050HArt%2E+3&ActID=1005&ChapAct=105%26nbsp%3BILCS%26nbsp%3B5%2F&ChapterID=17&ChapterName=SCHOOLS&SectionID=48753&SeqStart=31100000&SeqEnd=37700000&ActName=School%2BCode%2E>
- 105 Illinois Compiled Statutes Act 5 Article 3A. Retrieved November 30, 2011, from <http://www.ilga.gov/legislation/ilcs/ilcs4.asp?DocName=010500050HArt%2E+3A&ActID=1005&ChapAct=105%26nbsp%3BILCS%26nbsp%3B5%2F&ChapterID=17&ChapterName=SCHOOLS&SectionID=48786&SeqStart=37700000&SeqEnd=39400000&ActName=School+Code%2E>
- Illinois Association Regional Superintendents of Schools. (2002a). *Directory of regional superintendents—By state map*. Sterling: Author. Retrieved November 30, 2011, from <http://www.iarss.org/directory/state-map.html>
- Illinois Association of Regional Superintendents of Schools (2002b). *Responsibilities of the regional superintendent* [Website]. Sterling: Author. Retrieved November 30, 2011, from <http://www.iarss.org/responsibilities.html>
- Illinois State Board of Education. (2011). *Illinois state report card*. Retrieved November 30, 2011, from http://www.isbe.net/assessment/pdfs/report_card/rc_11.pdf
- 511 Indiana Administrative Code Article 4. Retrieved November 30, 2011, from <http://www.in.gov/legislative/iac/T05110/A00040.PDF>
- Indiana Code Section 20-20. Retrieved November 30, 2011, from <http://www.in.gov/legislative/ic/code/title20/ar20/ch1.html>
- Indiana Department of Education. (n.d.). *Education service centers*. Indianapolis: Author. Retrieved November 30, 2011, from <http://www.doe.in.gov/htmls/esc.html>

- Iowa Area Education Agencies. (n.d.). *Iowa area education agencies*. Des Moines: Author. Retrieved November 30, 2011, from http://www.iowaaea.org/files/_WCLrA_/e6fc3d76e3eafb5f3745a49013852ec4/aeamap.pdf
- Iowa Department of Education. (2010). *The annual condition of education report*. Des Moines: Author. Retrieved November 30, 2011, from http://educateiowa.gov/index.php?option=com_docman&task=cat_view&gid=646&Itemid=4303
- Iowa Merged Code and Supplement, Title VII, Subtitle 6, Chapter 273. Retrieved November 30, 2011, from <http://search.legis.state.ia.us/nxt/gateway.dll/ic/2009codesupp/1?f=templates&fn=default.htm>
- Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators (MAISA). (2006). *Michigan MDE and ISD/RESA partnership*. Lansing: Author. Retrieved November 30, 2011, from <http://www.michiganedusource.org/Intermediate/MAISA/Matrix2006.doc>
- Michigan Revised School Code (Act 451 of 1976). Retrieved November 30, 2011, from [https://legislature.mi.gov/\(S\(qxo55g45sr0xqwakwoz5ykuq\)\)/printDocument.aspx?objectName=mcl-Act-451-of-1976&version=txt](https://legislature.mi.gov/(S(qxo55g45sr0xqwakwoz5ykuq))/printDocument.aspx?objectName=mcl-Act-451-of-1976&version=txt)
- Michigan.gov. (2004). *Individual intermediate school district maps*. Retrieved November 30, 2011, from http://www.michigan.gov/cgi/0,4548,7-158-52927_53037_12540_13084-29765--,00.html
- Minnesota Service Cooperatives. (2011). *Map* [Website]. Retrieved November 30, 2011, from <http://www.mnservcoop.org/map.htm>
- Minnesota Service Cooperatives. (2011). *Programs* [Website]. Retrieved November 30, 2011, from <http://www.mnservcoop.org/ProgramHighlights.htm>
- 2011 Minnesota Statutes 123A.21. Retrieved November 30, 2011, from <https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/?id=123A.21>
- Ohio Educational Service Center Association (OESCA). (n.d.). *Ohio ESC region map*. Columbus: Author. Retrieved November 30, 2011, from http://www.oesca.org/pages/uploaded_files/ESC%20Region%20Map%20and%20Representatives%202009-2010.pdf
- Ohio Educational Service Center Association (OESCA). (2008). *The Ohio educational regional service system: A reference guide*. Columbus: Author. Retrieved November 30, 2011, from http://www.oesca.org/pages/uploaded_files/ERSS%20Explained_A%20Reference%20Guide%20110608.pdf
- Ohio Educational Service Center Association (OESCA). (2009). *Ohio's educational service centers: Making a difference*. Columbus: Author. Retrieved November 30, 2011, from http://www.aesa.us/ESA_State_Reports/Ohio2009_Brochure.pdf

- Ohio Educational Service Center Association (OESCA). (2011). *About OESCA*. Retrieved November 30, 2011, from <http://www.oesca.org/vnews/display.v/ART/47bb7a71896f5>
- Ohio Revised Code, Chapter 3311. Retrieved November 30, 2011, from <http://codes.ohio.gov/orc/3311>
- Ohio Revised Code, Chapter 3312. Retrieved November 30, 2011, from <http://codes.ohio.gov/orc/3312>
- Peters, R. E., & Svedkauskaite, A. (2008). *A network for educational change in the Great Lakes region: A view through the lens of educational service agencies*. Naperville, IL: Great Lakes East and Great Lakes West Regional Comprehensive Centers at Learning Point Associates. Retrieved November 30, 2011, from <http://www.learningpt.org/pdfs/GreatLakesESAreport.pdf>
- Williams, J. M., & Alsop, R. J. (2008). *The role of educational service agencies in supporting alternative teacher certification*. Arlington, VA: Association of Educational Service Agencies. Retrieved November 30, 2011, from <http://www.aesa.us/Research/Alternative%20Certification%20Phase%20II.pdf>
- Wisconsin Association of CESA Administrators. (n.d.). *Questions and answers* [Website]. Retrieved November 30, 2011, from <http://www.cesawi.org/qa.cfm>
- Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. (2008). *Wisconsin CESA districts*. Madison: Author. Retrieved November 30, 2011, from <http://dpi.state.wi.us/lbstat/newmap2.html>
- Wisconsin Statutes Chapter 116. Retrieved November 30, 2011, from <http://www.legis.state.wi.us/statutes/stat0116.pdf>

Websites for ESA Organizations in the Midwest Region

Association of Educational Service Agencies

<http://www.aesa.us/index.cfm>

Illinois Association of Regional Superintendents of Schools

<http://www.iarss.org/>

Iowa Area Education Agencies

<http://www.iowaea.org/>

Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators

<http://www.gomaisa.org/>

Ohio Educational Service Center Association

<http://www.oesca.org/>

Wisconsin's Cooperative Educational Service Agencies

<http://www.cesawi.org/index.cfm>

Additional Resources³

- Arkansas Bureau of Legislative Research. (2006). *Comparison of Arkansas Education Service Cooperative Network to three other state networks*. Little Rock: Author. Retrieved November 30, 2011, from <http://www.arkleg.state.ar.us/bureau/research/Publications/Education%20Issues/Comparison%20of%20State%20Education%20Service%20Networks.pdf>
- Association of Educational Service Agencies. (2010). *Improving American education through educational service agencies*. Arlington, VA: Author. Retrieved November 30, 2011, from http://www.aesa.us/Research/AESA_White_Paper_1_2010.pdf
- Halberg, K., Drill, K., Brown-Simms, M., Svedkauskaite, A., & Akerstrom, J. (2009). *Educational service agency accountability and accreditation: Is a national system needed?* Arlington, VA: Association of Educational Service Agencies. Retrieved November 30, 2011, from http://www.aesa.us/Research/ESA_Accountability_and_Accreditation.pdf
- Michigan Edu Source. (2006). *The integral role of Intermediate School Districts (ISDs) in delivering quality and equitable education in Michigan*. Lansing: Author. Retrieved November 30, 2011, from <http://www.michiganedusource.org/Intermediate/ISDs/ISDsRESAsDefined.doc>
- Office of Performance Evaluations: Idaho Legislature. (2009). *Feasibility of school district services consolidation: Evaluation report*. Retrieved November 30, 2011, from <http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/ope/publications/reports/r0904.pdf>
- Public Policy Associates. (2009). *History and analysis of Section 81 funding: Final report*. Lansing, MI: Author. Retrieved November 30, 2011, from <http://www.michiganedusource.org/MAISA/Section81FinalReport.pdf>
- Public Sector Consultants. (2010). *The role of consolidation of school-based services in Michigan's fiscal crisis*. Lansing, MI: Author. Retrieved November 30, 2011, from http://www.michiganedusource.org/Intermediate/ISDs/InghamISD_ConsolidationReport.pdf

³ Resources were located by searching the state education agency websites and the websites for state and national ESA organizations. The search did not focus on evidence of effectiveness of particular programs or practices. Any evaluative reports included are for information only as these reports were not reviewed for rigor or quality of evidence.

RESA Task Force. (2006). *A comprehensive study of the programs, governance, and administration of Regional Education Services Agencies (RESAs)*. Charleston: West Virginia Department of Education. Retrieved November 30, 2011, from <http://wvde.state.wv.us/hstw/documents/FinalRESAReport.pdf>

Stanley, M. C. (2005). *Massachusetts collaboratives: Making the most of education dollars*. Boston: Pioneer Institute for Public Policy Research. Retrieved November 30, 2011, from <http://www.pioneerinstitute.org/pdf/wp23.pdf>

Talbott, B. (2009). *AESA survey on back office services*. Arlington, VA: Association of Educational Service Agencies. Retrieved November 30, 2011, from http://www.aesa.us/Research/back_office_services.html