



Great Rivers Education Service Cooperative

Willie Murdock, Director

December 13, 2022

Board of Directors

Name	Position	School District
Lee Vent	President	Clarendon
Dr. Tiffany Hardrick	Vice President	Forrest City
Dr. Katina Ray	Secretary	Marvell-Elaine
Bruce Guthrie	Board Member	Barton
Brenda Poole	Board Member	Brinkley
Dr. Keith McGee	Board Member	Helena-West Helena
Micheal Stone	Board Member	Lee County
Danny Sample	Board Member	Palestine-Wheatley
Richard Atwill	Board Member	West Memphis

ESC Demographics

Act 349 of 1985 formally established "The Education Service Cooperative Act of 1985" and by its authority Great Rivers Education Service Cooperative was formed on July 1, 1985. The Board of the original fourteen school districts, containing over 28,000 students at that time housed the Cooperative office on the campus of Phillips County Community College.

On July 1, 1985, the Board of Directors hired its first director. We now operate under the leadership of our third director, Mrs. Willie Murdock. During our thirty-seven years, the districts in the Great Rivers area have lost population and student enrollment. The Cooperative has not lost area of coverage, but population patterns have affected the number of districts served from an original number of fourteen to the ten served today.

Great Rivers partners with a variety of organizations within our communities and beyond. These partners (formal and informal) include: TNTP, Reach University, Phillips Community College of the University of Arkansas, East Arkansas Community College, Office of Coordinated Support and Service, State Personnel Development Grant, Easter Seals, Arkansas State University Rural STEM Center, Workforce Development Board of Eastern Arkansas, area preschools and child development centers, Arkansas Health Department, Boys and Girls Club of Phillips County, and Arkansas State Parks.

Section 6-13-1003	Requirement	Status	Documentation
1	ESC region includes at least three (3) but no more than nine (9) counties	Great Rivers ESC serves 10 school districts in 5 counties.	Counties Served: Crittenden, Lee, Monroe, Phillips, and St. Francis
2	ESC region includes at least ten(10) but no more than thirty-five(35) school districts	Great Rivers ESC serves 10 school districts in Arkansas	School Districts Served: Barton, Brinkley, Clarendon, Forrest City, Helena-West Helena, KIPP Delta, Lee County, Marvell-Elaine, Palestine-Wheatley, West Memphis
3	ESC region includes at least twenty thousand (20,000) pupils in K-12 average daily membership (ADM)	Number of students in Great Rivers ESC region (My School Info): 12,305 students	Barton: 677 Brinkley: 422 Clarendon: 417 Forrest City: 1,990 Helena-West Helena: 1,116 KIPP Delta: 1,095 Lee County: 591 Marvell-Elaine: 293 Palestine-Wheatley: 779 West Memphis: 4,925
4	ESC region includes at least one (1) postsecondary education institution	There are three postsecondary education institutions within the Great Rivers ESC region	The postsecondary education institutions are: Phillips Community College of the University of Arkansas, East Arkansas Community College, Arkansas State University–Mid South
5	ESC region covers no more than fifty (50) miles distance or approximately one (1) hour driving time to the area's main offices for ninety percent (90%) of the school districts. (Google Maps)	Great Rivers ESC serves 10 school districts, with 90% of those within 50 miles of driving distance (or approximately 1 hour) from the Cooperative.	Barton: 10 mi Brinkley: 49 mi Clarendon: 46 mi Forrest City: 47 mi Helena-West Helena: 0.5 mi KIPP Delta: 3 mi Lee County: 27 mi Marvell-Elaine: 17 mi Palestine-Wheatley: 43 mi West Memphis: 63 mi

Section 1: User Satisfaction and Service Adequacy

1.A, 1.B: Annual User Satisfaction Survey and Summative Survey; Summative PD Session Evaluation Responses

Great Rivers Education Service Cooperative (Great Rivers) values the feedback we receive from our participating districts. Great Rivers administers a user satisfaction survey that is designed in collaboration with statewide co-ops. One of the many obstacles in the Delta is obtaining an adequate amount of data for services provided. In order to acquire the maximum amount of data, Great Rivers’s personnel attended faculty meetings and/or set up and managed data collection tables in the teachers’ lounges or other common areas along with on-site visits in order to administer the User Satisfaction Surveys. Great Rivers also administers a professional development session evaluation for participants to fill out after they attend a Great Rivers training session. This evaluation is generated through escWorks and is sent electronically via email. Great Rivers’ specialists who conduct professional development sessions use the data from this evaluation as well as the user satisfaction survey as a reflection to grow their practice. The results from these surveys are analyzed by the instructional team during staff meetings which consists of the teacher center coordinator, literacy, mathematics, science, recruitment and retention, technology, gifted and talented, and career and technical education specialists. Conversations are continuously held throughout the school year amongst and across all specialists’ areas about the needs in order to better serve each district on an individual basis.

The Great Rivers Education Service Cooperative’s Annual User Satisfaction Survey was distributed to all member school districts and administered in the spring of 2022. The survey received 426 responses. The overall percentage of satisfied or very satisfied responses was 93.6%.

User Satisfaction Survey Results

Note: In survey directions, participants were instructed to use N/A if the question pertained to a service area with which they were not familiar. In the table below, N/A responses are removed from the final calculations of the percentages of user satisfaction.

	Area of Service	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Not Satisfied	Very Satisfied + Satisfied Subtotals
Support Services	Administrative Support	38.8% 88 out of 227	59% 134 out of 227	2.2% 5 out of 227	97.8%
	Support for State Initiatives	38.2% 105 out of 275	58.9% 162 out of 275	2.9% 8 out of 275	97.1%
	Support for Federal Programs, ESL, Curriculum, GT, etc	30.6% 70 out of 229	65.1% 149 out of 229	4.4% 10 out of 229	95.7%
	Helpfulness of Staff when Seeking Info as an Educator	50.6% 169 out of 334	47.9% 160 out of 334	1.5% 5 out of 334	98.5%
Literacy	RISE K-2	44.6% 58 out of 130	54.6% 71 out of 130	.8% 1 out of 130	99.2%
	RISE 3-6	39.7% 60 out of 151	57.6% 87 out of 151	2.6% 4 out of 151	97.3%
	Literacy Specialist SoR Stand-Alone Days	30.6% 22 out of 72	66.7% 48 out of 72	2.8% 2 out of 72	97.3%
	Critical Reading	31.5%	63.9%	4.6%	95.4%

		34 out of 108	69 out of 108	5 out of 108	
	Disciplinary Literacy	29.6% 40 out of 135	68.1% 92 out of 135	2.2% 3 out of 135	97.7%
	Dyslexia	34.7% 41 out of 118	58.5% 69 out of 118	6.8% 8 out of 118	93.2%
	Writing Training	26.7% 24 out of 90	68.9% 62 out of 90	4.4% 4 out of 90	95.6%
Math	Cognitively Guided Instruction (CGI)	30% 18 out of 60	65% 39 out of 60	5% 3 out of 60	95%
	Mathematical Content Trainings	32.7% 33 out of 101	66.3% 67 out of 101	1% 1 out of 101	99%
	Quantitative Literacy	18.6% 11 out of 59	76.3% 45 out of 59	5.1% 3 out of 59	94.9%
	AR Math QuEST	30.8% 16 out of 52	67.3% 35 out of 52	1.9% 1 out of 52	98.1%
	Illustrative Mathematics	28% 14 out of 50	70% 35 out of 50	2% 1 out of 50	98%
	Mathematics Programs	27.8% 20 out of 72	70.8% 51 out of 72	1.4% 1 out of 72	98.6%
Science	Grasping Phenomenal Science K-4	31.9% 15 out of 42	61.7% 29 out of 42	6.4% 3 out of 42	93.6%
	Grasping Phenomenal Science 5-8	22.2% 10 out of 45	68.9% 31 out of 45	8.9% 4 out of 45	91.1%
	Grasping Phenomenal Science 9-12	17.5% 7 out of 40	75% 30 out of 40	7.5% 3 out of 40	92.5%
	STEM	22.6% 14 out of 62	67.7% 42 out of 62	9.7% 6 out of 62	90.3%
Novice Teacher	Classroom Management	42.7% 79 out of 185	54.1% 100 out of 185	3.2% 6 out of 185	96.8%
	Support through use of Digital Platform	39.3% 70 out of 178	57.3% 102 out of 178	3.4% 6 out of 178	96.6%
	Support by R & R and/or Cooperative Specialists	39.4% 61 out of 155	56.1% 87 out of 155	4.5% 7 out of 155	95.5%
	PD on relevant topics	39.7% 77 out of 194	55.7% 108 out of 194	4.6% 9 out of 194	95.4%
Digital Learning	Digital Learning Resources/Tools	32% 62 out of 194	61.3% 119 out of 194	6.7% 13 out of 194	93.3%
	Support on Digital Platforms	34.3% 71 out of 207	59.9% 124 out of 207	5.8% 12 out of 207	94.2%
	In-district support for Digital Learning	31.1% 59 out of 190	61.1% 116 out of 190	7.9% 15 out of 190	92.2%
	IT Support	33.1% 57 out of 172	55.8% 96 out of 172	11% 19 out of 172	88.9%

Covid-19	Assistance to transition to Blended Learning	25.7% 49 out of 191	61.3% 117 out of 191	13.1% 25 out of 191	87%
	Regular Communication/Updates	29.3% 68 out of 232	63.4% 147 out of 232	7.3% 17 out of 232	92.7%
	PD Offerings during Covid-19	30.3% 76 out of 251	62.5% 157 out of 251	7.2% 18 out of 251	92.8%
	Support with AR RfL Plan	28.1% 47 out of 176	61.7% 103 out of 176	10.2% 17 out of 176	89.8%
Special Education	LEA Supervisors	29.5% 33 out of 112	58% 65 out of 112	12.5% 14 out of 112	87.5%
	Behavior Support Specialists	23.3% 27 out of 116	58.6% 68 out of 116	18.1% 21 out of 116	81.9%
	Other SPED Services	24.3% 26 out of 107	64.5% 69 out of 107	11.2% 12 out of 107	88.8%
Early Childhood	ABC Program	44.4% 32 out of 72	51.4% 37 out of 72	4.2% 3 out of 72	95.8%
	Early Childhood Special Education	32.3% 21 out of 66	61.5% 40 out of 66	6.2% 4 out of 66	93.8%
	HIPPY	29.8% 14 out of 47	63.8% 30 out of 47	6.4% 3 out of 47	93.6%
	Other Early Childhood Services	32.4% 23 out of 71	63.4% 45 out of 71	4.2% 3 out of 71	95.8%
Other Services	Student Services (Quiz Bowl, Chess, Spelling Bee, etc.)	32.8% 40 out of 122	55.7% 68 out of 122	11.5% 14 out of 122	88.5%
	Career/Technical Education(CTE)	31.4% 37 out of 118	60.2% 71 out of 118	8.5% 10 out of 118	91.6%
	Gifted and Talented	25.6% 33 out of 129	63.6% 82 out of 129	10.9% 14 out of 129	89.2%
	Instructional Technology	24.7% 36 out of 146	65.1% 95 out of 146	10.3% 15 out of 146	89.8%
	Community Health Nurse	29.8% 28 out of 94	66% 62 out of 94	4.3% 4 out of 94	95.8%
	Facilities Consortium	18.6% 13 out of 70	70% 49 out of 70	11.4% 8 out of 70	88.6%
	Purchasing Programs (Warehouse)	23.7% 22 out of 93	59.1% 55 out of 93	17.2% 16 out of 93	82.8%
	Teacher Center and/or Print Shop	26.7% 28 out of 105	59% 62 out of 105	14.3% 15 out of 105	85.7%
Overall Percentage of Satisfied or Very Satisfied					93.6%

A review of the results from the Summative Professional Development Evaluation Responses from 6/1/2021 to 5/31/2022 show an overall average score of 3.96 on a 4.0 scale from 2,360 responses.

The Instructional team examined the data to determine how Great Rivers could better meet the needs of the districts. Some sample responses from educators on the user satisfaction survey that are being addressed by Great Rivers:

- Please offer more PD options regarding classroom management throughout the year and how to manage difficult students.
- There needs to be more training provided for the classroom teachers on Dyslexia and Critical Reading that will target the children who are struggling.
- More training for the administrators so it can trickle down to the teachers

Great Rivers responded to these needs in the following ways:

- Great Rivers provided professional development sessions for teachers in the area of classroom management including sessions specifically for novice teachers and for virtual learning during summer 2022. Instructional Specialists plan to work with individual schools throughout the year for support with professional development and classroom embedded support for teachers dealing with classroom management.
- Great Rivers Literacy Specialists have planned to meet the needs of each district as needed when asked for dyslexia and critical reading training. For example, a training was held on September 14 and 15, 2022 for a specific district that needed Barton training for dyslexia. Four days of Critical Reading sessions were offered for another specific school district during Summer 2022 on that district's campus.
- Great Rivers plans to re-establish an administrators collaborative learning community and provide professional development based on needs expressed by administrators

Another form of data collection is through the Great Rivers School Visit Form. Instructional Specialists fill out a School Visit Form through Google Forms that keeps a record of visits made to each school, the teacher or administrator who received support, the length of the visit, the purpose of the visit, and a short summary of what occurred during the visit.

1C: Annual Surveys and Needs Assessments

The Great Rivers Education Service Cooperative's Professional Development Needs Assessment Survey is administered via Google Forms to administrators each year to determine the focus on professional development for summer and the school year. During the 2021-2022 school year, 14 responses were collected from administrators. The data is analyzed by the Great Rivers K-12 Instructional Team consisting of the Teacher Center Coordinator, Instructional Specialists and CTE coordinator to determine how Great Rivers could better service the school districts. This data is also shared, discussed and analyzed at the first meeting of the year by the Teacher Center Coordinator Committee, and suggestions will be offered to the Teacher Center Coordinator. Needs Assessment data is reviewed by the Great Rivers Board Members at the Great Rivers Administrator Retreat in June.

In September 2022, the Instructional Team reviewed the 2022 Needs Assessment survey given in Spring. Data review revealed the need for professional development in the area of social and emotional support to educators for themselves and the students they serve. This response is in the planning phase that will start with administrators during Co-op facilitated collaborative

communities. Additionally, Great Rivers will offer summer professional development for teachers in the area of social and emotional support.

Statewide, the Teacher Center Coordinators meet with DESE on a monthly basis to coordinate services and support.

1D: Provide Assistance

Great Rivers ESC assists member districts with accreditation standards and equalizing educational opportunities. We hold the required Tier I Fiscal training for administrators and bookkeepers, provide instructional support in all core areas, assist schools with curriculum review, help schools develop new career course concentrations to meet career focus requirements and to purchase equipment/materials necessary for those courses, classroom management professional development and on-site support/coaching, coordinated Literacy support with DESE and districts in levels 4 and 5 support. As part of the coordinated literacy support, three individuals from Great Rivers serve on the Literacy Support Plan Team for all of the levels 4 and 5 school districts.

We provide professional development support toward the requirement in rule (10.01.3), and our specialists provide on-site support to districts throughout the year for each of the following DESE initiatives: R.I.S.E. Academy, Critical Reading, Math Quest, Grasping Phenomenal Science.

Our Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) Services department assists schools in providing speech, occupational, physical, and developmental therapy services as well as instructional support. The Early Childhood department services approximately 514 students. Overall, service provision was impacted by absences due to quarantine, symptoms, or positive COVID tests of both staff and students. Teachers planned for untraditional therapy methods, including packets and communication with parents and teletherapy. All attempts were made to ensure that the needs of the children were being addressed.

As a result of the Pandemic and the need for virtual schooling, individual student's equal access to WiFi became a necessary service for Great Rivers to coordinate within our districts. In Spring 2020 and during the 2020-2021 school year, Great Rivers ESC provided extended, open access to WiFi on all school campuses. Additionally, we strategically placed buses within communities with wireless access points. Great Rivers ESC worked with districts and DESE to review digital learning plans before districts submitted them to the State Board of Education. We also coordinated and delivered PPE to districts during the 2020-2021 school year.

1E: Teacher Center Committee and Other Necessary Committees

Great Rivers Education Service Cooperative's Teacher Center Committee was established by Act 349 of 1985. The TC Committee is composed of at least one representative from the staff of each school district and shall advise the Teacher Center Committee and the governing body on the staffing, programs, and operation of the teacher center. At least one-half, but not more than two-thirds of the members are classroom teachers. The committee meets at least three times per year. The meeting dates for the 2021-2022 school year: October 18, 2021, January 10, 2022, and May 23, 2022.

Teacher Center Committee			
Committee Member	District	Position	Expires
Amy Kinney	Barton	Elementary Teacher	May 2025
Denise Files	Brinkley	Special Education Teacher	May 2025
Nellis Caldwell	Clarendon	Principal	May 2025
Dr. Deangela Graham	Forrest City	Principal	May 2023
Priscilla McDaniel	Helena-West Helena	Assistant Principal	May 2023
Mary Knight	Lee County	Teacher	May 2023
Emily Boals	Marvell-Elaine	Counselor	May 2025
Mary Luker	Palestine-Wheatley	Librarian	May 2023
Candice Johnson	West Memphis	Instructional Coach	May 2023

In addition to the Teacher Center Committee, the following groups met to respond to various needs/concerns:

- ESOL Coordinators, GT Coordinators, and Technology Coordinators

1F: Liaison with Postsecondary Institutions

Great Rivers ESC has a relationship with Arkansas River ESC through educator recruitment efforts with Educators Rising. This relationship also includes the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff (UAPB). In 2020-2021, Great Rivers partnered with UAPB and Arkansas River ESC in planning the Educators Rising Region 4 Conference hosted virtually on April 9, 2021. In 2021-2022, Great Rivers Recruitment and Retention Facilitator served as Co-Coordinator with Arkansas River ESC Teacher Excellence Coordinator of Region 4. The co-coordinators planned the Educators Rising Region 4 Virtual Conference on January 26, 2022. The Educators Rising partnerships support the DESE Educator Effectiveness unit initiatives in working with aspiring educators and teacher leaders within high-need communities. The Educators Rising partnership was publicized on the Great Rivers Facebook page, website, and in the Helena-West Helena local newspaper.

An additional recruitment initiative partnership is between Great Rivers and Reach University. Great Rivers hosted an informational meeting with Joe Ross, President of Reach University, and Celena Spirjam, TNTP, for district and school administrators on May 4, 2022. The session provided introductions amongst Reach University, TNTP, and Great Rivers districts. Following

this informational meeting, Great Rivers hosted an in-person information session for potential Reach University candidates on May 10, 2022 that was led by Joe Ross.

Science, Math, and GT specialists and coordinators have worked extensively with Arkansas State University (ASU) Rural STEM Center, ASU engineering, and ASU-Midsouth teacher education.

Examples of this work include but are not limited to the following:

- teaming with the STEM Center and ASU Engineering to optimize materials utilization, activities facilitation, and student supervision;
- Great Rivers and ASU Rural STEM partnership to provide maker space professional development opportunities; and
- Great Rivers Science Specialist has supported ASU-Midsouth teacher education in providing science-standards training for pre-service science teachers to better equip them to be day-one ready.

The TCC has worked with personnel from the East Arkansas Community College (EACC) to provide an alternative location for workshops other than at Great Rivers's facilities along with providing adequate spacing in previous years for the McCommon Institute. Additionally, the TCC and Recruitment and Retention Facilitator collaborate with Arkansas State University's Education Renewal Zone Director—this partnership led to Great Rivers having the first group of Educators Rising students being trained as tutors in the Arkansas Tutoring Corps.

Section 2: Staff Qualifications

2A: Director, personnel, general policies, and reports

The Great Rivers Education Service Cooperative includes school districts from five counties in the Eastern AR Delta region of the state. The administration of the Cooperative and its staff is located in Helena, AR on the campus of Phillips Community College of the University of Arkansas.

Great Rivers currently employs a staff of forty-seven, consisting of approximately twenty-nine certified positions. All Great Rivers employees who hold positions requiring licensure are licensed in the appropriate area. That documentation is handled via the Great Rivers Business Office. Tomeka Watson, Business Manager, maintains and monitors the employee licensure spreadsheet annually.

What makes Great Rivers so unique is that the specialists work shoulder to shoulder with school districts in classrooms as well as provide training needed. Because Great Rivers member districts have a vast number of needs, the staff provides a wealth of resources that may not be normally needed at other cooperatives. Great Rivers works in partnership with DESE and DCTE to provide additional support for districts labeled in academic distress as well as in an early intervention phase. We collaborate monthly and participate in on-site visits with districts in high need of services, working closely with Traci Holland, District Support Specialist in the DESE office of Public School Accountability, in order to provide focused support to 8 of the 10 public districts. This includes goal setting, providing individualized services which may include participating in school/district walk-throughs and coaching to district leaders by Great Rivers's

personnel. This is above and beyond technical visits provided to all the districts we serve. Our primary focus is to build connections (as we call “bridges”) for the students in the Delta and we work closely with school districts in order to make the structures secure.

The Cooperative uses various modes of communication such as online participation, emails, phone calls, participation in partnership meetings, and inviting member districts and DESE to professional learning opportunities, as well as board meetings. The Cooperative also has a Facebook page and keeps the website up to date.

The Great Rivers Annual Report is compiled each spring and reported to the Great Rivers Board at the June meeting. The Annual Report is then sent to Stacy Smith and Renee Holland via email as per the ADE directive and then posted on our website under State Required Information for public perusal. A few highlights addressed in the 2021-2022 Annual Report include:

- All instructional certified staff attended Cognitive Coaching sponsored by SPDG
- Developed and piloted a Growth Tool for professional growth
- STEM makerspace
- Worked with state math specialists for FUNdamentals of Fractions 3-5

The Great Rivers business office uses the Federal Grants Management Handbook to ensure the proper use of any/all Federal grants funds. Staff participates in all DESE-sponsored workshops and training to stay abreast of current changes, as well as keeps an ongoing communication with the Cooperative director. The Cooperative has had no major audit findings.

The goal of Career and Technical Education (CTE) is to provide services to all students who are enrolled in Career and Technical Education programs in compliance with the Arkansas Department of Career Education which has the mission of providing leadership and contributing resources to serve the diverse and challenging career education needs of Arkansas youth, adults, and persons living with disabilities.

The program is set up to provide services to all students who are enrolled in Career and Technical Education programs. The passage of the Federal Carl Perkins V Act of 2018 and the State Act of 980 directed vocational education to focus on assisting all students, not just special populations. Career and Technical Education also has a major objective of energizing the private sector as a partner throughout the nation.

CTE efforts with the local school districts include but are not limited to the providing of:

- An assessment of the interests, abilities and special needs of the student with respect to successfully completing the Career and Technical Education program;
- Special services, including adaptation of curriculum and instructional equipment and facilities;
- Guidance, counseling and career development activities provided by counselors, teachers, and the Cooperative;
- Career counseling services designed to facilitate the transition from school to post-school training and/or employment and career opportunities, and

- Supplies, equipment and teacher training for the integration of academics and new technologies through sequential course offerings.

Great Rivers and the other 14 education cooperatives make a concentrated effort to share policy/procedural information that will help all of the co-ops work more effectively and efficiently. Great Rivers partners with DESE to oversee pass-through grants from DESE and various organizations, including Praxis tutoring and ARP Homeless II. We also partner with SPDG to provide coaching training to Great Rivers's instructional staff.

2B: Board of Directors and Executive Committee

The Great Rivers Board of Directors currently consists of all the local traditional school district superintendents, who function as a public corporate body and exercises general responsibilities for the Cooperative in regard to policies and practices.

The Board has designated regular face-to-face monthly meetings, held at the Cooperative's administration building. During the monthly meeting, the Board reviews the Cooperative's monthly financial statements. Usually at the Board meeting in May, the Board receives the annual report for review and approval. During the summer, the Board hosts a retreat for administrators of the local school districts.

The Board has some superintendents that have served on the board for more than five years, with this fiscal year, 22-23, having the biggest turnover in board members. This year, the Board currently has three new board members, with another change coming soon as another superintendent has been replaced by its local board. However, the superintendents support each other often as each works to develop a guaranteed and viable curriculum, as well as to grow its own personnel, in the most challenging area of the state.

The Board meets monthly, or at least a minimum of eight times a year, and written policies and procedures for operation are filed with the ADE. The Great Rivers Board has already met each month during the first quarter of this fiscal year.

Section 3: Extent of Local Financial Support

3A: Program Services, local participation, and local support

Great Rivers Education Service Cooperative has been financially supported with state and federal grants that have ensured the Cooperative's ability to serve the local educational community. The state has provided funds to support the basic structure of the Cooperative, which includes the following:

- Salaries and fringe benefits for the director, a teacher center coordinator, and support staff;
- Costs for travel, utilities, rent, equipment, and supplies;
- Funds to support staff and curriculum development activities; and
- Annual Funds for travel expenses of itinerant personnel employed by the Cooperative to serve the part-time needs of local school districts.

In terms of local participation, nine of the ten local public school districts participate fully in Great Rivers Education Service Cooperative services and contribute toward a successful collaborative program. One of the local school systems has been invited to join, but has yet to come on board. Local school superintendents, serve as the board of directors and provide leadership to the Cooperative. The local school districts contribute to a number of Cooperative projects that require funds from the local districts. Generally, those funds are based on the number of students per district. This type of local funding allows for tighter budget controls and for planning of services. Superintendents are willing to share the needs of the district, and how the Cooperative can assist. Likewise, the districts are willing to give and share services and support as needed to improve Cooperative services.

One example of the collaboration amongst districts and cost savings as a result is the E-Rate and Wide Area Network. The Technology Coordinator works directly with local area school district Technology Coordinators to apply for approved E-rate applications for our high-speed Fiber Optic Wide Area Network (operating at a 10 Gigabit bandwidth speed) that connects all of the school campuses and districts together and back to the Cooperative. The E-rate program provides discounts on network connectivity hardware and Wide Area Network connections. Using this program and applying as a consortium allows our schools to get an 85% discount on networking hardware and a 90% discount on WAN connectivity. The Cooperative works with the State's Department of Information Services to implement high-speed fiber optic Internet connectivity provided by the State which leverages the Cooperative WAN and delivers the internet connectivity to all participating schools in the Cooperative area. This saves the Department of Education money because they can bring the Internet to all of our schools utilizing only 3 connections when it used to take over 30. This also saves the schools because they no longer have to pay for the high-bandwidth Internet access as we did in the past. We are the only Cooperative in the state of Arkansas that offers this type of service. The Technology team is continuing to work with our school districts on the deployment of both of our E-rate Category 2 projects. The first Category 2 E-rate application from 2020 has been installed, and we are still waiting for approval from USAC for the 2021 application.

Great Rivers provides professional development and instructional/curriculum support to all ten of our member districts based on their requests and priorities of the state. All ten districts are entitled to participate in state-supported programs, as well as those initiated by Great Rivers ESC. Additionally, we serve personnel from other co-op areas in state-supported training if and when the need arises.

Great Rivers ESC member schools participate in the following extended services supported by their local funds:

- 90% of member districts participate in the Professional Development Consortium: Barton, Brinkley, Clarendon-Holly Grove, Forrest City, Helena-West Helena, Lee County, Marvell-Elaine, Palestine-Wheatley, and West Memphis
- 90% of member districts participate in Gifted and Talented Specialist support: Barton, Brinkley, Clarendon-Holly Grove, Forrest City, Helena-West Helena, Lee County, Marvell-Elaine, Palestine-Wheatley, and West Memphis

- 80% of member districts participate in the CTE Consortium: Barton, Brinkley, Clarendon-Holly Grove, Forrest City, Helena-West Helena, Lee County, Marvell-Elaine, and Palestine-Wheatley
- 80% of member districts utilize the Facilities Coordinator offering: Barton, Clarendon-Holly Grove, Forrest City, Helena-West Helena, Lee County, Marvell-Elaine, Palestine-Wheatley, and West Memphis
- 100% of member districts districts utilize our Early Childhood Special Education student support services
- 100% of member districts participate in the Novice Teacher Mentoring Program

Great Rivers Education Service Cooperative publishes a report annually on all programs/positions. The report is submitted to the Arkansas Department of Education, shared at the June Board of Directors' meeting, and posted on our website under State Required Information.