

ESU³

ANNUAL REPORT

24-25



Effectiveness • Efficiency • Excellence



From the CEO of ESU #3

Dr. Dan J. Schnoes

It's a genuine pleasure to present our annual report. We invite you to explore the pages that detail the educational challenges and celebrate the many accomplishments of Educational Service Unit #3.

Here are a few key components:

- For over five decades, we have been the state's largest ESU, delivering high-quality services that save our member districts millions annually.
- We are entering our 60th year on the leading edge, partnering with districts to provide research-based, high-quality educational opportunities for staff and students
- Our Award-Winning Board continually sets and enforces high standards and ambitious expectations for agency performance.
- We value and actively leverage strong partnerships with ESUCC, NDE, and other Nebraska Educational groups to enhance our collective impact.
- We champion educational access across our metro, suburban, and rural districts, ensuring impact in every service we deliver.
- As a proud AESA member, we promote ESU #3's excellence and innovation on the national stage.
- Exceptional collaboration and clear communication are the keys to effectively delivering our core services: staff development, technology, and instructional materials.
- Our highly qualified, innovative staff are the core of our mission, relentlessly focused on advancing student and adult learning.
- ESU #3 is a vibrant, innovative community where every staff member contributes to a great workplace and mission success.



4 Counties



18 Districts



**5,300
Teachers and
Administrators**



**86,000+
Students**



**Award
Winning Board**



**\$1 Million+
Saved Annually**

Committed To:



Collaboration



Excellence



Efficiency



Effectiveness



Communication



Innovation

Everyone truly makes ESU #3 a great place to work, every day.

ESU #3 Board

Stan Turner

District 1

*Arlington, Blair, Fort Calhoun,
Bennington, Elkhorn, DC West*

Ted Stilwill

District 2

Elkhorn, Millard

Marla Fries

District 3

Westside, Ralston

Secretary

Mary Scarborough

District 4

Papillion-La Vista, Millard

Brett Kuhn

District 5

Gretna, Elkhorn, Millard

Liz Tompkins

District 6

*Bellevue, Millard, Papillion-La Vista,
Springfield-Platteview*

Vice President

Brenda Sherman

District 7

*Springfield-Platteview, Plattsmouth,
Conestoga, DC West, Elkhorn, Elmwood-
Murdock, Gretna, Louisville, Weeping Water*

President

Ron E. Pearson

District 8

*Bellevue, Papillion-La Vista, Springfield-
Platteview*



2024-25 BOARD OF EXCELLENCE AWARD



ESU #3 Strategic Plan & Mission

Educational Service Unit #3 will advance Effectiveness, Efficiency, and Excellence through innovative and collaborative leadership and service to positively impact member school districts and all students.

ESU #3 Board Goals

Access:

ESU #3 will collaboratively provide and promote opportunities, access, and support for educational outcomes within the unique needs and contexts of member districts and ESU #3.

Impact:

ESU #3 will develop and utilize a comprehensive and collaborative process to monitor and measure impact across ESU #3 departments and services provided to member districts.

Resources:

ESU #3 will ensure the efficient and effective use of resources to support the continuous improvement of member school districts and ESU #3.

Professional Learning

Assistant Administrator: Dr. Scott Blum

Empowering Educators, Inspiring Students:

In 2024-2025, the ESU #3 Professional Learning Department served and supported districts in multiple and adaptive ways throughout the year with a strategic focus of serving with collaboration, leadership, innovation, and the efficient use of resources in support of its member districts. This included:



8,812
Hours of Service
Delivered



25,847
Teachers and
Administrators Served

Regional Professional Learning

1,160

*Attendees at
over 40
Programs*

Building capacity and fostering agency with professional learning offerings that support continuous improvement, educator wellness, implementation, reflection, leadership, and growth

On-Demand Professional Learning

5,093

*Users of 30+
Modules
Offered*

Modules for both educators and students in high needs areas such as Title IX, Anti-Vaping, Mandatory Reporting, Dyslexia Awareness, Standard Response Protocol, and emendation.

Support for High Ability Learners

3,448

*Students
attended over
180 Programs*

Fostering Talents, Igniting Passions with high-quality programming that ranges from Culinary Skills in partnership with MCC to Poetry with the NE State Poet Laureate.

Makerspace Programming

430

*Students
and 87 Staff
Engaged*

Hands-on learning experiences for both educators and students, incorporating design software, cutting-edge technology, and maker-centered learning, both in the lab and through outreach programs.

Media and Science Center

Offers all districts participation in a library automation consortium and access to research databases, while also managing a collection of over 250 instructional materials and resources for science education, including hands-on experiment kits.

Efficiently Delivering Priority Services to Districts:



Coaching and Leadership Support

Inspiring Effective Teachers and Leaders

5,291

*Hours of Service to over 3,542 Recipients
in 17 Districts*



Curriculum, Instruction, & Assessment

Designing Quality Learning Experience for All

1,047

*Hours of Service to over 2,655 Recipients
in 18 Districts*



Continuous Improvement

Reflective Partnerships for Purposeful Change

376

*Hours of Service to over 1,846 Recipients
in 15 Districts*



Multi-tiered System of Supports

Data-Based Decisions for Student Success

791

*Hours of Service to over 5,998 Recipients
in 15 Districts*



Language Arts and Mathematics

Building Foundational Skills for Future Success

155

*Hours of Service to over 927 Recipients
in 15 Districts*



Digital Learning

Leveraging Technology for Innovative Instruction

250

*Hours of Service to over 1,136 Recipients
in 15 Districts*



Leadership, Innovation, and Research

Leveraging Technology for Innovative Instruction

\$2.2

*Million grant to serve and support a consortium of 7 districts
and ESU #3/Sarpy County Head Start and over 15,000 students*

Principal Support Initiative (PSI)

17

Head principals from 9 districts serving 6,000 students

Student Services

Executive Director: McKayla LaBorde

Improving Outcomes for Children...

The ESU #3 Student Services Department is proud to have served children ages Birth-21 and their families throughout the ESU #3 area and beyond. We strive to design exceptional services, programs and resources for ESU #3 children, families and the staff who support them.

Through Quality Professional Learning:

Student Services Staff have provided thousands and thousands of hours of high-quality professional development to educators on a wide range of topics. Many projects are regional and support ESUs 2, 3, and Omaha Public Schools.

- Autism Spectrum Disorders Network Grant (Regional)
- Multi-Tiered System of Support and Continuous Improvement
- Inclusive Practices
- Postsecondary Transition Grants (Regional)
- Social, Emotional, and Behavioral Learning
- Greater Metro Deaf and Hard of Hearing Program (Regional)
- NeMTSS Support (Regional)
- Special Education Leadership
- Professional Learning Communities of Practice
- Specialized training for teachers, SLPs, School Psychologists and Administrators

1,809 Educators trained by the ESU #3 Autism Network Team

856 parents, professionals, and students attended activities/workshops provided by the Nebraska Regional Programs food Students who are Deaf/Hard of Hearing

15.25 Million in Grants and Contracts



Through Investing in Early Childhood:

The Student Services Early Childhood team has provided professional development, coaching and consultation to our dedicated early childhood workforce, while our Birth-3 team helps families of infants and toddlers with disabilities get started on the right foot.

- Birth-3 Services Coordination
- Early Learning Connection (ELC)
 - Professional Development Team
 - Bilingual Professional Development
 - Coach Consultant
 - Child Development Associates Navigator
- Early Childhood Coordination Services
- Planning Region Team #3

2,773 District Preschool Educators trained by the ESU #3 Early Childhood Coordination Team

909 Referrals for Birth-3 Services processed

181 Events offered by ELC Professional Development/Coach Consultant, impacting 60,000+ children in early care and education programs.



**Nebraska Early
Development Network**

Through Direct Services to Students:

Student Services partners with our school districts to provide needed services and supports in the areas of Speech Language Pathology, School Psychology, Mental Health Therapy, Early Childhood Special Education, Teachers of the Visually Impaired, Vision Materials Coordination, Orientation and Mobility Services, Audiological Support, and through activities for students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing.

237 Students seen in Tier 2/Tier 3 School Mental Health Services

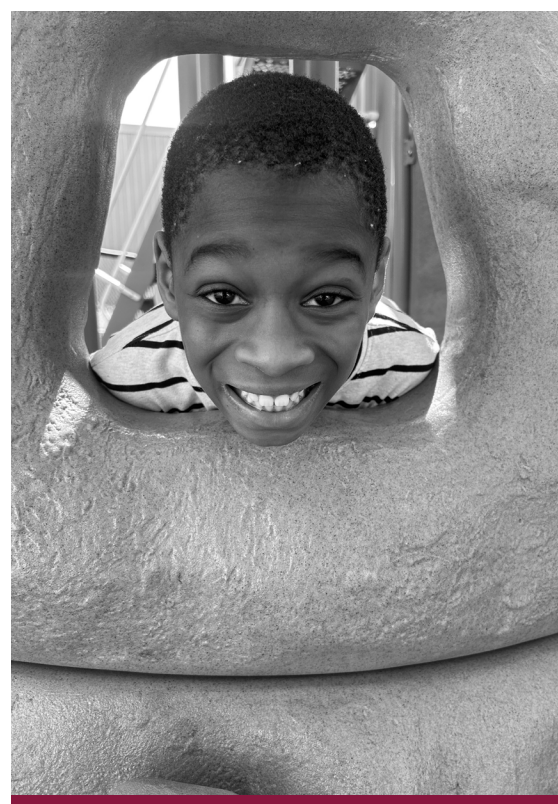
1,469 Staff engaged in School Mental Health professional learning

90+ Students Served at Brook Valley



Through Intervention at Brook Valley:

ESU #3's Brook Valley Program is an intensive intervention for students with disabilities in grades K-12+ who have significant cognitive or behavioral difficulties. Highly trained staff at Brook Valley provide specialized programming and support to assist students in finding alternative ways to succeed as well as opportunities for independence, allowing students to transition back to their neighborhood schools.



Information Systems & Technology

CIO: Bill Pulte



The Information Systems & Technology Department consists of three distinct teams that help districts with a multitude of services. In addition to the teams below, the IS&T team also leads several consortium purchases assisting districts with price negotiations and discounts.

Cybersecurity: This is the newest team to the IST department, assisting districts with support after a security incident but also building systems to avoid potential problems. This includes support of MFA and end-user training.

Data Systems: Provides support and development for NebSIS, a student information system, product integrations, learning management systems and custom programming. This includes products such as the Flex Scheduler, and Data Dashboards.

Network and Systems: Provide support for hardware and networking solutions. These consist primarily of internet access, filtering as required by CIPA and Wide Area and Local Area Networking support.

The ESU #3 IST team takes on several roles as state and area leaders by serving and leading several committees focused on advancing technology throughout the region.

“ESU #3 provides invaluable support to Gretna public schools. Their commitment to addressing our technology needs is evident in the seamless development and integration of new tools and resources. We are grateful for their partnership and the positive impact they have on our students and staff.”

- Greg Schwanke (Gretna Public Schools)

“ESU #3 always provide outstanding support and services, ESU #3 has automated processes saving the district time and resources.”

- Robert Godfrey (Bellevue Public Schools)

“Every question/problem we brought to the tech staff at ESU #3 has been received with a “Yes, we can help with that!”..even when it has been off hours and I bypassed the help desk by resorting to a text for help.”

- Greg Boettger (Bellevue Public Schools)

“ESU #3 continues to be a wonderful educational partner as we plan and deploy technical systems and solutions to our staff and students. We appreciate their customer service focus and expertise in an ever changing technical environment.”

- Kent Kingston (Millard Public Schools)



Value	Admin	Cyber	Development	Systems	Grand Total
eFinance PLUS	8	0	29	537	574
Writing System	0	0	11	0	11
WordWare	1	0	1	0	2
Tyler	1	0	0	6	7
TimeClockPlus	0	0	0	0	0
Time and Attendance	0	0	0	0	0
Terminated Employees	0	0	0	1	1
Teacher Evaluation System	0	0	4	0	4
TLC	0	0	2	4	6
System Integration	1	0	20	9	30
Sub System	2	1	0	5	8
Software Implementation	16	0	2	19	37
Servers	2	0	14	159	175
Powerschool	0	0	0	0	0
Phone System	3	0	0	65	68
PeopleAdmin	0	0	0	0	0
Offsite Repair	81	0	0	0	81
New Employee	12	0	0	22	34
Network Security	0	35	0	12	47
Network	7	7	2	673	689
NDE State Reporting	0	0	4	3	7
NebSIS	5	0	1886	34	1925
Moodle	1	0	31	0	32
Logs	0	0	0	1	1
Laserfiche	1	0	56	1	58
Helpspot	5	0	1	29	35
Graphic Design	0	0	8	0	8
Google Classroom	0	0	46	1	47
Google	21	2	5	83	111
Forms Site	0	0	147	0	147
Equipment Checkout	23	0	0	90	113
Email	2	40	1	32	75
ESU #3 Website	9	0	89	0	98
EMS	0	0	18	1	19
E-rate	1	0	0	0	1
Drivers Education	0	0	1	1	2
District Website	0	0	4	2	6
Desktop Issues	8	2	2	651	663
Copiers	1	0	0	39	40
Conference Center	2	0	1	566	569
Citrix	0	0	1	264	265
Badge/Security	81	0	0	6	87
AdvancED	0	0	0	0	0
Administrative Tasks	359	3	8	114	484

Program Services

Director: Troy Glock



Fall Festival 2024

Percentage of Children who are up to date on a schedule of preventative and primary health care per Nebraska Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment (EPSDT):

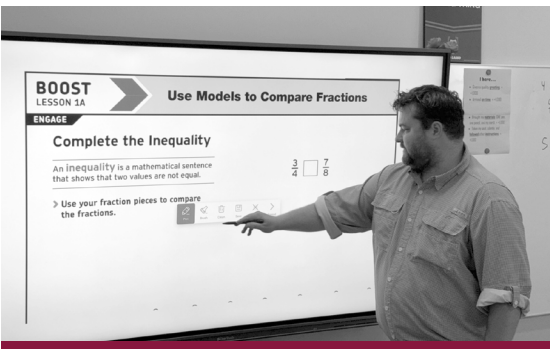
Head Start 92%
Early Head Start 55%

Percentage of Children served who received Dental Exams:

Head Start 67%
Early Head Start 98%

Percentage of Children with Health Insurance:

Head Start 100%
Early Head Start 100%



Sarpy County/ESU #3 Head Start

The mission of Head Start is to promote school readiness for young children from low-income families by supporting their cognitive, social, and emotional development. Sarpy County/ESU #3 Head Start advances this mission by offering a comprehensive range of services that prepare both children and families for long-term success.

The program currently serves 140 children. Head Start classrooms (for children ages 3–5) operate in a 6.5-hour setting, while Early Head Start supports infants and toddlers (birth to age 3) through either a 7.5-hour classroom model or weekly home visits as part of the Home-Based program.

Each family is paired with a dedicated Family Advocate or Home Visitor who helps them set goals and connect with vital community resources. Staff members work alongside families to support progress toward self-sufficiency and long-term stability. Through strong partnerships with local organizations, the program helps families access support for housing, utilities, food, and other essential needs.

The program is committed to engaging families in meaningful and impactful ways. During the 2024–2025 program year, the primary focus was on integrating the creative arts into all aspects of learning and development. This emphasis was reflected in professional development opportunities and implemented across all Head Start and Early Head Start classrooms.



Jim Gill Family Concert Event

To support this initiative, the program partnered with presenters such as Jim Gill and Omaha Performing Arts to deepen staff understanding of arts integration and to enrich classroom experiences. As part of this effort, Jim Gill led an interactive family concert that brought storytelling, music, and movement together — encouraging families to actively participate and connect through the arts.

TITLE I Boys Town

ESU #3 administers the Title I program at Boys Town by employing a dedicated program coordinator and an intervention teacher. The Title I Coordinator oversees the administration and implementation of the program, ensuring that students receive the necessary support to meet academic standards. This includes collaborating with teachers, administrators, and support staff to develop and maintain an effective Title I program.

Title I funds are used to provide targeted academic assistance through an intervention teacher, who leads classes in reading and math. These funds also support behavioral and academic interventions by providing supplemental materials, before- and after-school programs, and staffing for summer school.

In addition to academic instruction, Title I supports supplemental activities and provides resources for both the hospital and home campus programs. Funds are also allocated to assist learning in family homes by supplying project materials, a graphing calculator loan program, reading resources, and educational games for use during “study hour.” Furthermore, Title I supports high school and middle school book clubs by providing books and related materials.

The Title I Coordinator monitors the use of funds and ensures that all supplemental curriculum and intervention efforts align with program goals.

Driver Education

ESU #3 provides a comprehensive driver education safety program consisting of 20 hours of classroom instruction along with driving lessons and a final DMV approved road test.

In 2024 - 2025, we served 405 students from Platteview, Plattsmouth, Gretna, Weeping Water, Conestoga, Blair, PLV, and Bennington. We continue to offer both in-person and online options for instruction. Currently, all instructors are competency certified.

Conference Center

The Conference Center offers 13 versatile conference rooms equipped with advanced distance learning technology, providing effective learning environments for both conference and workshop participants. Our multi-functional event space is supported by on-site IT staff and catering services, ensuring a seamless experience for all attendees.

We accommodate a wide range of events, from small meetings and student activities to outside agencies and large workshops for both district and non-district organizations. During the 2024-2025 school year, ESU #3 hosted:

1,218	23,603	4,783	64	69
Events/Meetings	Adults	Students	District Meetings/ Workshops	Student Events

Gifford Farm

Our History: Gifford Farm Education Center is deeply rooted in a location rich in both geographic and historical significance. Originally a family farm, it became an educational hub under the stewardship of ESU #3, thanks to the generous donation from Dr. Hal Gifford. Today, Gifford Farm spans 420 acres, including 280 acres of cropland, and is bordered by woodlands and the Missouri River oxbow. This unique setting has inspired a wide array of programs and events, serving thousands of students, educators, and community members since 1973.

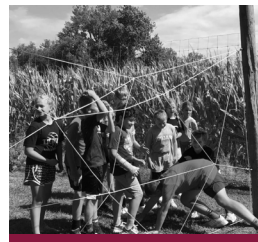
At Gifford Farm, we provide outdoor education experiences that enrich curricula and bring learning to life. Our programs offer a hands-on approach to science, history, nature, agriculture, and adventure. During the 2023-2024 school year, we delivered over 500 programs to a diverse array of community groups, including local school districts, childcare centers, and non-profit organizations.

As students journey to our farm, they embark on a path of discovery—immersing themselves in the wonders of nature, exploring the importance of sustainable agriculture, and experiencing the excitement of outdoor adventure.

Highlights From the Year:

Gifford Farm was the recipient of two grants this past year.

From the Midlands Community Foundation we received \$2500 to help refresh and expand our Team Challenge program. We will be adding four or five new challenge implements to our course. We are looking forward to utilizing these new challenges with our visitors.



Meta/Facebook awarded us a grant to upgrade and improve our chick incubator program. The total awarded for this grant was \$5,500. In our incubator program, we give teachers eggs and a chick incubator and brooder so the students can see the life cycle of the chick and care for them for about a week in the classroom. In the past, we've had limited success with the incubators we had. We tested out the new ones and were very pleased with the results. Any chicks that hatch are eventually returned to Gifford Farm to become part of the flock.

This year we were able to offer more summer camp opportunities by partnering with some new community partners. We held expanded camps in conjunction with the Omaha Children's Museum and Fontenelle Forest. The partnerships were beneficial to both sides and we look forward to working with them again next summer. The Siembra Nebraska Internship program provided us with interns over the summer who became an integral part of the summer camp team. In all we were able to support 600 children in our summer camps! We enjoyed introducing them to the natural world around us.

We are extremely proud that we were able to exceed our 2024-2025 goal of 22,000 visitations. We achieved 22,341! We continue to work towards greater visibility in the community and look forward to expanding the number of visitations in the coming year.

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.

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.

In the spring of 2023, our ESUCC Cooperative Purchasing Program was the proud recipient of both the “Quality and Innovation Award” and the “Relationship Excellence Award” from the Association of Educational Purchasing Agencies.



How We Help Nebraska Schools Save

COMPETITIVE BIDS

A procurement that involves inviting multiple vendors to bid for a product, material, or service.

SPECIAL BUYS

A negotiated agreement between ESUCC and a vendor to provide a service at a discounted rate to ESUCC members.

ANNUAL BUYS

A competitive line item bid where vendors are invited by bid category and awarded by line item.

YEAR-ROUND BUYS

A competitive bid or special buy agreement where items are available year-round in our ESUCC Marketplace.

AEPA NATIONAL SOLICITATIONS

A group of Educational Service Agencies/political subdivisions organized through a Memorandum of Understanding between all participating states for the purpose of securing combined volume purchasing contracts based on potential sales by qualifying customers in participating states.

Member Savings Statewide 2024- 2025

Total Savings

\$8,447,946

6 Year Savings Total

\$47,885,326

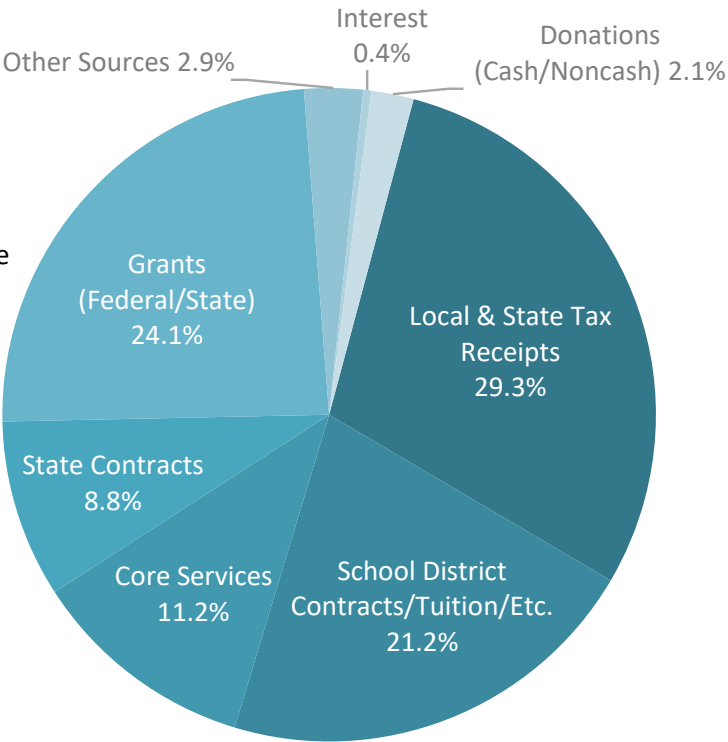
ESU #3 Sales & Savings By Program 2024- 2025

PROGRAM	MEMBER COST	SAVINGS
AEPA	\$1,309,405.41	\$245,847.01
Annual Buy	\$127,241.95	\$50,028.52
Custodial Buy	\$423,175.29	\$232,939.95
Extended Buy	\$951.39	\$251.99
Food Buy	\$994,919.21	\$232,839.95
Paper Buy	\$62,885.93	\$10,992.71
Special Buy	\$893,133.68	\$224,163.04
GRAND TOTALS	\$3,811,712.86	\$1,057,213.42

Financial

CFO: Lori Meays

The ESU #3 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.

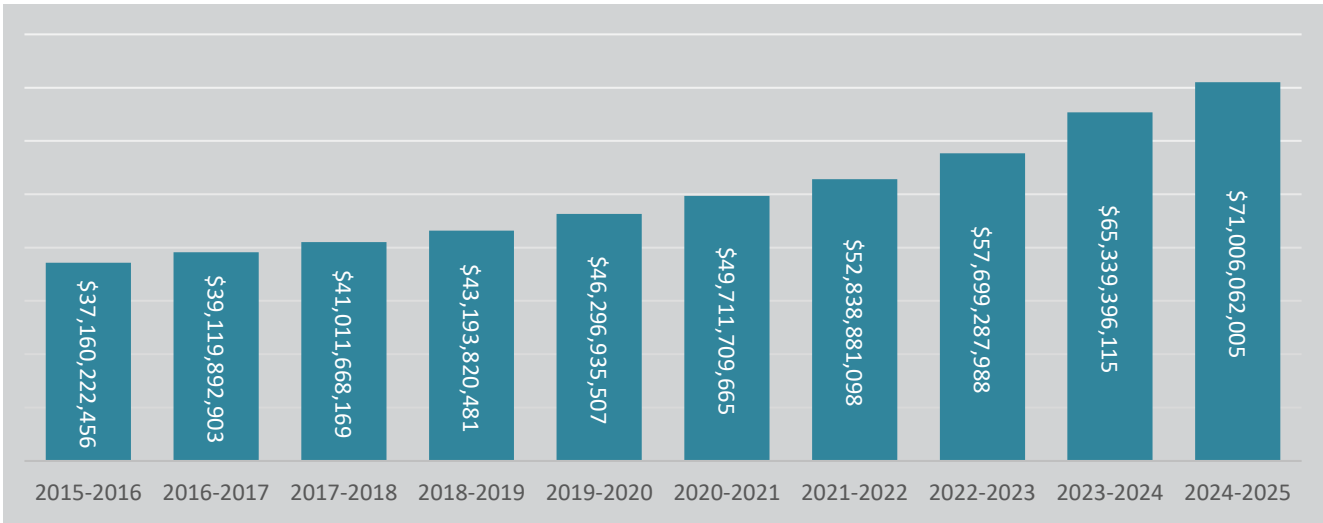


REVENUE

2024-2025 Actual Revenue

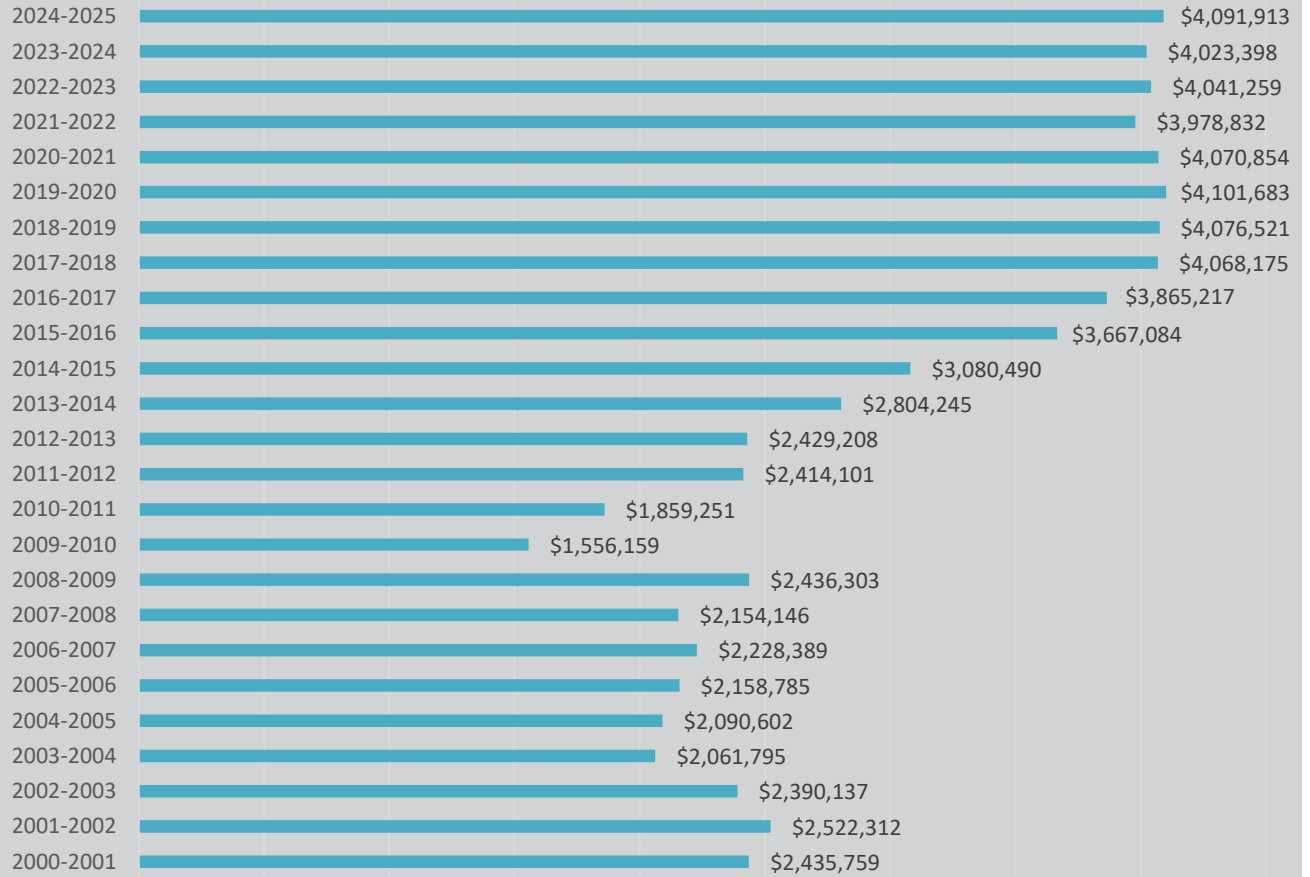
PROGRAM	AMOUNT	PERCENT OF TOTAL
Local & State Tax Receipts	\$10,707,013	29.32%
School District Contracts/Tuition/Etc.	\$7,729,069	21.17%
Core Services	\$4,091,913	11.21%
State Contracts	\$3,218,333	8.81%
Grants (Federal/State)	\$8,811,327	24.13%
Other Sources	\$1,062,398	2.91%
Interest	\$140,251	0.38%
Donations (Cash/Non-cash)	\$756,447	2.07%
Total	\$36,516,751	100%

VALUATION



CORE SERVICE FUNDS

ESU #3 Core Service Funds Received



EXPENDITURES

2024-2025 Actual Expenditures

Administration & Business Services	\$1,462,113	4.59%
Board Expense	\$68,518	0.21%
Program Services		
Buildings & Grounds and Coop Purchasing	\$1,031,073	3.23%
Capital Improvement & Building Fund	\$597,514	1.87%
Conference Center	\$202,178	0.63%
Driver Education	\$147,006	0.46%
Gifford Farm	\$557,427	1.75%
Head Start Program	\$3,308,614	10.38%
Program Services - General	\$90,693	0.28%
Title I Program at Boys Town	\$632,315	1.98%
Information Systems and Technology	\$6,106,012	19.16%
Professional Learning Department	\$4,333,020	13.59%
Student Services District Services, Grants, Contracts, & Other Programs	\$13,340,114	41.85%
Total	\$31,876,597	100%



2024-2025

Filled colored boxes indicate inclusion

Arlington	Bellevue	Bernington	Blair	Conestoga	DC West	Elkhorn	Elmwood / Murdock	Ft. Calhoun	Gretna	Louisville	Millard	Papillon / La Vista	Plattsmouth	Ralston	Springfield - Platteview	Weeping Water	Westside	Others
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Administration/Ancillary Services

Cooperative Purchasing																		
Gifford Farm																		

Substitute Teacher Program

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Driver Education

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Information Systems & Technology

Business Services																		
Student Information Services																		
Substitute Finder																		
Custom Web Development/Graphic Design																		
Internet Services																		
Networking Services																		
Document Management																		
Managed Services																		
Consortium Purchasing																		

Professional Learning

Regional Staff Workshops																		
Direct Services in Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment, Instructional Technology, Digital Learning																		
Science Refurbishing																		
ProQuest Services																		
Principal Support Initiative																		
Coaching Cadre																		

Student Services

Brook Valley School																		
Early Childhood Services																		
Services Coordination																		
Speech/Language Therapy																		
Vision Services																		
Behavioral Health																		
Autism Spectrum Disorder Grant																		
Regional Deaf/Hard Hearing Contract																		
RDA/PEaK																		
VR Student Conference																		
Metro Transition Grant																		
Community of Practice																		
School Psychology Services																		
School Mental Health Services																		
Planning Region Team 3																		