

North Central Educational Service Cooperative Evaluation

Evaluation Date: October 26, 2022

Section 1: User Satisfaction and Service Adequacy

1A. Annual User Satisfaction survey results (all personnel of member districts) (22.2) <i>User Satisfaction Survey - Please show evidence that the survey was sent to all in the ESC area. Focused effort on Superintendent and key personnel who utilize or facilitate PD. Please identify the percentage of districts that responded to your Survey.</i>	
90% or greater satisfied/very satisfied	5 Excellence
80-89% or greater satisfied/very satisfied	4 Exceeding Standards
70-79% or greater satisfied/very satisfied	3 Meeting Standards
60-69% or greater satisfied/very satisfied	2 Alert
50-59% or greater satisfied/very satisfied	1 In Need of Improvement
<p>Evaluation Notes: There were 474 responses with a 95% overall satisfaction rate. The North Central ESC had high marks in all areas and numerous comments made throughout the day supported the satisfaction that member districts felt for the ESC.</p>	
1B. Summative PD Session Evaluation responses (22.2) <i>ESC Works Final Report for 2020-21 or 2021-22</i>	
3.8 or higher on 4.0 scale	5 Excellence
3.4 to 3.7 on 4.0 scale	4 Exceeding Standards
3.0 to 3.3 on 4.0 scale	3 Meeting Standards
2.6 to 3.2 on 4.0 scale	2 Alert
2.5 or below on 4.0 scale	1 In Need of Improvement
<p>Evaluation Notes: The overall average score from PD sessions for the 21-22 school year was 3.95 from 1668 participants. Several stakeholders interviewed noted that professional development is personalized to the needs of the school, including utilizing the specific curriculum the district is using. Specialists are responsive to ensure that sessions are not a one-time sit and get session, but thoughtful follow up is provided onsite throughout the year. The Co-op is responsive to the needs of the districts in several ways, including offering sessions onsite in districts to reduce travel time for teachers, providing Zoom opportunities, offering more sessions in the summer due to a shortage of subs during the year, and inviting educators to facilitate PD, such as in the case of the Library Media Specialists PLC. They also work with Co-ops across the state to provide sessions such as ACT Prep, Restorative Practices, and Title IX training. The ESC had evidence of listening and responding to the lowest areas noted in the survey. The special education section had lower scores of 84% (LEA supervisors), 89% (behavior specialists), 86% (other sped. services). The ESC addressed needs by providing youth mental health, nonviolent crisis intervention, and Ruby Payne professional learning and services.</p>	

1C. Annual Survey and Needs Assessments (17.00) <i>One professional development needs survey with evidence that the survey was reviewed by ESC leadership and evidence on on-going input of district needs. (survey, agenda, results, follow-up evidence, etc.</i>	
Meets 4 of the 4 criteria AND Reports survey and needs assessment results to member districts and the Department AND Reports any duplications to the Department (<i>How was information shared with DESE</i>)	5 Excellence
Meets 4 of the 4 criteria AND Reports survey and needs assessment results to member districts	4 Exceeding Standards
Meets 4 of 4 criteria listed below. Evidence that: 1. A PD Needs Survey was administered 2. The survey data was reviewed by cooperative leadership 3. Ongoing input of district needs from various groups (i.e. Teacher Center Committee, job alike groups, etc.) 4. Works with the Department to conduct surveys that complement rather than duplicate the work	3 Meeting Standards
Meets 3 of 4 criteria	2 Alert
Meets 2 or less of the 4 criteria	1 In Need of Improvement
Evaluation Notes: In efforts to get more responses the NAESC made changes to the needs assessment survey by sending it directly to administrators twice a year. A variety of stakeholders reviewed the needs assessment results and shared with the sixteen superintendents and various committees. The information is posted on the NAESC website. Administrators stated that the NAESC personalized professional learning for individual schools based on the needs assessment and specific requests from schools. It was stated in several interviews that all parties felt comfortable taking questions and needs to the NAESC. A superintendent stated he asked the educational cooperative for “best uses of funding”. ESC leadership meets regularly with DESE representatives to provide feedback to districts and communicate the needs of districts to DESE.	
1D. Provide Assistance (4.2) <i>District Cost Analysis connected to examples provided.</i>	
Meets 3 of the 3 criteria AND Provides evidence that exceeds the expectation in at least two (2) areas such as exceeding accreditation standards and equalizing education opportunities AND A cost analysis study of coordinated service	5 Excellence
Meets 3 of the 3 criteria AND Provides evidence that exceeds the expectation in at least one (1) areas such as exceeding accreditation standards and equalizing education opportunities OR a cost analysis study of coordinated services	4 Exceeding Standards
Meets 3 of the 3 criteria listed below: 1. Assist member districts in meeting or exceeding accreditation standards and equalizing educational opportunities; 2. Using educational resources more effectively through cooperation among school districts; and 3. Promoting coordination between school districts and the Department in order to provide services that are consistent with the needs identified by school districts and the education priorities of the state	3 Meeting Standards
Meets 2 of the 3 criteria	2 Alert
Meets 1 of the 3 criteria	1 In Need of Improvement

Evaluation Notes:

The Co-op provides assistance to districts in exceeding standards in several areas; including with systematic support for schools in need of Level 3 support; working with two other Co-ops to create a virtual school; and in providing programs for students such as the ACT Prep sessions and STEM Expo. Several of these programs are being provided by the Co-op in conjunction with the AR Department of Education. Both the ACT Prep sessions and STEM Expo are equalizing opportunities for students in this region. The STEM program in this Co-op goes above and beyond standards and exposes students and teachers to a variety of opportunities not readily available in this rural area. The Tri-Region virtual program is another example of how the Co-op is supporting districts to go beyond what is required. In their virtual school, students are engaged daily in synchronous instruction with their teachers, who provide personalized support and interventions. Teachers work closely with parents and each other through Zoom to provide quality instruction for students who choose not to be onsite in their districts. This takes a burden off the school districts, provides quality instruction, and allows these students to remain in their own public school districts. The Coordinator of the Tri-Regional Virtual Program, was mentioned several times by school personnel as providing excellent support and responsiveness for students.

1E. Teacher Center Committee and 10.00 Other Necessary Committees (9.0) TCC Committee list, noting district and position of each member. Link documentation of at least 3 meetings per year 2020-21 or 2021-22 school year.

Meets 5 of the 5 criteria AND Lists the other committees and the purposes or responsiveness to member districts AND Best practices are shared publicly	5 Excellence
Meets 5 of the 5 criteria AND Lists the other committees and the purposes or responsiveness to member districts	4 Exceeding Standards
Meets 5 of the 5 criteria listed below: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A teacher center will provide, if funds are available, curriculum development assistance, educational materials, and staff development services to teachers within the area 2. A teacher center committee is composed of at least one (1) representative from the staff of each school district 3. At least one-half ($\frac{1}{2}$), but not more than two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) of the members are classroom teachers 4. The committee meets at least three (3) times per year; and 5. Other committees of local school personnel are convened to be responsive to the member districts. 	3 Meeting Standards
Meets 4 of the 5 criteria	2 Alert
Meets 3 or less of the 5 criteria	1 In Need of Improvement

Evaluation Notes:

The Teacher/R&R center provides a wealth of resources for educators in the region to access. Items such as computers, laminators, die cuts, and printers. The Teacher Center Committee is composed of representatives from each district including teachers and administrators according to the requirements in the law. Other job-alike groups, including Principals, GT Coordinators, etc. also meet regularly to discuss information pertinent to their roles. During TCC meetings, the TCC updates the group on information from the state for them to disseminate in their districts. They also provide input on Summer PD for planning purposes. One member stated, "The Co-op goes above and beyond to provide PD" for our schools. This meeting is offered both in person and via Zoom, and the recording is shared on their website for all to watch. Superintendents noted the quality of professional development provided and expertise of specialists as being of high value to them.

1F. Liaison with Postsecondary Institutions (16.00)

Publicly shared Post Secondary partnerships.

Collaborates with more than two (2) postsecondary institutions or other recognized educational agencies on a regular basis AND Best practices are shared publicly	5 Excellence
Collaborates with more than one (1) postsecondary institutions on a regular basis	4 Exceeding Standards

Shall cooperate with the state-supported postsecondary institution located within its area	3 Meeting Standards
Cooperates with one (1) postsecondary institution within the state	2 Alert
Does not cooperate or collaborate with a postsecondary institution	1 In Need of Improvement
<p>Evaluation Notes: NAESC has partnerships with at least four postsecondary institutions: Ozarka, UACCB, UCA, and Lyon. These partnerships provide opportunities for larger venues and the ability to support more participants. Best practices are shared via social media, through meetings with the other fourteen ESC, and posted on their website. One employee stated, “they have published 10 podcast episodes with over 400 listeners.” These podcasts are based on teacher questions and needs.</p>	

Section 2: Staff Qualifications and Administration Effectiveness

<p>2A. Director; personnel; general policies, rules and regulations; policies, procedures, expenditures, reports, and audits. (11.00, 12.00, 14.00, 21.00) <i>Spreadsheet of positions occupied with appropriate licenses noted; Evaluations will be checked during site visit; Personnel policies and procedures will be part of the site visit; 2020-21 and 2021-22 annual reports.</i></p>	
Meets 5 of the 5 criteria AND All audit findings are addressed AND Best practices are shared publicly	5 Excellence
Meets 5 of the 5 criteria AND All audit findings are addressed	4 Exceeding Standards
Meets 5 of the 5 criteria listed below: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All positions requiring licensure are occupied by personnel possessing licensure or approved alternative 2. Evidence of staff formal evaluations including performance evaluation of director 3. Personnel policies are in place and current 4. Annual reports are compiled and disseminated to individuals and entities required by statute 5. There is no evidence of fiscal distress as witnessed by any one of criteria in 27.00 of the Rules 	3 Meeting Standards
Meets 4 of the 5 criteria	2 Alert
Meets 4 of the 5 criteria	1 In Need of Improvement
<p>Evaluation Notes: The Northcentral Arkansas Education Service Center is fiscally sound and no fiscal distress noted. Their employee licensing and certifications meet the state standards and all personnel policies are current and shared with the employees at the beginning of each year. Through team interviews, themes emerged which included staff empowerment and repeated acknowledgement of staff expertise across disciplines. The evaluation team applauds strategies used for continual professional development through the use of bi-weekly meetings, yearly evaluations and encouraging daily dialogue amongst colleagues. Teamwork and a cooperative worldview was emphasized multiple times during staff interviews and appears genuine amongst the team at NAESC.</p>	
<p>2B. Board of Directors and Executive Committee <i>Documentation of Board of Directors meetings according to rubric.</i></p>	
The Board of Directors meet more than eight (8) times each year, and written policies and procedures for operation are filed with the State Board AND Records of internal improvement in efficiency of operation are available upon request <i>MAY Substitute: The executive</i>	5 Excellence

<i>committee and board of directors meets more than required.</i>	
The Board of Directors meet more than eight (8) times each year, and written policies and procedures for operation are filed with the State Board <i>MAY Substitute: The executive committee or board of directors meets more than required.</i>	4 Exceeding Standards
The Board of Directors meet at least eight (8) times each year, and general fiduciary responsibilities for the cooperative are documented OR The executive committee meets at least nine (9) times per year, and the board of directors meets at least three (3) times annually. The president of the board shall serve as chair of the executive committee	3 Meeting Standards
The Board of Directors meet less than eight (8) times each year, and/or general fiduciary responsibilities for the cooperative are minimally documented	2 Alert
The Board of Directors meet less than eight (8) times each year, and/or general fiduciary responsibilities for the cooperative are not adequately documented	1 In Need of Improvement
<p>Evaluation Notes: The Northcentral Arkansas Education Service Center has more than exceeded the standard of 8 meetings a year. Their Board of Directors met 10 times during the most recent 2021-22 fiscal year. Minutes of these meetings are posted on their website for public review. Interviews of the superintendents and other stakeholders revealed detailed evidence of innovation at NAESC. This has led to a “De-Silo” effect resulting in less overlapping services and more efficiency.</p>	

Section 3: Extent of Local Financial Support

3A. Program Services; participation of local districts; extent of local financial support; technology center; Math and Science Center (18.00, 19.00, 22.2, 24.00, 25.00)	
Meets 3 of the 3 criteria AND . Programs and services are documented based on needs assessment and evaluation is reported AND . Resources of the educational service cooperative are enhanced by forming support networks among the member schools to provide extended services, provide new services and combine funding to support programs such as group purchasing, thus maximizing local school district funding. 90% or more of member districts participate by purchasing services and providing release time for staff to engage in specialized training & services AND . Cost analysis study has been performed for 1/3 of member districts annually and the findings have been shared in a face-to-face meeting with the superintendent AND . Best practices are shared publicly	5 Excellence
Meets 3 of the 3 criteria AND . Programs and services are documented based on needs assessment AND . 50% or more of member districts support the cooperative in offering extended services in two (2) or more activities or events or purchased services with local funds AND . At least one (1) cost analysis study has been performed and the findings have been shared in a face-to-face meeting with the superintendent(s)	4 Exceeding Standards
Meets 3 of the 3 criteria listed below: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Programs and services are based on the needs of the member districts and priorities of the state 2. Each member district is entitled to participate in programs and services that are fully supported by state funds 3. Programs and other services may be supported by local funds 	3 Meeting Standards
Meets 2 of the 3 criteria	2 Alert
Meets 1 or less of the 3 criteria	1 In Need of Improvement
<p>Evaluation Notes: North Central Cooperative provides financial support to all 16 districts under their umbrella in some capacity. 100% participate in PD offerings and STEM programs. 13 of 16 districts are provided support through the CTE consortium and Early Childhood SpEd student support services. The cooperative’s legislative</p>	

audit was provided for the evaluation team, which showed year to year revenues higher than expenditures, and no audit findings. District cost analysis services are provided every 5 years, but Mr. Cooper provides that yearly for the superintendents of districts that request that service. The Tri-Region Virtual Program is being coordinated through the North Central Co-Op and provides cost effective K-6 virtual school for member school districts of NorthCentral, NorthEast and CRESC cooperatives. This collaborative effort makes it affordable for several schools to provide virtual school for their students, that otherwise may not be able to.

Total Evaluation Score

Determination of Rating	Cooperative Evaluation Level
Must receive a majority score of 5 on categories (at least 6 out of 9 categories); and NO scores below 3	5 Excellence
Must receive at least 6 scores of 4 or some combination of 4 or 5; and NO scores below 3	4 Exceeding Standards
Must receive at least 6 scores of 3 or some combination of 3, 4, or 5; may include only one score of 2 (if some combination of 4 or 5 was assigned) with no additional scores below 3	3 Meeting Standards
Scores 2 in 2 or more categories	2 Alert
Scores 1 in 1 or more categories	1 In Need of Improvement

Evaluation Notes:

North Central ESC was inviting and well prepared for the evaluation team and visit. The ESC organized 7 group interviews with various stakeholders that reinforced the efforts of the cooperative. Team, expertise, personal touch, and responsiveness were all words used to describe the ESC. NCESC received an excellence rating based on meeting criteria outlined in the rubric. Mr. Cooper and Mr. Gipson have established a positive culture within the cooperative and the employees have an attitude of continuous progress and collaboration. One ESC specialist commented, “everyone here is an expert, so we are always helping each other.”

The ESC hired a STEM specialist as a request from the districts. Throughout the interviews there were several positives about STEM that were mentioned in collaboration with others. The STEM specialist is working with the DESE Special Education unit to provide students STEM using high leverage practices. They are also working with the Science unit at DESE on implementing the STEM Model Program and have a school that is about to be designated. They are also piloting the STEM rubric with PreK students for the state.

In one of the interviews, it was highlighted the personal connection that the ESC has with the various district employees. Two different administrators shared personal experiences in which they were having a personal hardship and the ESC stepped in to assist, but also showed them that they cared. “I have a professional relationship with these folks, but when I was sick they sent texts, emails, and flowers”. “They made me stronger in my absence.” “They are truly

good people.” The novice teacher program is also built on relationships and personalization. They interviewed principals of second and third year teachers to gain a greater understanding of what support the novice teacher and their principals needed for them to be successful.

The practices being used in the Virtual school go beyond what is required. They could likely hire less teachers to meet standards, but because they believe in face-to-face instruction, they invest in 11 teachers who are able to provide synchronous instruction to students. This benefits students as they receive more intense instruction. One teacher noted, “It’s like the kids are at the front of the room each day because they are on Zoom.” They have also expanded the program to grades 7 and 8 this year, and are possibly looking to add a 9-12 program. They also include events that are important for students to make sure they are not missing any milestones, such as the Kindergarten graduation held last spring.

The staff at the Co-op works with autonomy and is empowered to support schools. The leadership provided by Mr. Cooper and Mr. Gipson allows for the specialists and coordinators to provide excellent support, and several noted that they are constantly reminded to “work outside their comfort zone.” This has led to a culture of innovation and collaboration in the Co-op, that is also bleeding over into the districts.

Committee Members:		
Stacy Smith, DESE	Jason Evers, Administration	Dr. Candace Killian, School Board
Melissa Howard, Parent	Jill Clogston, ERZ	James Miller, Business
Jennifer Barbaree, DESE	Julie Workman, Co-op	Merinda Jackson, Parent

Committee Chair Signature: *Stacy Smith*