

## **Regional Educational Service Centers (RESCs)**

Regional Educational Service Centers (RESCs) were created more than 30 years ago by legislative mandate to help districts communicate and collaborate. The state of Connecticut has six RESCs which provide a framework to improve education through communication, collaboration, and high quality, cost effective programs and services.

ACES (Area Cooperative Education Services)

CES (Cooperative Education Services)

CREC (Capitol Regional Education Council)

EASTCONN Regional Education Service Center

Education Connection

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RESCs have further leveraged the strength of collaboration through the establishment of the RESC Alliance. RESCs' cost efficient, cooperative efforts have saved money for Connecticut school districts and have enabled schools to expand services beyond what they could have accomplished alone. Each RESC is:

- Locally governed by member boards of education
- Cost effective in delivering programs and services to school districts
- Committed to helping local school districts improve teaching and learning
- Responsive to local needs and inter-district opportunities
- Flexible in creating, adapting, or eliminating programs

## **Capitol Regional Education Council (CREC)**

- CREC's mission is to work with boards of education of the Capitol Region to improve the quality of public education for all learners.
- For more than 45 years, CREC has supported regional services to towns and school districts to provide access to a wide range of regionalized services that allows districts to focus on the important work of teaching and learning.
- CREC's role is to promote cooperation and collaboration with towns and schools

## **CREC'S Office for Regional Efficiencies**

In response to Connecticut's current financial difficulties and increasingly tight local budgets, CREC created the Office for Regional Efficiencies to help communities support public education by finding efficiencies in non-educational areas. CREC's Office for Regional Efficiencies focuses on promoting cooperation and collaboration with local school districts and other organizations as a way to cut costs. The results of this approach are increased savings and efficiencies and decreased liability for partners, so that more valuable resources can be allocated to the classroom, without increasing the bottom line. Through cost containment efforts, funds can be allocated back into the classroom.

## **Why CREC?**

As a regional educational service center (RESA), CREC already exists as a regional entity, providing high quality, cost-effective services to its 35 member school districts, and other districts across the state. The work of the Office is at the heart of CREC's mission. Its governance structure, with a CREC Council comprised of one representative from each member district, models the collaborative governance approach that can support regional services. CREC is poised to be a leader in finding innovative ways to reduce costs for quality services for member districts and other organizations committed to public education.

## **Why now?**

The work of the MORE Commission led by Speaker Sharkey has made it clear that state leaders are focused on finding ways to reduce cost in the delivery of services. As Speaker Sharkey said recently, "The state cannot afford to subsidize, through local aid and education aid, inefficiencies. It can no longer be the function of state government to contribute to and tolerate any inefficiencies that go on at the local level, as well as the state level."<sup>1</sup> All financial indications are that schools will operate in a state of continual transformation for the foreseeable future. Connecticut's current economic woes coupled with increasingly tight budgets in our cities and towns will require innovative ways to increase efficiencies, to continue to deliver quality services, and to ensure an excellent education for all students.

## **How Can the Office for Regional Efficiencies Save Money for School Districts?**

By creating the Office for Regional Efficiencies, CREC can create a shared services center to enable school administrators to keep their focus on education and eliminate the headaches associated with the management of non-educational services like transportation, facilities management, food services and information technology. Regional Efficiencies Areas of Opportunities include the following:

### **Cooperative Purchasing**

### **Transportation**

### **Regional Alternative Programs for At Risk Students**

### **Regional Funding Procurement**

### **Facilities Management**

### **Regional Safety and Security Services**

## **Next Steps:**

- **Remove barriers to collaboration**
- **Provide incentives to encourage cooperative efforts and reallocate savings to support education**
- **Address local control barriers by creating regional oversight review**
- **Create pilot projects in each of the RESA areas to develop models**

