

Cooperative Purchasing

Data and Networking

Driver Education

Gifford Farm

Media Center

Professional Development

Student Services



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# ESU<sup>3</sup>

EDUCATIONAL SERVICE UNIT #3

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ANNUAL REPORT  
2013 - 2014

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## MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of ESU #3 is to ensure a continuum of innovative and cooperative services that advance the efficiency, effectiveness, and excellence of its member school districts.

## 2013-2014 BOARD OF EDUCATION

Ron E. Pearson, President • James Stock, Vice President  
Dennis Wilkins, Secretary  
Barbara Coleman  
Stuart Dornan  
Alan Moore  
Mary Scarborough  
Phillip Wright

*ESU #3 Board Members are elected to a four-year term. Each Board Member represents two or more of the 18 school districts within ESU #3.*

## ESU #3 ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

Dr. Dan J. Schnoes, Chief Administrator  
Bill Menousek, Interim Director • Professional Development and Media  
Susan Forslund, Director • Data & Networking Systems  
Dr. Greg Gaden, Director • Student Services  
Jan Glenn, Director • Business Services  
Nancy Williams, Director • Gifford Farm  
Dave Curtis, Director • Buildings & Grounds



## ESU #3 AND NEBRASKA EDUCATIONAL SERVICE UNITS

ESU #3 is the largest Educational Service Unit in the state of Nebraska, serving eighteen (18) school districts, with over 73,000 students and over 4900 staff. ESU #3 has been located at 6949 South 110th Street in La Vista, NE, for the past 20 years.

In 1965, the Nebraska Legislature created Educational Service Units (ESUs) as intermediate public educational agencies, between public school districts and the Nebraska Department of Education, in order to provide supplementary educational services to school districts at costs lower than school districts could provide on their own. There are seventeen (17) ESUs across the state serving all public school districts in Nebraska.

In 2008, the Nebraska Legislature created the ESU Coordinating Council, which brings together all 17 ESUs in a statewide coordinative effort to provide cost effective services for the students, teachers, and school districts in each ESU. The council's duties are: 1) Prepare strategic plans to assure cost efficient and equitable services across the state, 2) Administer statewide initiatives and services, and 3) Coordinate distance education. Each ESU Chief Administrator is a voting member of the ESU Coordinating Council.

The Nebraska Legislature prioritized educational supplementary services as "Core Services". Core Services are defined by law with the following service areas: (i) **staff development**, which shall include access to staff development related to **improving the achievement of students** in poverty and students with diverse backgrounds; (ii) **technology**, including distance education services; and (iii) **instructional materials services**.

The ESU #3 Annual Report explains our commitment to provide Core Services to our eighteen (18) school districts in the metropolitan four-county area in an effective and cost efficient manner for the benefit of school districts and taxpayers. Patrons not in the field of public education often ask us, "What exactly does ESU #3 do?" Let's look at an example of what we do and why.

One of the core services that save school districts significant dollars can be found in the area of technology, specifically the contract for Internet Computer Services to our school districts. Each of our school districts could contract individually for Internet Services based upon their bandwidth needs but it would not be cost efficient.



Instead of having eighteen (18) school districts with eighteen (18) separate contracts, ESU #3 contracts for the needs of all schools into one purchase when purchasing bandwidth in a “bulk” rate which reduces costs for everyone and provides efficiencies.

In addition to the purchase, ESU #3 staff monitors and supports the Internet system relieving our school districts from having their own staff performing the same functions or hiring staff for this function.

This is just one in many examples of how ESU #3 operates in a cost efficient manner to perform services and reduce costs to school districts because of our cooperative manner. Share services equate to cost savings for all involved. This is just one of the great benefits of ESU #3.

Other services, beyond Core Services, are also provided based upon school district specific requests. Payroll and Accounting Services for districts is not required by Nebraska statutes, but is another service ESU #3 provides to our schools so school districts do not have to purchase their own computer hardware and software for these necessary functions.

The 18 Superintendents come together to form an advisory group, which reviews, recommends, and supports the services offered by ESU #3. The expenditures of property taxes and state Core Service funds for cooperative services must be approved by 2/3rds of our school districts representing 50% of our over 73,000 students. In this manner, school districts with small and large student populations have a direct voice in how ESU #3 operates.

The list of services offered by ESU #3 is located in the back of this Annual Report with a common theme for all ... increased efficiency of needed services through the most cost efficient process, by sharing the resources of our schools in a cooperative manner.

ESUs have been providing these services, and more, since 1966 with the savings to school districts in the millions of dollars. ESU #3 has been partnering with our local school districts with the goals of improving student learning and outcomes, along with enhancing instruction with our teachers and staff. Sometimes we are known as the best kept secret in Nebraska even though we always want to get the “word” out that we are one of the best supporters of education and stewards of Nebraska public tax dollars.





# COOPERATIVE PURCHASING

Cooperative Purchasing is a statewide purchase agreement among Educational Service Units. This ESU service allows our schools an opportunity to purchase equipment and materials at a considerable reduction from retail cost as a result of the bidding process and achieved through combining orders.

Last year, the amount of purchases by ESU #3 districts totaled \$237,581. A 2.5 percent fee is charged to the schools for the local administrative coordination and handling costs.

Cooperative Purchasing lists over 3,000 items including: projectors, TV receiver/monitors, CD's and DVD's, projector carts, screens, files, desks, chairs, laminators, duplication materials, sanitary paper, construction paper, cameras, bulbs, computer equipment, sports equipment, office supplies, science and art supplies.

Catalogs for materials and equipment are available to local schools by downloading them from the Nebraska Cooperative Purchasing website in the early spring. The local schools are able to place orders and make changes until the ordering deadline, late spring. ESU #3 issues passwords to local schools, assists the users, and monitors the use of the website. After the ordering deadlines, the local school orders are locked in and compiled with all ESU #3 school orders and placed with the appropriate vendors. Shipments are generally received from June through August.

ESU #3 has been participating in this program since 1972. The statewide program actually began in 1968. Since then, over 75 million dollars worth of material and equipment has been purchased statewide.

The savings to local schools, realized through this program, has amounted to approximately 56 million dollars.

The Statewide Cooperative Paper Purchase has 90 line items of "cut" paper that includes copy paper, and card stock in standard cut sizes, weights, and colors.

Special buys on products such as printer cartridges, projection and fluorescent lamps are offered throughout the year. The Food Program and the Custodial Product Prime Vendor Program are also used by many of our schools. Information on all of these programs may be accessed on the Nebraska ESU Cooperative Purchasing website at: [www.neesucoop.org](http://www.neesucoop.org)

Our coop manager is also available throughout the year to provide our schools with purchasing information and service.







## DATA & NETWORKING

The Data and Networking Department (D&N) provides numerous services to our schools.

The Student Information Management System (SIMS) continues to be enhanced to meet the unique needs of our districts' data storage, transfer and reporting requirements.

The SIMS Online Administrative Web allows administrators read only access to student data. Mass e-mail capability, behavior management updates and customized district information tabs are also available.

The Teacher Appraisal Systems continue to be customized. These systems allow teachers and evaluators to complete forms throughout the year. E-mails are sent back and forth to alert each user as to the status of a form.

A forms management system continues to be enhanced. This system is customized per each District's needs.

The Laserfiche document management system is supported by D&N. This system is used for scanning and organizing documents for long term management and retrieval.

ESU #3 supports a Moodle server (MLS). Moodle is an open source e-learning software platform. Customization has been done to read data from SIMS and PowerSchool.

iShareInfo is a template-based web content system that allows the customer to focus on website

content and less time on design. In addition, customers are able to provide a more dynamic, easily updated and maintained site. iShareInfo was used to develop the ESU #3 Project Sites.

ESU #3 continues to support the District Website System (DWS). This system allows districts to take full control of their district website through a district controlled template.

ESU #3 has also supported website development for our districts not using DWS in the graphic design area, coding specialized html and data management and conversion. The D&N staff also assisted in the development of Fall Workshop, Martin Luther King and Video Tutorial websites.

The eFinance Plus Accounting, Human Resources and Payroll System are supported by D&N. This system is an online interactive package designed to handle all phases of K-12 school business. The hardware and software were both updated in the 12-13 fiscal year.

ESU #3/D&N is supporting a new time clocking system called Time Clock Plus. This clocking system will integrate with eFinance Plus as well as other human resources systems used by our districts.

The Subfinder System continues to be supported by the D&N Department. Eleven districts are served by this system.





## DATA & NETWORKING

Wide Area Network (WAN) and Internet Services are a top priority of this department. ESU #3's Internet Service Provider is currently Windstream. ESU #3 schools have 500 megabits per second of access to the Internet.

SPAM filtering and Internet content filtering continue to be a service provided by Data and Networking. ESU #3 also hosts an e-mail service, spam protection, server housing and provides LAN consulting.

Data and Networking, together with the Professional Development Department, continue to support the TLC (The Library Corporation) consortium of districts. TLC is a library system supporting automated cataloging and circulation along with many other features. Data transfers between student information systems and human resource systems have been implemented to move updated data on a daily basis. This system's hardware and software were upgraded during the 11-12 fiscal year.

ESU #3 and non-ESU #3 schools continue to be served by the AV/Computer Repair Center. As an Authorized Apple Service Center, ESU #3 is able to perform warranty service on Macintosh computers and non-warranty work on other PC brands.





Gifford Farm Education Center is a 400-acre farm owned and operated by ESU #3. Gifford Farm offers agricultural curriculum and outdoor education to K-12 students. The Farm, which was donated to the State by the Dr. Harold Gifford family in 1973, is located in Bellevue along the Missouri River and is surrounded by 1200 acres of riverfront and woodlands belonging to the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission. Gifford Farm celebrates over 40 years of this wonderful gift from the Gifford Family.

Participation in Gifford Farm activities are shared with up to 30,000 visitors annually both from the schools and from our community. Gifford Farm provides several on-site programs including: The Farm Program (PreK-2nd grade); Friends of Discovery-A Journey with Lewis and Clark (4th-6th grade), STARLAB-The Celestial Navigation of Lewis and Clark (4th-6th grade), The Discoveries of Lewis and Clark (4th-6th grade), STARLAB-Planetarium (K-8th), Animals on the Go (K-6th grade), The Nature Explore® Certified Outdoor Nature Classroom (PreK-3rd grade), and Kid's Challenge (3rd-5th grade) or Team Challenge (6th grade to adult), team building and leadership development programs. We are also pleased to announce 2 new programs to our offerings; The Living History of the Plains Program featuring a one-room school house, a cabin, a teepee, an underground railroad experience and more for 3rd - 6th graders. Also now available on the Farm is a full day of Outdoor Education for 4-6th graders utilizing all of our programs for a day of fun learning experiences.

Gifford Farm's STARLAB programs, Animals on the Go Program, Farm to Go, The Discoveries of Lewis and Clark, and Team or Kid's Challenge do travel to Schools, Libraries, Outdoor Education programs, scout meetings and more, providing educational programs and presentations to students of all ages.

Our programs are set in place to assist teachers in meeting their curriculum and Nebraska State Standards needs.

Gifford Farm is a resource for community groups including Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, 4-H, Youth Groups, College groups, Senior Citizens and families. Also offered are several open houses throughout the year, which are an opportunity to share the farm, the animals and special activities with the families of our community. We offer a picnic area for use in conjunction with an educational program, birthday parties and community events.





## TITLE I BOYS TOWN

ESU #3 administers the Title I program at Boys Town, employing a coordinator, located at the Boys Town Campus, to oversee the use of Title I funds and the programs funded with Title I monies.

Title I operates the Mentoring Program which provides reading and math mentors to students identified by test scores upon enrollment and teacher recommendation. The program employs a program coordinator who schedules mentors, provides mentor training, and works with students as needed in the classroom in Boys Town High School and Wegner School.

The ESU #3 also employs a mentor facilitator. The facilitator is responsible for pre/post testing, lesson planning, and working with students as needed at Boys Town High School and Wegner School. The facilitator also works with students working off-campus, as part of their daily school schedule, to provide the “education piece” of the work experience.

Title I also provides staff development, parent involvement projects, transition activities for some students, and funding for some summer school classes.



## DRIVER EDUCATION

ESU #3 provides a comprehensive driver education program that consists of classroom study and actual driving instruction on the roads and streets in the greater Omaha area. This is an optional program for students and parents. The number of students participating in driver education during the 2013-2014 school year was 489 students from 10 school districts.





## STUDENT SERVICES

The Student Services department provided required special education services and supports for children ages birth-to-five in the child's natural environment. Natural environments include the child's home, childcare programs, hospitals, and preschools. Additional early intervention and early childhood support was given to school districts regarding Results Matter (student performance measures), The Teaching Pyramid, program self-evaluation through the Improving Learning for Children with Disabilities (ILCD) program, Primary Provider as Coach Model, and other improvement programs/trainings requested by school districts. Planning Region Team #3 (PRT #3) serves as the advisory group that plans and conducts many of the activities under the early intervention programs.

The Services Coordination program, for families with children with verified disabilities from birth-to-three/five years old, assisted in the coordination of various agencies/services supporting children and their families. The Service Coordination program collaborated with community providers, social service agencies, teachers, and related service providers to increase outcomes for infants and toddlers.

The Student Services department provided school age (5 to 21 years of age) itinerant services, upon the request of school districts in the areas of Speech/Language Pathology, Psychology, Behavioral Consultation, Vision Resource, Occupational and Physical Therapy, Homebound, and Early Childhood Special Education services.

Brook Valley School serves students with verified disabilities in grades K-12. Brook Valley School continues to provide services to children and youth with significant cognitive and behavioral disabilities.

The Student Services department continues to support the following grant projects: Regional Assistive Technology Project Grant, METRO Brain Injury Regional School Support Team Grant, Metropolitan Regional Deaf and Hard of Hearing Program Contract, Metro Regional Transition Grant, Special Education Continuous Improvement Project Grant, Planning Region Team #3 System Supports Change Grant, Regional Autism Spectrum Disorder Project Grant, the Eastern Nebraska Transition Conference for Students with Disabilities Grant, the ESU/NDE Collaborative Project Grant, and the Early Childhood Consortium/Early Learning Connections Grant of the Omaha Area Grant.



## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DEPT

The Professional Development Department (PDD) is funded through the Nebraska Core Services Funds to be used for the improvement of student learning through professional development for educators, the effective use of technology by teachers and students, and support for media in the classrooms.

Programs and services are identified through input from school district participation in PDD and Media Advisory committees, District Service Plans, and by analysis of school district student achievement data.

PDD regional training and development efforts focused on curriculum and instructional alignment to the core academic areas. Fifty-six regional programs were offered with participants totaling 2,108, including 1,372 students. Educators and/or students from all 18 ESU #3 school districts participated.

To evaluate the effectiveness of its programs and projects related to improving teaching and learning, the PDD surveyed program participants with 82% of respondents agreeing they would recommend the programs to their colleagues, 83% indicating they had confidence in applying learned skills to their teaching, and 93% agreeing the sessions they attended identified content that could impact student achievement.

Instructional technology and curriculum, instruction and assessment staff provided custom services in professional development to member districts and supported the improvement of teaching through regional programming that focused on improving student achievement. Staff also provided extensive support to school districts implementing 1:1 iPad implementation initiatives.

The PDD continued to support the school improvement and accreditation processes through the Nebraska Department of Education and AdvancED with staff assisting member school districts in their improvement efforts.

The PDD coordinated the scoring of 1,009 student writing assessments as part of its regional assessment service. In addition, the PDD and the Data and Networking Department facilitated the training of teachers in local districts so they could conduct their own analytical scoring of writing totaling 10,856 student assessments. The PDD coordinated two custom writing assessment scoring events that did not utilize the Writing Assessment System; approximately 3,870 student writing samples were assessed. A total of 11 ESU #3 districts and one non-ESU #3 district received





# PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DEPT

*(continued)*

writing assessment scoring services in 2013-14.

On-site delivery of services to school districts were provided through “direct service days” allocated to each district, based upon available contact days of staff and the proportionate student population of each district. Approximately 1,450 ESU #3 staff days were allocated to school districts for services in improvement areas relating to curriculum, instruction, assessment, and technology integration.

### **Professional Development Conference Center**

The Professional Development Conference Center’s 12 conference rooms, two computer labs, and distance-learning technology provided effective learning environments for conference and workshop participants. The Conference Center hosted over 720 meetings and/or events, including approximately 200 events for outside agencies. ESU #3 districts utilized the Conference Center in 2013-2014, hosting 95 meetings and events in our rooms.

## **Professional Development Center Utilization**

17,144

Individuals utilized the  
Conference Center

56

Regional trainings were held

95

District meetings/events





## MEDIA CENTER

The Media/Science Center provides educational resources in streaming video, DVD, and printed material mediums. These products and services are identified through input from member district participation in the Media Advisory Committee and the Professional Development Advisory Committee.

The Media Library maintains over 3,500 streaming video and DVD titles for use in classrooms. Additional rights to 100-120 video titles are purchased annually through participation in the ESUPDO Instructional Materials (IMAT) Affiliate Group. These purchases include both the duplication and digital streaming rights. All videos may be viewed or reserved through IRIS, the Media Center's Online Instructional Materials catalog. Reserved materials are delivered and picked up weekly by the ESU #3 courier.

Member districts also have access to these titles via Learn360, a video-on-demand website. In addition to accessing the 10,863 full video titles, this service offers 38,652 segment clips, 25,000 Britannica Concise Encyclopedia articles, audio files, images, newsreels and speeches.

The Media/Science Center also coordinates the licensure of ProQuest K-12, a subscription-based online database of research tools. Database options for member districts includes eLibrary K-12, eLibrary Elementary, eLibrary Science, History Study Center, Learning Literature, World Conflict Today, SIRs, Culture Grams, and Professional Journals. These resources enable students to research information

from more than 2,500 full-text magazines, newspapers, books, and transcripts, plus thousands of maps, pictures, and top quality audio/video files.

ESU #3 offers our school districts the opportunity to participate in a library automation consortium offered by The Library Corporation (TLC). Key features of this complete automation solution include an online web-based catalog, hundreds of pre-formatted reports, daily updates from the Student Information System, acquisitions, and authority control.

The Science Center manages over 250 instructional items. Materials and resources, which are available for check out, range from batteries and bulbs to the behavior of mealworms kits.

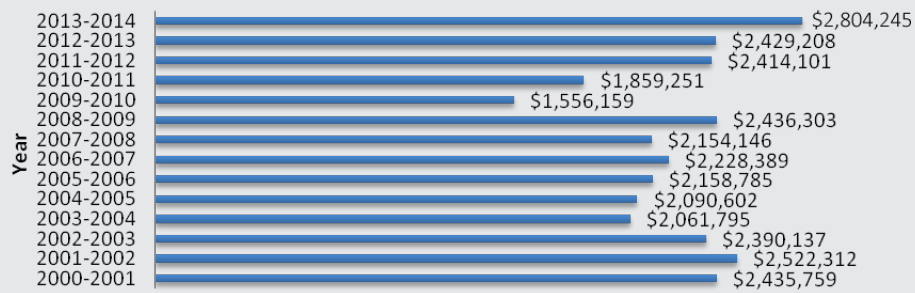




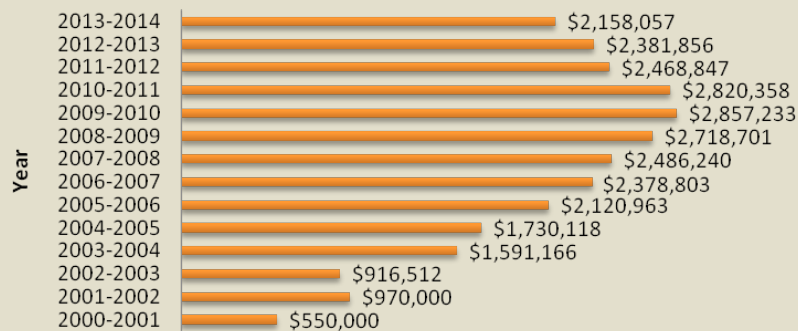


# FINANCIAL

## ESU #3 Core Service Funds Received



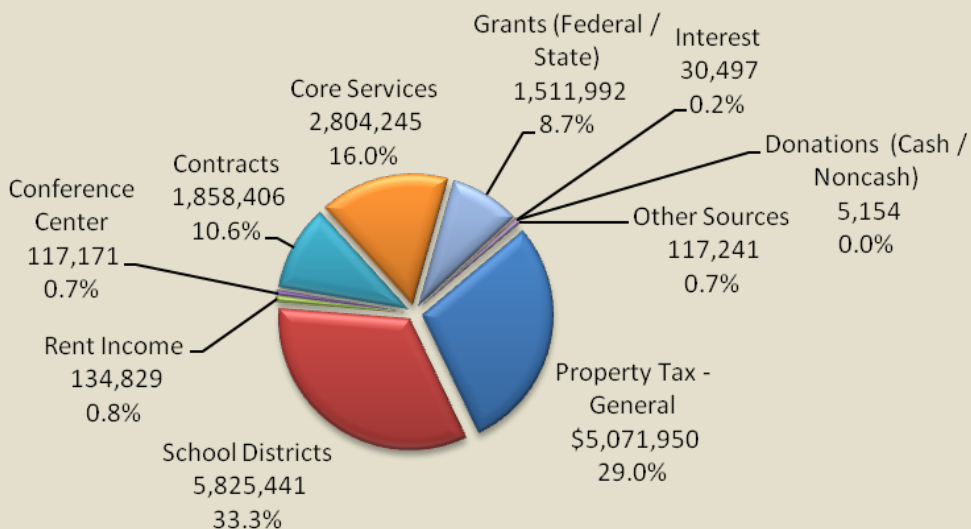
## Local Initiative Funds for ESU #3 Member Districts



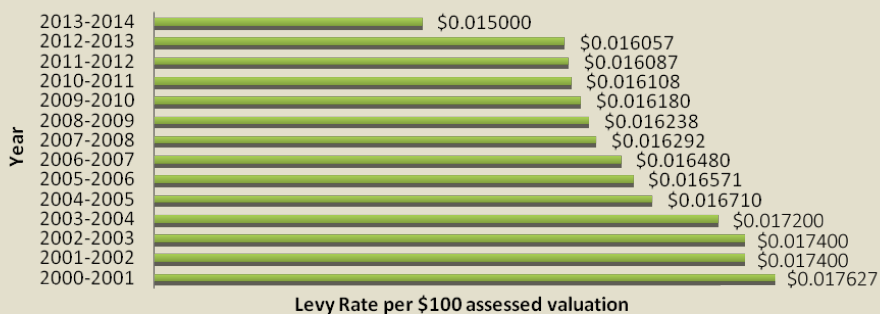


# FINANCIAL

## ESU #3 Revenue



## ESU #3 Property Tax Levy





# FINANCIAL

## 2013-2014 ACTUAL REVENUE

Property Tax - General	\$ 5,071,950	29.02%
School Districts	5,825,441	33.33%
Rent Income	134,829	0.77%
Conference Center	117,171	0.67%
Contracts	1,858,406	10.63%
Core Services	2,804,245	16.05%
Grants (Federal/State)	1,511,992	8.65%
Interest	30,497	0.17%
Donations (Cash/Noncash)	5,154	0.03%
Other Sources	117,241	0.67%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 17,476,926</b>	<b>100%</b>

The 2013-2014 revenues and expenditures are reported on a cash basis. The cash basis accounting method recognizes revenues and expenditures when the revenues are received and payments are expended. This method may not align revenues and expenditures in the same accounting period. ESU #3 maintains cash on hand to allow for instances when program expenditures are incurred or required before the revenue is received.





# FINANCIAL

## 2013-2014 ACTUAL EXPENDITURES

Benefit Set Aside	\$4,076	0.00%
Administration	418,471	2.40%
Business Services	445,237	2.60%
Board Expense	62,365	0.40%
Capital Improvements	237,009	1.40%
Building Fund	175,325	1.00%
Buildings & Grounds	484,751	2.80%
Buildings & Grounds - Conference Center	239,788	1.40%
Coop Purchasing	402,278	2.30%
Driver Education	210,169	1.20%
Data and Networking	2,491,015	14.30%
Data and Networking - Repair	17,211	0.10%
Professional Development	1,713,165	9.80%
Professional Development Grants/Contracts	183,874	1.10%
Gifford Farm	279,385	1.60%
Media Center	323,640	1.90%
Production/Publications	14,497	0.10%
Student Services School Age	3,523,939	20.20%
Student Services Service Coords	824,026	4.70%
Student Services Other Programs	322,454	1.80%
Student Services Grants & Contracts	1,341,128	7.70%
Title I-Boys Town	303,004	1.70%
Perkins Grant	73,379	0.40%
Schools' Allocation & Balance Carryover	2,312,064	13.30%
Schools' Sub Program	1,042,600	6.00%
Contingency	0	0.0%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 17,444,850</b>	<b>100%</b>



A Place Where Ideas **Grow**

ESU #3









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