

# Frequently Asked Questions Cooperative Educational Service Agencies

## What is a CESA?

CESA stands for Cooperative Educational Service Agency. There are 12 CESAs in the state of Wisconsin. Each CESA serves the unique needs of schools and children in a particular region of Wisconsin. CESAs make it possible for schools, regardless of size, to work together to share staff and equipment, save money, and extend educational opportunities to all corners of the state and to all children. CESAs provide these services without mandates, without levying taxes, and with no state aid.

## How are CESAs governed?

Each CESA is governed by an 11-member Board of Control elected by a delegate assembly at the CESA annual convention. Delegates adopt bylaws governing the operation of the CESA. Elected CESA Board of Control Members are also seated members of their local school board.

## What does the Board of Control do?

The board sets agency policy and sets the budget for agency operations. The Board of Control is also responsible for authorizing expenditures to operate the CESA, including those for personnel, space and equipment. The Board of Control appoints and supervises the CESA administrator and advises him or her regarding services needed by local districts. Every three years, the board must provide to the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction a report that addresses the efficiency and effectiveness of CESA programs.

## Are CESAs government units or businesses?

CESAs are unique public entities, but run much like private businesses. They listen to their customers – schools, colleges and even local governments, and develop needed services. Customers buy only the services they want. Because CESAs are cooperatives, if they did not meet the needs of their member school districts, they could not continue to operate.

## How are CESAs funded?

Unlike schools and other local governments, CESAs have no taxing authority and they receive no state aid. For funding, they rely on the fees from service contracts with member districts, and from federal, state or other grants.

# Frequently Asked Questions Cooperative Educational Service Agencies

## What do CESAs do for school districts?

Families, businesses and communities have high expectations for schools in Wisconsin. They want local control, equal access and value for dollars spent. They want schools to cooperate and continuously strive for improvement. They want graduates to be college, career, and citizenship-ready fully prepared to contribute to the future prosperity of our state. CESAs help Wisconsin schools meet those high expectations by developing and providing services that meet school and district needs, for example:

- Professional development for teachers, support staff, principals, and district leaders
- Cooperative purchasing to maximize available resources
- Sharing of special education teachers and other professionals to meet student needs

## Why choose CESAs?

CESAs exist to provide leadership, leverage resources and build regional capacity.

## CESAs...

*Support* school and district leaders in their work to improve learning for ALL students.

*Develop*, plan and identify resources needed to lead implementation of statewide initiatives.

*Share* research, best practices and innovative new practices to best serve districts in enhancing learning.

*Cultivate* productive relationships and strategic partnerships for effective implementation of programs.