

Cooperative Purchasing

Data and Networking

Driver Education

Gifford Farm

Professional Development

Student Services



ESU³

EDUCATIONAL SERVICE UNIT #3

ANNUAL REPORT
2014 - 2015

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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.

2014-2015 BOARD OF EDUCATION

Ron E. Pearson, President • Stuart Dornan, Vice President
Dennis Wilkins, Secretary
Barbara Coleman
Brett Kuhn
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
Dr. Julee Sauer, 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 74,000 students and over 5000 staff. ESU #3 has been located at 6949 South 110th Street in La Vista, NE, for the past 22 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 serves on 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 a couple of examples of what we do and why.

One of the core services that saves school districts significant dollars can be found in the area of technology, specifically for Internet Service to our school districts. ESU #3 contracts with Network Nebraska for purchasing bandwidth at a “bulk” rate for all of our 18 school districts combined. This reduces costs for everyone and provides for efficiency. In addition,



ESU #3 staff monitors and supports Internet usage, bandwidth, and helps coordinate filtering, thus relieving our school districts from having their own staff performing the same functions.

Another example of a core service area is in our Professional Development Department. ESU #3 has expanded our focus on Blended Learning. Blended Learning is using current best practices in instruction and blending in an online curriculum component. Our Professional Development Department can help produce new curriculum using Blended Learning that can be shared across many of our districts. This collaboration helps our district's teachers save time.

These are just two of the 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. Shared 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 74,000 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 \$248,174. 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.

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. A Student Enrollment Module has been added. This module allows parents to enroll new students and complete all paperwork online. A significant amount of work has been completed to integrate SIMS with the NDE ADVISer Dashboard system. D&N has worked closely with the ESUCC staff to begin implementation of the Single Sign On (SSO) system that will be used with the ADVISer Dashboard.

The Teacher Appraisal Systems continue to be customized. This system allows 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 Moodle (MLS). Moodle is an open source Learning Management System. Customization has been done to exchange 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 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.

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.

Wide Area Network (WAN) and Internet Services are a top priority of this department. ESU #3's Internet Service Provider is currently Windstream.





DATA & NETWORKING

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 experiences to K-12 students. The farm, which was donated to the State of Nebraska 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.

This year 28,000 visitors, both from the schools and from our community, participated in Gifford Farm activities. 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), The Living History of the Plains (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.

Gifford Farm's STARLAB programs, Animals on the Go Programs featuring either farm animals or exotic animals, The Discoveries of Lewis and Clark, and Team or Kid's Challenge, 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 as well as to provide a safe and enjoyable hands-on experience for our area children.

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 program coordinator, located at the Boys Town Campus, to oversee the use of Title I funds and the programs funded with Title I monies. Use of Title I funds are supplemental and support computer lab software, some audio-visual equipment in classrooms, a TI-84 Calculator Loan Program for the family homes, and book give-aways, to name a few.

Title I operates the Mentoring Program which provides reading and math mentors to students identified by test scores upon enrollment and teacher recommendation. The ESU #3 also employs two mentor (instructional) facilitators. Each facilitator is responsible for scheduling mentors and providing mentor training when necessary, pre/post testing, lesson planning, and working with students as needed at Boys Town High School and Wegner School. The mentoring facilitator assigned to Wegner School also helps in a new eighth grade Career Education program at the high school and provides similar services to the math and reading program in new sections of social studies and science mentoring in the high school.

Title I funding 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 2014-2015 school year was 519 students from 10 school districts.





STUDENT SERVICES

The Student Services department provided required Special Education services and supports for children age birth-to-five in the child's natural environment. Natural environments can 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, self-evaluation through the Improving Learning for Children with Disabilities/ Results Driven Accountability (ILCD/RDA), Primary Provider as Coach Model, and other improvement programs/trainings requested by school districts. Planning Region Team #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 students (5 to 21 years of age) itinerant services, upon the request of school districts in the areas of Speech/ Language Pathology, Behavioral Consultation, Vision Resource, Occupational and Physical Therapy,

Homebound Resource, 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. Brook Valley School is owned and operated by ESU #3.

The Student Services department continues to support the following grant/contract projects: Regional Assistive Technology Project Grant, Metropolitan Regional Deaf and Hard of Hearing Program Contract, Metro Regional Transition Grant, Enhancement 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 ILCD Facilitator 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, with an emphasis on the effective use of technology and media.

Programs and services are identified through input from school district participation in PDD, Media, High Ability Learning (HAL), and Instructional Technology Users Group (ITUG) Advisory committees, District Service Plans, and by analysis of school district student achievement data.

PDD regional training and development efforts focused on curriculum, instruction, assessment, instructional technology integration, and continuous improvement alignment to the Nebraska accountability tenets known as Accountability for a Quality Education System, Today and Tomorrow (AQueSTT). Custom services to member districts provided support to those implementing 1:1 technology initiatives. Educators and/or students from all 18 ESU #3 school districts participated in this programming that involved 3,093 adults and 1,970 students.

The PDD coordinated the scoring of 954 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. The PDD coordinated one custom writing assessment

scoring event during which 1,755 student writing samples were assessed. A total of 11 ESU #3 districts and one non-ESU #3 district received writing assessment scoring services in 2014-2015.

To evaluate the effectiveness of its programs and services, the PDD surveyed all program participants. 80% or more of all respondents agreed they would recommend the programs to their colleagues, that they had confidence in applying learned skills to their teaching, and that they identified content that could impact student achievement.

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 1,100 PDD staff days were allocated to school districts for services in improvement areas relating to curriculum, instruction, assessment, continuous improvement, and technology integration.

The Media/Science Center of PDD 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.





PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DEPT

(continued)

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

Professional Development Center Utilization

21,052

**Individuals utilized the
Conference Center**

260

**Member District
Events Held**





PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DEPT

(continued)

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 of PDD 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. In addition, the Science Center annually refurbishes hundreds of elementary science experiment kits used by our member districts.

Professional Development Conference Center

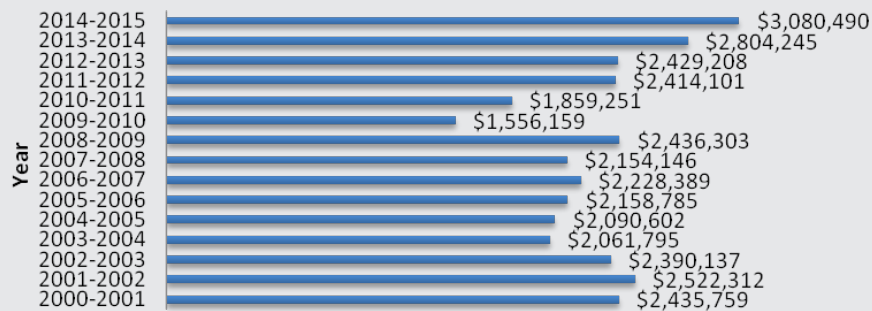
The Professional Development Conference Center's 12 conference rooms, two computer labs, and distance-learning technology provided effective learning environments for conference and workshop participants. The Conference Center hosted over 800 meetings and/or events for both member districts and outside agencies.



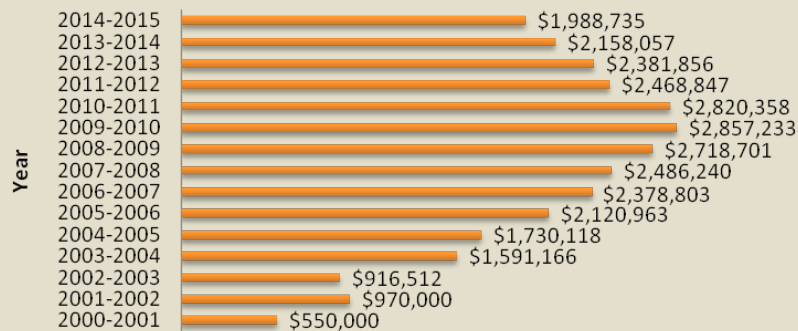


FINANCIAL

ESU #3 Core Service Funds Received



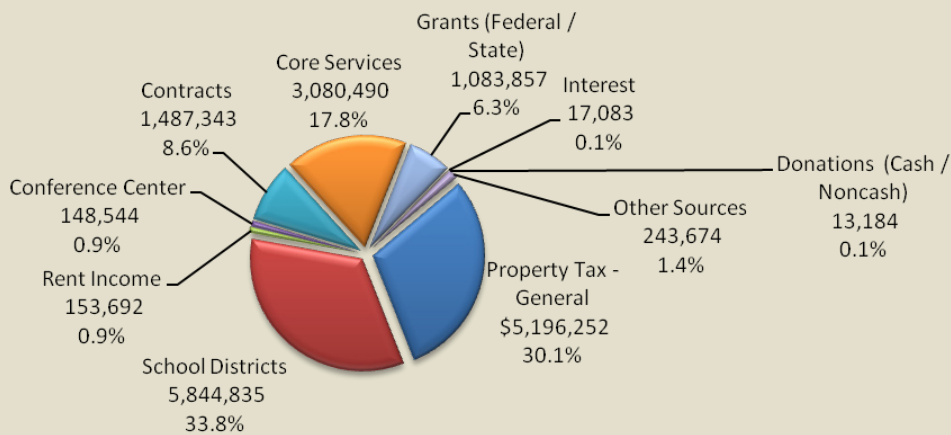
Local Initiative Funds for ESU #3 Member Districts





FINANCIAL

ESU #3 Revenue



ESU #3 Property Tax Levy





FINANCIAL

2014-2015 ACTUAL REVENUE

Property Tax - General	\$ 5,196,252	30.09%
School Districts	5,844,835	33.85%
Rent Income	153,692	0.89%
Conference Center	148,544	0.86%
Contracts	1,487,343	8.61%
Core Services	3,080,490	17.84%
Grants (Federal/State)	1,083,857	6.28%
Interest	17,083	0.10%
Donations (Cash/Noncash)	13,184	0.08%
Other Sources	243,674	1.41%
TOTAL	\$ 17,268,954	100%

The 2014-2015 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

2014-2015 ACTUAL EXPENDITURES

Benefit Set Aside	(\$6)	0.00%
Administration	347,003	1.90%
Business Services	474,248	2.60%
Board Expense	64,664	0.40%
Capital Improvements	244,580	1.40%
Building Fund	1,248,636	6.90%
Buildings & Grounds	521,181	2.90%
Buildings & Grounds - Conference Center	275,056	1.50%
Coop Purchasing	328,372	1.80%
Driver Education	192,865	1.10%
Data and Networking	2,297,601	12.70%
Data and Networking - Repair	23,948	0.10%
Professional Development	1,689,356	9.30%
Professional Development Grants/Contracts	185,056	1.00%
Gifford Farm	290,152	1.60%
Media Center	323,640	1.90%
Production/Publications	19,776	0.10%
Student Services School Age	3,796,733	21.00%
Student Services Service Coords	1,021,538	5.60%
Student Services Other Programs	345,794	1.90%
Student Services Grants & Contracts	1,246,463	6.90%
Title I-Boys Town	274,568	1.50%
Perkins Grant	66,845	0.40%
Schools' Allocation & Balance Carryover	1,928,182	10.60%
Schools' Sub Program	857,518	4.70%
Contingency	2,818	0.0%
TOTAL	\$ 18,113,300	100%



A Place Where Ideas **Grow**

ESU #3





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