

A MODEL FOR IMPLEMENTING A STATEWIDE NETWORK
OF REGIONAL EDUCATIONAL SERVICE CENTERS
IN THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA

By

JOE ELLIS WHITE

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Bachelor of Science
Oklahoma State University
Stillwater, Oklahoma
1959

Master of Teaching
Southwestern State College
Weatherford, Oklahoma
1967

Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate College
of the Oklahoma State University
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Thesis Approved:

Kenneth H. Clair

Thesis Adviser

Donald W. Robinson

Thomas A. Cannon

Larry M. Berlin

N. N. Durham

Dean of the Graduate College

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CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM AND ITS BACKGROUND

Introduction

Today, in schools across the country, there is evidence that educators are addressing themselves to the highly complex task of assimilating, integrating, and making decisions about each facet of the educational process, and thereby creating, administering, and improving the environment for learning wherein students at every level may develop those individual talents, skills, and values which are unique and significant to mankind. This study is concerned with the development of a model for implementing a statewide network of Regional Educational Service Centers (RESC) in the state of Oklahoma in order to assimilate, integrate, improve, and make more effective use of services which may or may not be available to the local school districts, and to coordinate services of other state agencies.

Background

The RESC is a regional institution set to offer school districts help in a variety of ways as a coordinate concern to provide needed services to school districts that they could not otherwise provide as effectively and economically.

There has been significant interest expressed in Oklahoma in the past few years for the development of a system of RESC as a result of

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funds that were earmarked for supplementary educational centers when Congress enacted the Elementary, Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965.

The RESC concept developed into a working reality in Oklahoma based on a plan suggested by Hall (1970) and the funding of three regional service centers with Title III ESEA funds. Although local districts have profited from these centers, they have not been able to develop a plan for financing the operation once the Title III funds subsided. Currently there are three RESC in Oklahoma, but unless interest and funds are made available immediately through a concerted statewide effort, these centers will fail to serve as the models they were intended to be by the Title III ESEA (See Figure 1).

Regional educational agencies are supported by recent enactment and pending legislation in many states. It is obvious from examination of activities in selected states that there is widespread interest in the intermediate unit. States such as New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Nebraska, Utah, and Texas are representative of a sample of states that have made significant advances toward establishing regional educational service agencies (Chambers, 1971).

Need for Regional Educational Service Centers in the State of Oklahoma

Historically the connecting unit between a state department of education and the LEA has been the county superintendent of schools. In Oklahoma the county superintendents were originally administrative arms of the state, with record keeping duties, regulatory powers, and educational leadership functions.

School district consolidation and expanding educational programs

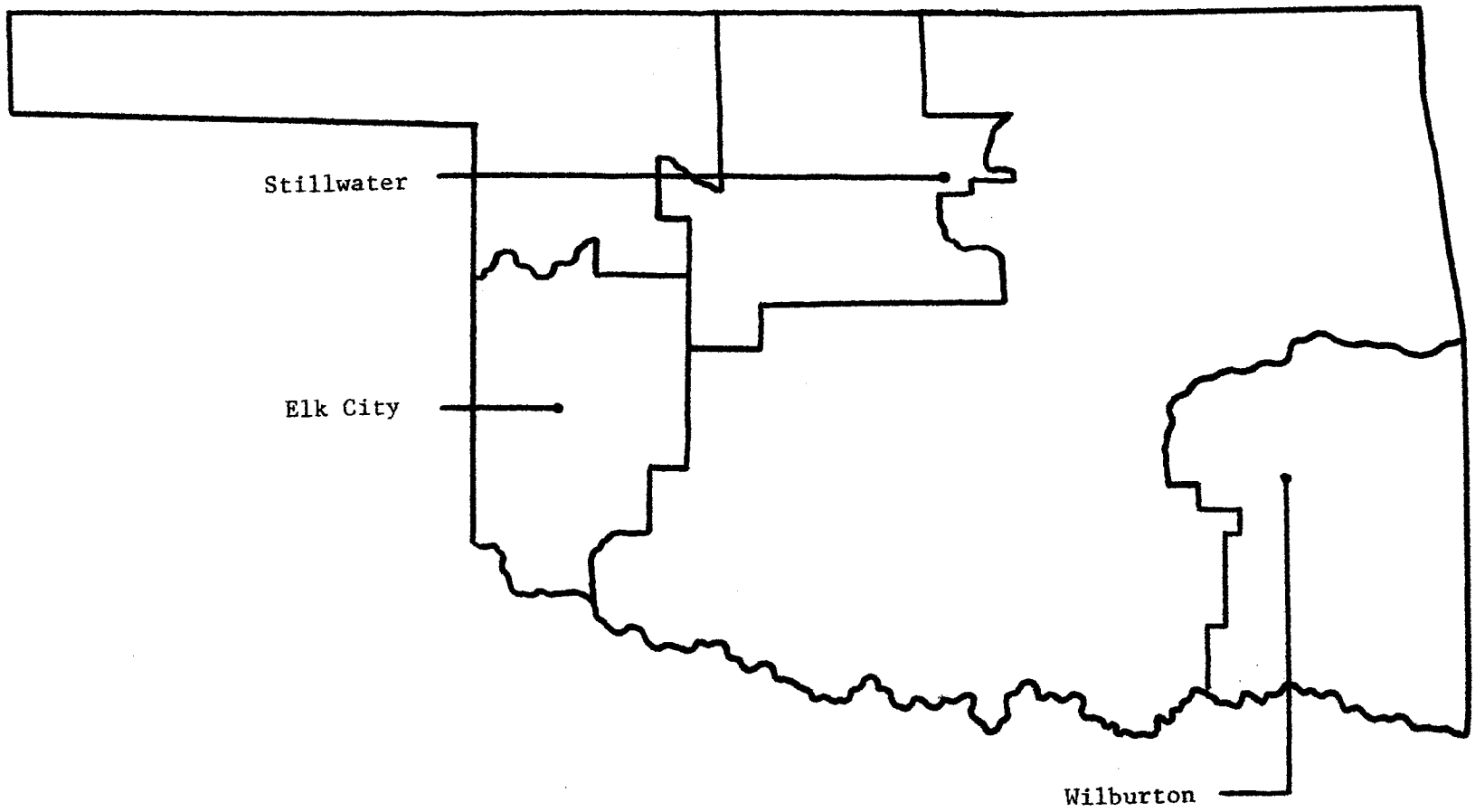


Figure 1. Regional Educational Service Centers in Oklahoma

rapidly made the office of county superintendent obsolete in the state of Oklahoma. In a few counties there was a single school district; in others, only two or three. Additional programs and educational needs have required a new kind of connecting unit with a multi-county spread. The Oklahoma State Legislature began to selectively abolish the office of county superintendent and did not provide a connecting unit. In Oklahoma the functions of the county superintendent have been assigned to the Instructional Division of the State Department of Education, which basically involves the reviewing of transfer requests (Casey, 1970).

Adams (1960) pointed out the need for a more desirable type of intermediate unit of educational administration for Oklahoma. He concluded that county units in Oklahoma are not large enough to serve many of their respective local districts. He recommended an intermediate unit that would be, in most cases, larger than a single county.

The major limitations of the existing county unit of school administration in Oklahoma to assist constituent local school districts in providing needed program and services relate to: (1) programs and services, (2) professional personnel, and (3) enrollment size. Adams (1960) reports there were only eight counties in Oklahoma that had more than 10,000 students in average daily attendance (ADA). This indicates that most Oklahoma counties have a limited number of professional personnel, which limits the services and programs which can be provided to the LEA.

Adams (1960) study reports a need for an agency to carry out educational functions that can be located close to the LEA. The Oklahoma State Department of Education does assist the LEA in many aspects as a centralized unit; however, it is remotely located at the State Capitol.

It does not appear to be the logical organizational unit to provide major assistance to local school districts.

A major alternative would be for the Oklahoma State Department of Education to decentralize its educational operation. The question arises as to what aspects of the State Department of Education could be effectively decentralized. A decentralization of the State Department of Education staff would seem to require significant planning and an investment of tremendous financial support.

Another potential alternative to the establishment of an intermediate unit would be school district consolidation. Perhaps the urban areas which do not need consolidation could consolidate due to their proximity. However, the rural districts of Oklahoma which perhaps need to consolidate, could not consolidate due to the student per square mile ratio. Many students in rural Oklahoma are traveling 40 miles by bus to attend school today.

A need does exist across Oklahoma for educational programs and services to meet the needs of the LEA. These services cannot be provided by the county unit because few exist today. The decentralization of the State Department of Education would be cumbersome and expensive. School consolidation in rural Oklahoma does not seem feasible due to the number of miles children would be forced to travel in order to receive an education.

The need exists for a different structural organization that can better utilize existing resources, develop new resources and provide programs and services. The RESC appears to be a feasible alternative to permit LEA to overcome present inadequacies and to provide needed educational opportunities for the students.

It appears that if the RESC is to become a model that can be operationalized, then a logical and systematic approach would be to do so through a study which will examine the feasibility for the RESC in the state of Oklahoma.

Purpose of the Study

This study was selected because of a growing concern about the large number of regional service centers that have been designed and operationalized conforming to the explicit purposes of Title III, yet that have not been continued by the local educational agencies following the termination of outside funding. It is the purpose of this study to help expand regional concept in the state of Oklahoma, and further use this model to recommend a statewide network of RESC to the Oklahoma State Department of Education.

Significant work has already been accomplished based on the regional centers already in operation in Oklahoma. In addition the tremendous research on a plan for regional intermediate educational centers developed by Hall (1970) is monumental and basic to this study. This study was concerned with a macrocosmic view of the need and suggested criteria for establishing a regional network plan for the State.

It will further attempt to provide a microcosmic view of a state plan through the development of a suggested model which will include:

1. Suggested guidelines for
 - . . . Governance
 - . . . Administration
 - . . . Financing
 - . . . Services

2. Cost analysis of an existing Title III ESEA, RESC in the state of Oklahoma
3. An evaluation analysis model for RESC

Significance of the Study

To date, only a few states have continued the educational service centers through legislative funding. No state has made a study on the cost analysis of existing RESC activities. It seems plausible that this study can make a significant and startling impact on education in Oklahoma if such recommendations are accepted by the State Legislature and the State Board of Education,

The Honorable David Hall, Governor of the state of Oklahoma, and Dr. Leslie R. Fisher, State Superintendent of Public Instruction of Oklahoma, have both expressed, in writing, an interest in the initiation and results of this study.

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this study is to examine the feasibility and extent to which the RESC can effectively deliver educational services to the constituent LEA.

The study is concerned with the development of a state plan based on developed criteria for RESC in Oklahoma. The study will also attempt to analyze alternative approaches of financing, organization, and governance of the RESC. It will further suggest means for adoption by the local school system under the aegis of the State Department of Education.

The Limitations of the Study

In order to establish a study which might be covered with reasonable completeness within the constraints of time and resources, the scope of this study is arbitrarily limited in several respects.

It specifically deals with the period of time from April, 1965, to December, 1973. This includes the period of development, organization, and operation of the Title III ESEA Regional Educational Service Centers in the State and Nation.

It deals only with the feasibility and extent to which the services of Title III Southwest Oklahoma Region 14 Service Center can be continued under the aegis of the State Board of Education with support of the State Legislature.

Definition of Terms

Regional Educational Service Center

A vehicle to provide services to local educational agencies on a regional basis in a consistent and organized manner.

Basic Operation Grant

A block of money appropriated by the State Legislature to each RESC.

Cost Analysis

A measure for analysis of school district and regional service center expenditures.

Oklahoma State Department of Education Regional
Prescriptive Teaching Resource Center

A facility established to provide special education core services to school districts across the state of Oklahoma.

Board of Governors

The governing board of a RESC.

Local Educational Agency

A school district, either dependent or independent, which is recognized and accredited by the Oklahoma State Department of Education.

State Superintendent

The official head of the Oklahoma State Department of Education.

Average Daily Attendance

The number of calculated days of attendance in school by eligible students.

Administrative Cost

Financial category dealing with the general regulation, direction, and control of the affairs of the school district.

Instructional Costs

Financial category dealing directly with or aiding in the teaching of students or improving the quality of teaching.

Title III ESEA

A segment of the Elementary, Secondary Education Federal Act of
1965.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In Oklahoma, leaders from many different educational organizations, including legislative bodies, have asked for and participated in studies of different types of regional centers. John C. Fitzgerald did a doctoral study at Oklahoma A & M College in 1956 on the "Adequacy of Intermediate School Districts in Oklahoma." Then in 1960, James Avery Adams' study, "A Proposal for the Creation of Desirable Intermediate Units of Educational Administration for Oklahoma," brought attention to such needs. In 1970, Charles Oliver Hopkins studied data for a "State-wide System of Area Vocational-Technical Training Centers for Oklahoma." Leonard Hall reported his study in 1970 as "A Plan for a Statewide Network of Regional Intermediate Educational Centers for the State of Oklahoma." In 1971, after a comprehensive study the State Department of Education reorganized the 18 recommended Regional Educational Service Centers (RESC) areas into 15 areas. As late as 1973, Betty Williams made a comprehensive service evaluation of four regional service centers in Oklahoma, i.e., Bartlesville, Elk City, Stillwater, and Wilburton.

Fitzgerald's (1956) study investigated the capacity of counties to serve as intermediate units, particularly for administration of specialized educational services. His determination was that the intermediate unit should have at least 10,000 public school students, but he found that few Oklahoma counties could offer a maximum program.

Adams (1960) based his recommendations on criteria such as total and pupil population, topography, geography, agricultural regions, economic areas, and trade centers. Based on the findings of his study, the state of Oklahoma could be divided into 18 areas suitable for the formation of intermediate units of educational administration that would be potentially adequate to provide a comprehensive program of specialized educational services in cooperation with local school districts.

Hall (1970) made a comprehensive study of existing centers in other states and recommended a set of criteria for regional intermediate educational centers. He used a modified version of Adam's geographical regions as a basis and developed 15 recommended regions.

In 1970 the State Department of Education recommended to the Legislature a bill establishing 18 intermediate units based upon somewhat equalized student population, contiguous county boundaries, and other geographical-economic considerations. The bill was shelved in hearings, because of a variety of opinions by witnesses and legislators to the proposal (Casey, 1970).

A study was conducted by the Oklahoma State Department of Education in 1971 in order to draw a pattern for the establishment of regional area centers (See Figure 2). Appropriate criteria for Oklahoma appeared to be (1) the establishment of areas 10,000 and under 100,000 in scholastic population with equitable distribution of students where possible without dividing a school district; (2) the maintenance of county boundaries except where a total number of students was excessive; (3) a perimeter-to-center driving time of approximately one hour except where scarcity of population would dissipate services; and (4) other economic, social, and educational characteristics which would tend to unite an

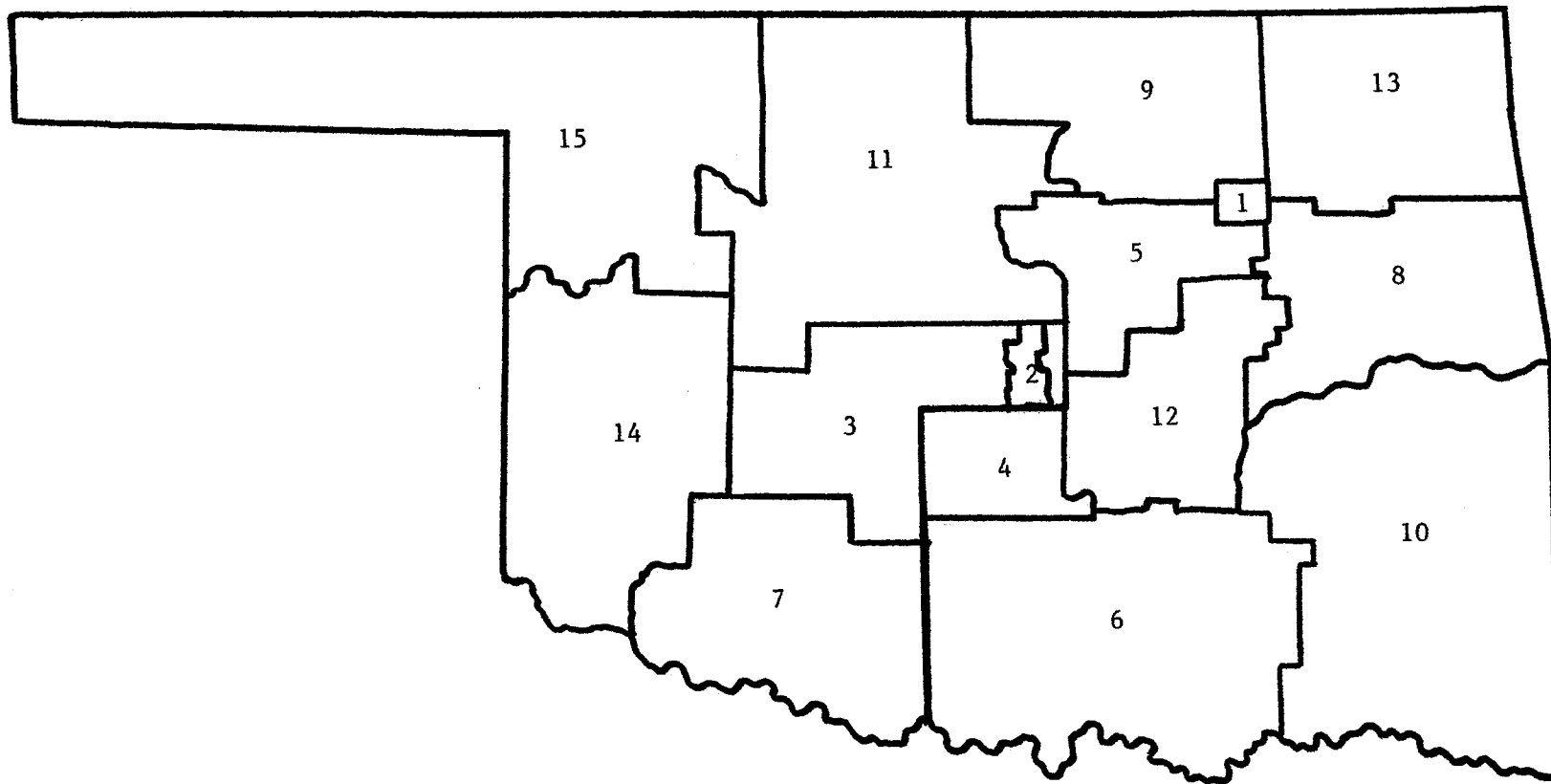


Figure 2. Fifteen Educational Service Centers

area with common bonds. By using these criteria the study aimed to overcome the weaknesses of the previous studies of having each county as a separate unit which would be almost impossible to fund and staff appropriately at this time; of using criteria such as agriculture production which is no longer indicative of the major factors common to an area; of having areas which cross too many legally constituted boundaries; of establishing areas with too few students for an equitable distribution of services throughout the state; and of having too many areas for feasible establishment at the present time (Casey, 1970).

Betty Williams (1973) in a doctoral study at Oklahoma State University conducted an evaluation of the characteristics of four regional service centers in Oklahoma as perceived by the participants. This was accomplished through a survey device sent to service centers located at Bartlesville, Elk City, Stillwater, and Wilburton.

Williams' (1973) study supported the premise that student services offered within an educational regional unit are dependent upon coordination and two-way flow communication. Decentralization of services is further dependent upon the public relations approach employed by those involved in the administration of the regional service center. Teacher knowledge of the services is directly related to the involvement enlisted during the development of the total program objectives. In the area of student services the relationship of responses indicates agreement that present service should be expanded.

Williams (1973) lists six general conclusions that were reached from the analysis of the summary:

1. The need for the existing student services was supported in each of the four regions.

2. The endorsement of the regional structure was given as being necessary in helping to improve instruction.
3. The extent of the public relations efforts will be dependent upon the success of the regional services.
4. The successful fulfillment of initial program objectives reflects sound assessment of regional needs.
5. The regional surveys reveal less teacher involvement than administrator involvement.

The results of Williams' (1973) study seem to support the recognition of the need in Oklahoma for the RESC concept.

Oklahoma has made progress in school district reorganization; however, many educational needs of children cannot be met by local school districts, because of the cost involved.

It has become increasingly clear that the present county units are not meeting special needs of local school districts, and it is assumed that these needs cannot be met through a highly centralized office at the state level (Hall, 1970).

Purdy's (1967) study showed two separate approaches evidenced in the developments taking place in the various states. One is the formation of school districts of sufficient size that they will be as nearly able as possible to meet the needs of all pupils within the district. The second is based on the belief that it will not be possible in the foreseeable future to develop a system of local school districts of such size, and that, even if it were possible, it would not be desirable. The districts so formed would be of such size geographically that people would tend to lose their feeling of having some relationship to the administration of schools. The second approach would make local school districts as large as practicable, but allocate high cost and specialized functions to some type of regional or area agency (Purdy, 1967).

Perhaps, the greatest observable deficiency of educational services in many schools in the state is in the area of special services, and in the coordination of services offered by the State Department of Education and other agencies, state and local. In 1972 there were an estimated 57,430 handicapped children in Oklahoma, and of these seventy-one percent received special services and educational programs suited to their needs. Guidance services were also limited with guidance programs being available in 243 of the 637 school districts in Oklahoma during the 72-73 school year. Less than ten percent of the elementary students in the State are receiving guidance services while approximately seventy percent of secondary students have these services (Oklahoma Special Education Section, 1974).

Current information indicates that 16 Regional Educational Prescriptive Teaching Resource Centers have recently been established in the state of Oklahoma (See Figure 3). Grants are funded to specified school districts by the State Department of Education for the purpose of serving exceptional students. The centers will provide a needed service to many students in the State and offer services not now available (Oklahoma Special Education Section, 1974).

Basically these newly established Oklahoma RESC offer school districts professional assistance in a variety of ways, aimed toward the improvement of instruction for students. Each center provides special education core services which include psycho-educational student appraisal, prescriptive teacher-counseling, inservice training, and curriculum development. Professional services were associated with local educators' needs in order to enhance the educational opportunities of students.

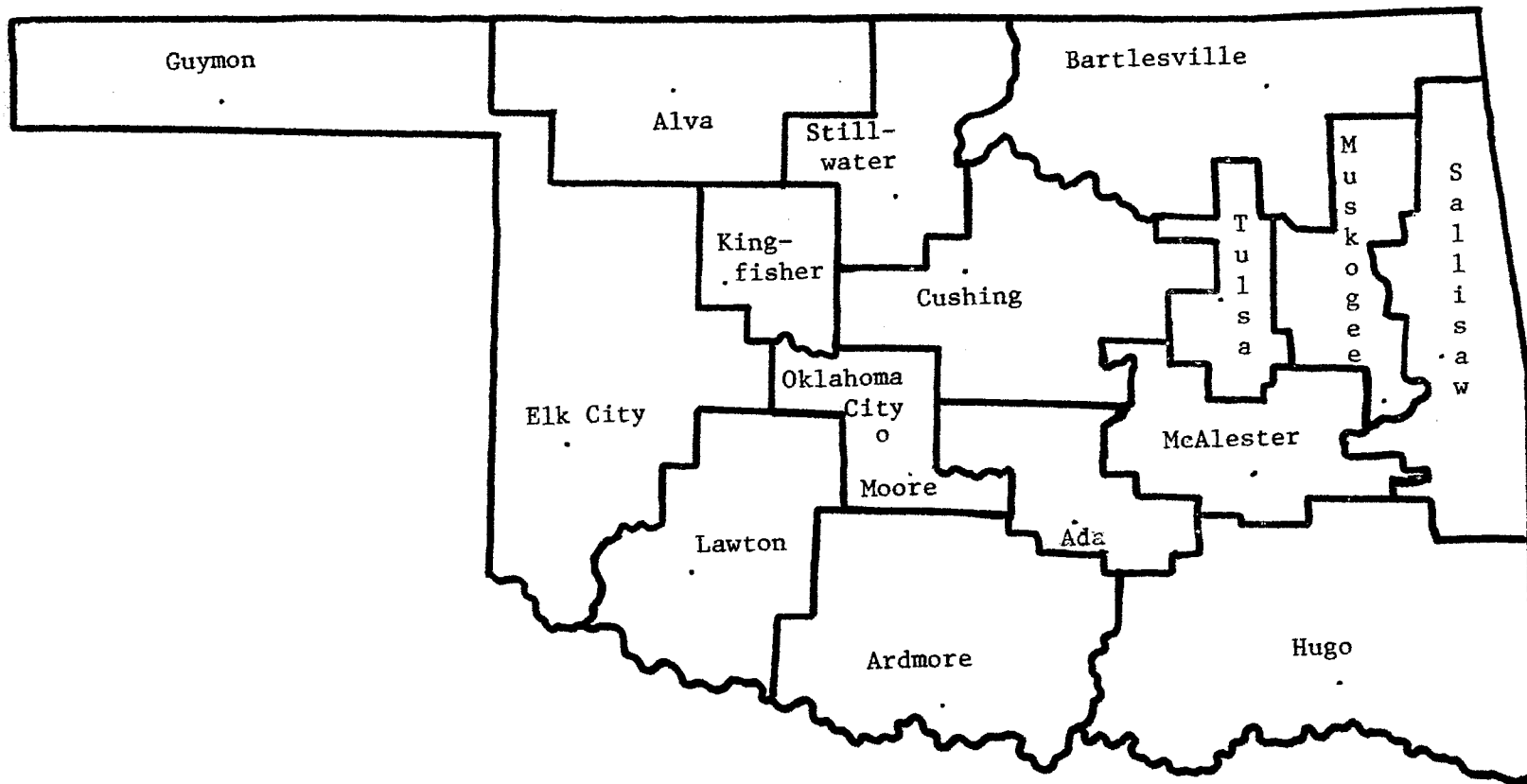


Figure 3. Sixteen Prescriptive Teaching Resource Centers

Professional staff positions include a center coordinator, a psychometrist, a prescriptive teacher, and a secretary-librarian. Staff members perform multiple roles in order to insure quality service to each school district (State Bulletin, 1973).

RESC are located in Ada, Alva, Ardmore, Bartlesville, Cushing, Elk City, Hugo, Kingfisher, Lawton, Moore, Muskogee, McAlester, Sallisaw, Stillwater, and Tulsa. Each center serves an area of 25 to 50 mile radius with a student population from 10,000 to 20,000 (Oklahoma Special Education Section, 1974).

There are many other services offered by the Oklahoma State Department of Education that are needed but are too remote to provide the necessary specialized educational programs and services needed at the local level. The State Department of Education is too remote from the people to be served to assist the local school districts in providing special programs and services (Hall, 1970).

It is clear that educational programs and services for meeting identified educational needs must be provided. These programs and services should be provided from sources as near to the local people as possible. The county units as presently structured are, in a majority of instances, inadequate in size and have resources which are too limited to provide help to local districts of special programs and services.

Without an intermediate or regional center to coordinate educational services, there are many services being duplicated and other services that are not available at the local level in the state of Oklahoma.

Background

Many Supplemental Education Centers have been funded under ESEA,

Title III during the past few years. For example, the state of Florida was operating five of these centers during 1967-1968. Each center involved several local education agencies and was perceived as a vehicle for innovation in rural areas of the State. The primary functions of these centers were: to help the counties assess their educational needs; to identify critical learner needs; to help counties plan, develop, implement, and evaluate innovative and exemplary programs which addressed the persistent educational problems in the identified critical learner need areas; to develop techniques and strategies that would provide the widespread diffusion of the successful innovations throughout the area served; and to perform various leadership services for the improvement of the total educational enterprise in the region served. Following the termination of Federal funds, only one of the centers survived and continues to operate at full capacity (Christian, 1973).

A Description of Regional Educational Service Centers

This section of the paper presents a review of professional writings and various states' interpretation of a Regional Educational Service Center or intermediate unit. Rhodes (1963) suggests that:

There probably is no "best" design, no "best" operational framework, for an Intermediate Unit. As a distinct but integral part of a state school system, it cannot be designed apart from other segments. It is well designed only as it contributes to and reinforces each of the other administrative levels of the total structure.

Since state school systems differ in some respects and the circumstances in which educational programs are provided differ widely, variations in the organization and operation of Intermediate Units will undoubtedly be necessary, both within and among states. Yet, in spite of this need for variation and organizational flexibility, certain features characteristic of good Intermediate Units can be identified.

Rhodes (1963), along with others, identified some of these characteristics. First was an adequate service area. He suggested that three criteria be considered in determining the service area for the Intermediate Unit: (1) The service area should encompass a sufficient population to permit the efficient employment of specialized service personnel; (2) The service area should be sufficiently limited in size to facilitate travel and communication among school districts and between local school districts and the Intermediate Unit offices; and (3) The local school districts comprising the service area should have sufficient common interests to become a cooperating working force. Next he identified an elected lay board of education as the governing body of the Intermediate Unit. Third, he suggested that the governing board select and appoint the executive officer of the Intermediate Unit and employ additional personnel upon the recommendation of the chief executive officer. Fourth, he said that an Intermediate Unit must have definite and reliable financial support. This support should come from state, local, and intermediate area sources. Fifth, he identified the functions of the Intermediate Unit as articulate functions, coordinative functions, and supplementary service functions. Finally, he said that there should be emphasis upon local determination. However, he suggested that the Intermediate Unit's functions and authority should be clearly defined in terms of the total educational system of which it is a part in order that there should be neither misunderstanding concerning its authority or any possible overlapping, duplication, or conflict between its responsibilities and those of the local school districts or the state education agency (Rhodes, 1963).

Butterworth (1948) has identified four characteristics of sound

intermediate units: (1) There should be a board of education to represent the people of the intermediate district; (2) There should be a competent superintendent as the chief executive officer of the intermediate district; (3) There should be sufficiently clear definition of functions in the state law so that the intermediate district may confidently exercise leadership without fearing that it is interfering with local boards; and (4) There should be sufficient financial resources available to the intermediate district board, from state and intermediate district sources, to enable it to carry out its functions (Butterworth, 1948).

Reller (1954) suggested these characteristics: (1) The purpose of the intermediate unit should be that of assisting the local school districts; (2) The governing board should be a popularly elected lay board; (3) The governing board should select the chief administrator of the intermediate unit; (4) The area of the intermediate unit should contain at least ten administrative units of adequate size; (5) There should be adequate financial resources supplied by the intermediate area and the state (Reller, 1954).

Adams (1960) proposed the following as desirable for intermediate units in Oklahoma: (1) The purpose of the intermediate unit would be to provide educational leadership, specialized educational services, and coordination of educational services and efforts of local school districts; (2) Financial support should come from the state, the intermediate unit (which should have taxing powers), and local school districts contributing to the financing of the functions of the intermediate unit; (3) The intermediate unit should be under the control of an elected board of education that appoints the administrator; (4) The structure of

the intermediate unit should be flexible; (5) The size of the intermediate unit should be an area with sufficient general and scholastic population to offer services economically and efficiently, large enough to provide challenging opportunities for educational leadership, and yet be socio-economically cohesive (Adams, 1960).

A recent study, in Texas, said the following should be given consideration in the establishment and operation of regional units.

1. The services of the center (program mix) should be highly specialized, never duplicating other operations in the state system, being highly complementary to local school efforts and closely supplementary to state-level operation.
2. The services should be physically accessible to its constituents and should be accessible as a matter of right.
3. The center should be financed with public funds.
4. The constituency of the center should have a school population of at least 50,000 ADM.
5. The programs of the center must meet some standards: (a) must be appropriate for regional operation--not state or local level; (b) must be discreetly specialized; (c) must be necessary to the well-being of its educational constituents and the state system; (d) must offer the best in the way of sophisticated practice that technology and educational and para-educational disciplines have to offer.
6. Staffing of the center should be based on a division of labor by specialty.
7. The organization operating the center should be an integral part of the state system of schools.
8. Institutional integrity is to be sought after in regional service centers.
9. Formal arrangement must be made within the state system to require, or at least encourage the regional center to behave in a responsible and therefore serviceable and viable fashion (Regional Education Service Centers, 1972).

The state of Pennsylvania's State Board of Education defines the intermediate unit as:

The intermediate unit is that echelon of a three-echelon state education system (school district, intermediate unit, and state education department), which provides consultative, advisory or education program services to school districts. The intermediate unit provides ancillary services necessary to improve the state system of education (Pennsylvania State Board of Education, 1967).

The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction defines the Regional Educational Service Center as:

The organization of school districts in Wisconsin is such that the legislature recognizes the need for a service unit between the local school district and the state superintendent. The co-operative educational service agencies are designed to serve educational needs in all areas of Wisconsin and as a convenience for school districts in co-operatively providing to teachers, students, school boards, administrators, and others, special educational services including, without limitation because of enumeration, such programs as research, special student classes, data collection, processing and dissemination, in-service programs and liaison between the state and local school districts (Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 1973).

The state of Texas has done considerable research on the RESC. The Texas Education Agency defines the RESC as:

A regional education service center is an educational institution established to develop and provide a locally oriented base for cooperative educational planning, operate the regional media component, and coordinate and encourage the development of supplementary education services and centers under Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. The center, authorized by the Fifty-ninth and Sixtieth Legislatures, is designed to provide services to school districts in a region in response to the needs and wishes of those districts.

The State Board of Education has designated twenty regions in Texas, each to be served by an education service center, and has adopted broad policies for establishing and operating the centers. These policies are designed to ensure the local voice in implementing and operating the service center (Texas Education Agency, 1970).

The New York Suffolk County Regional Education Center's mission is described as follows:

A federal enactment in 1965 described the function of

Regional Centers as one which would ". . . stimulate and assist in the provision of vitally needed educational services not available in sufficient quantity or quality." Thus, the Centers were designed to fill regional needs. They do not supplant what already exists; rather, do they supplement where help is needed.

Another important element in the nature of Regional Centers is that they are linked with the educational structure at its three pivotal points:

Federal - The bulk of regional Center funding comes from the Federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA).

State - These funds are administered by the State Education Department.

Also, the State Department's Center for Planning and Innovation for Elementary and Secondary Education combined with the sixteen Regional Centers, make up the Regional Center Network of New York. The network reflects a joint effort to improve education across the State.

Local - Legally, a local educational agency must sponsor the foundation of a Regional Center.

In the case of Suffolk, sponsors were the County's three Boards of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES). The Suffolk County Regional Center has as its mission "to promote, coordinate, and improve the planning of educational programs for the Suffolk region." In doing so it serves an educational community consisting roughly of 300,000 students, 16,000 teachers and administrators, 76 public school districts, 3 BOCES, 75 private schools, and 6 colleges. Also, a Board of Trustees drawn from local educators guides the Center's activities.

A final factor which distinguishes Regional Centers from many other educational agencies is that the Centers do not operate programs. They may conceive them, develop them, support them; but operational details are passed to other hands. This freedom from operational responsibility gives Regional Centers a unique strength of focus directed toward educational planning (Suffolk County Regional Educationa Center, 1972).

The state of Florida completed a comprehensive study of regional centers and presented what was believed to be some important conditions for the survival and productivity of regional centers for rural areas. Since the regional centers for this study were in rural areas, these observations may not be relevant to urban areas (Christian, 1973).

1. Educational needs for the member school districts should

provide a basis for cooperation.

2. A tradition of cooperation among the proposed members of a regional supplemental education center will enhance chances of success. If such a tradition does not exist, ways should be found to compensate for it before initiating the center.
3. Regional centers should be organized as semiautonomous organizations in which the centers have some choice concerning their activities by the State Department of Education and local school districts.
4. The superintendents of schools from the cooperating school districts should be members of the advisory boards for regional centers. The staff should work very closely with the advisory board in the development of regional policies and programs.
5. The regional center leaders and staff should be selected for balance in age and experience, and for potential for leadership. The leaders should be able to identify and work with the most influential persons in local school systems.
6. The leaders of regional staffs should be able to identify and work with the most influential leaders of local school systems in administering programs.
7. The semiautonomous nature of the regional center staff requires a different leadership and service orientation for the domesticated organizations. Those who are selected to provide leadership in these regional centers should undergo a period of training prior to assuming their tasks.
8. Stability of staff and leadership of the regional centers are essential.
9. The regional center staff must demonstrate high responsiveness to maintain credibility with the leaders of cooperating school systems.
10. The staff should be resourceful in the use of outside consultants to compensate for gaps in expertise.
11. The programs of a supplemental education center serve to make the cooperative indispensable to the participating school districts.
12. Programs for the center should include assistance in implementing statewide programs for educational improvement.

13. The regional centers are established for leadership and service to member school districts in improving education for children and youth rather than for the administration of state rules and regulations.
14. In addition to their responsibilities for assisting in constructive educational change and innovation and for providing imaginative alternatives for solutions to educational problems, these centers should provide various services not available to the cooperating school districts individually.
15. The center should have an effective communication program for maintaining its visibility and for promoting its programs and services. These programs in all instances enhance the visibility of local school systems.
16. Member school districts should share in the support of regional centers from the beginning. State and Federal funds should provide much of the financial support.

Summary

A survey of the literature indicates that there probably is no "best" design or no "best" operational framework for an RESC in the United States. Many individuals as well as separate states throughout the nation have been searching for the most effective kinds of "intermediate educational units" to operate midway between educational agencies and local school districts.

Historically John C. Fitzgerald made the first organized study of an intermediate unit in the state of Oklahoma in 1956. He investigated the capacity of counties to serve as intermediate units, particularly for administration of specialized educational services. This was followed by a study by James Avery Adams in 1960, who recommended dividing the state into 18 areas suitable for the formation of intermediate units of educational administration. In 1970 Hall made a very comprehensive study of existing centers in other states and recommended a set

of criteria for regional intermediate educational centers. In addition to these studies the Oklahoma State Department of Education in a study done in 1970, recommended to the legislature a bill establishing 18 intermediate units based upon equalized student population, contiguous county boundaries, and other geographical-economic considerations. This bill was shelved in hearings because a variety of opinions of witnesses and legislators to the proposal. In 1971 the Oklahoma State Department of Education established a pattern for 15 regional area centers, which has been used in this study.

A review of the professional studies of the various states indicates that since school systems differ widely, variations in the organization and operation of Intermediate Units will undoubtedly be necessary, both within and among states. In spite of the need for variation and organizational flexibility, certain features and characteristics of good intermediate units can be identified as follows:

The RESC should have

- . . . a governing board and director of the intermediate unit
- . . . Definite reliable financial support should come from local, state, and intermediate sources
- . . . The intermediate unit should encompass a sufficient population to permit the efficient employment of specialized services personnel
- . . . The service area should be sufficiently limited in size to facilitate travel and communication among school districts and between local school districts
- . . . The intermediate unit's function should be clearly defined in terms of the total educational system of which it is a part so there will be no misunderstanding concerning its authority or possible overlapping, duplication or conflict between its responsibilities and those of the local school district or the state department of education.

CHAPTER III

THE METHODOLOGY OF STUDY, TREND OF EDUCATION SERVICE CENTERS, CURRENT PATTERNS OF RESC IN SELECTED STATES, RATIONALE FOR RESC, AND A METHOD OF COST MEASUREMENT

Methodology of Study

Descriptive research will be used in this study. McGrath (1963) indicates that the term "descriptive" is used both in method and as a technique. The data derived in descriptive research can be meaningful and helpful in diagnosing a situation or in proposing a new and better program. He also states that another pattern of the descriptive approach involves the production of a format for a program. This could be a syllabus, a course of study, a handbook, a treatise, a set of directives for operation, or a similar contribution (McGrath, 1963).

Study Design and Procedure

The following procedures were used to conduct this study:

1. Requests were made to selected states for copies of their guidelines and state plans for regional units. These had been summarized.
2. Supplemental information will be secured, by questionnaire, from all 50 State Superintendents. This questionnaire will request information on: (a) the state's current practices, (b) the

current funding patterns, and (c) administrative and governance patterns presently encompassed in the various states for the RESC.

3. Related professional literature will be surveyed and summarized.
4. After obtaining data from the state plans, from the responses to the questionnaire, and from the related professional literature, criteria were developed for a model which may be implemented through the state.
5. A model for Regional Educational Service Centers shall be developed for Oklahoma. The model shall include (a) guidelines for the organization and control of Regional Educational Service Centers, the programs and services of Regional Educational Service Centers, and the financing of Regional Educational Service Centers, (b) techniques for the implementation of the state model, and (c) the presentation of a cost analysis of the Regional Educational Service Centers. This would include relating the comparative costs of services provided by individual school district as opposed to providing the same services using a Regional Educational Service Center model.

The National Trend of Regional Educational Service Centers

A survey in the form of a questionnaire was developed in order to determine the current trend toward Regional Educational Service Centers (RESC) in the United States. The survey was mailed to the State Department of Education in every state, and all 50 states responded to the survey. Currently 30 states including Oklahoma have made some concerted

effort to establish what they perceive to be effective intermediate unit possible with the use of local, state, and federal funding.

It appears that the RESC are operated differently in most states. Ten states had a department director, while four states left the direction of the RESC to the Title III ESEA department, and two states had established administrative assistants that worked directly under the state superintendent. Obviously only sixteen states had made provisions for the overall administration and organization of the RESC, and it was apparent that this problem had not been settled.

Funding for these service centers consistently drew from local, state, and federal fund sources. Nine states indicated their funding came from local, state, and federal funds, five states reported their source was state and federal funds, and two states indicated their only source as federal funds. These two states were Oklahoma and Montana. Indiana, Nebraska, and South Carolina reported their source as entirely local funds (See Table I and Figure 4).

The trend across the nation was toward the RESC concept with sixteen states having already adopted legislation for funding such centers and two states, Maryland and Ohio, having legislation pending. Fourteen other states possessed the RESC concept; however, at the time this study was done, they relied on state and/or federal funds for their financial support.

State plans which contain viable provisions for funding, governance and service of the RESC will be discussed in the following sections. The most relevant provisions of these state plans will be presented in taxonomic structure in this chapter's summary. The state plans and the summarizing taxonomy will be the primary sources for making recommendations

TABLE I

DATA INDICATING ESTABLISHED RESC IN THE UNITED STATES

States	RESC Concept		Administration*				Method of Funding*				Elected Board			Pending RESC Legislation
	Yes	No	Adm. Asst.	T. III Dir.	Dept. Dir.	Other	Loc.	St.	Fed.	Prior T. III	Loc.	St.	None	
Alabama	X				X			X	X			X		
Alaska		X												
Arizona		X												
Arkansas		X												
California	X					X		X			X			
Colorado	X					X	X	X	X		X			
Connecticut		X												
Delaware		X												
Florida	X				X			X			X			
Georgia	X			X			X	X	X				X	
Hawaii		X												
Idaho		X												
Illinois		X												
Indiana	X				X		X			X			X	
Iowa		X												
Kansas		X												
Kentucky	X					X		X	X		X			

TABLE I (Continued)

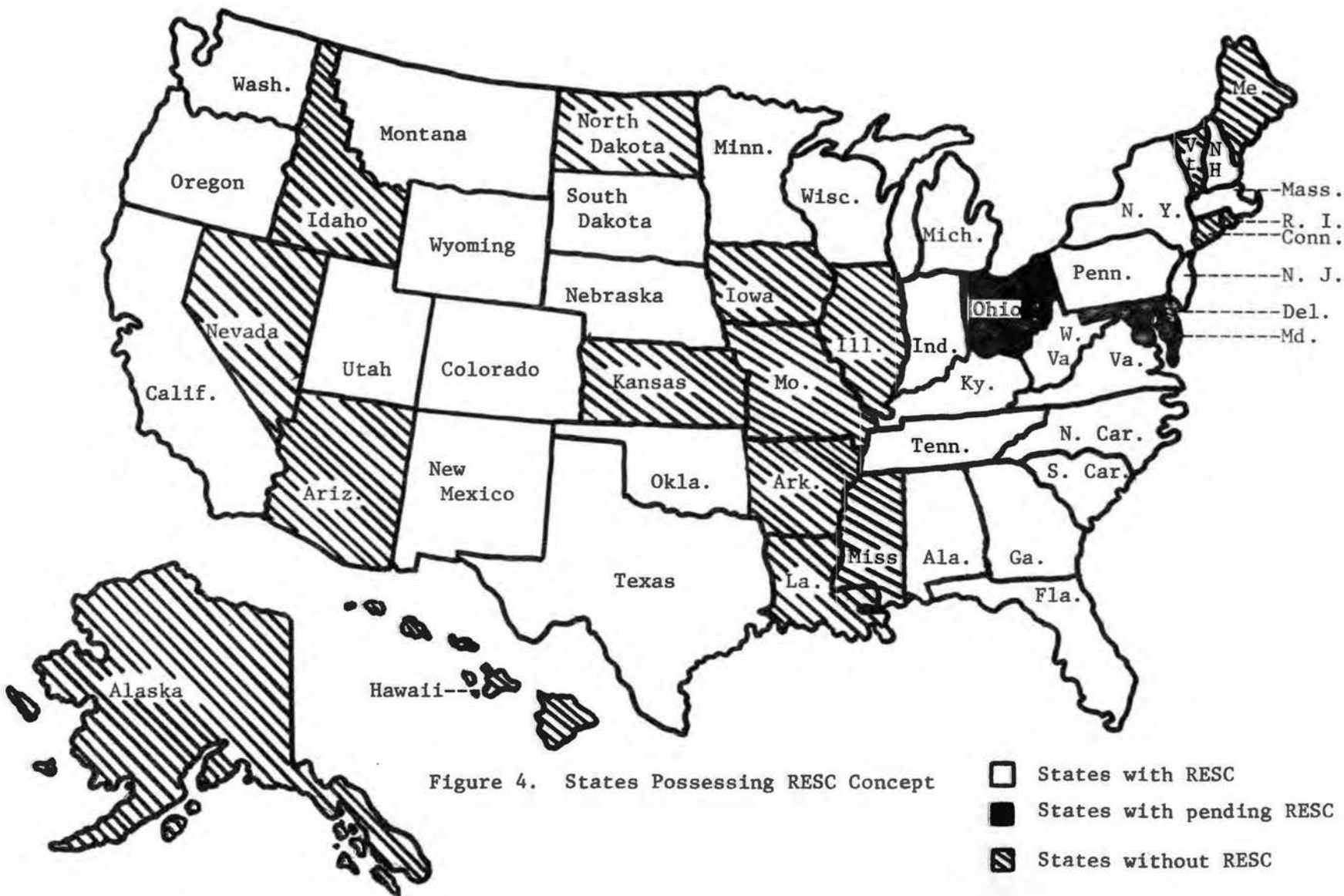
States	RESC Concept		Administration*				Method of Funding*				Elected Board			Pending RESC Legislation
	Yes	No	Adm. Asst.	T. III Dir.	Dept. Dir.	Other	Loc.	St.	Fed.	Prior T. III	Loc.	St.	None	
Louisiana		X												
Maine		X												
Maryland														X
Massachusetts . .	X				X		X	X	X		X			
Michigan	X			X			X		X		X			
Minnesota	X				X		X	X	X		X			
Mississippi . . .		X												
Missouri		X												
Montana	X				X				X				X	
Nebraska	X					X	X				X			
Nevada		X												
New Hampshire . .	X			X			X		X		X			
New Jersey	X			X		X		X	X				X	
New Mexico	X					X			X				X	
New York	X					X	X	X	X		X			
North Carolina . .	X				X			X	X				X	
North Dakota . . .		X												
Ohio														X

TABLE I (Continued)

States	RESC Concept		Administration*				Method of Funding*				Elected Board			Pending RESC Legislation
	Yes	No	Adm. Asst.	T. III Dir.	Dept. Dir.	Other	Loc.	St.	Fed.	Prior T. III	Loc.	St.	None	
Oklahoma	X			X					X				X	
Oregon	X				X		X	X	X		X			
Pennsylvania	X					X	X	X	X		X			
Rhode Island		X												
South Carolina	X					X	X			X			X	
South Dakota	X				X			X	X				X	
Tennessee	X					X		X					X	
Texas	X		X				X	X	X		X			
Utah	X					X	X	X					X	
Vermont		X								X				
Virginia	X					X	X		X				X	
Washington	X				X			X	X		X			
West Virginia	X					X	X	X	X				X	
Wisconsin	X		X					X			X			
Wyoming	X													

*Supervising Agency for the RESC

*Source of Funds for Operation of RESC



for the implementation of a network of RESC in the state of Oklahoma.

Funding Patterns

In the state of Wisconsin, state funds are the only reliable funds for Cooperative Educational Service Agencies. The LEA located within the various regions do in some cases give financial assistance for needed programs. The RESC may, according to Wisconsin school law, submit an application for federal funds; however, there is no certainty about the federal funds in the RESC financial operation (Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 1973).

In the state of Texas, state funds are granted to each RESC based on a block grant of \$125,000 each year. This money is raised based on a plan that allots \$2 per student in the state of Texas to the Texas Education Agency for distribution purposes to the respective RESC. If a surplus of money exists after the \$125,000 is awarded to each RESC, the remainder of the money is allocated based on the number of students in each region. Through legislative enactment RESC may apply for Federal grants. In addition, local funds up to \$1 per student may be contributed by the LEA to the RESC for purchase of media (Texas Education Agency, 1970).

The state of Florida initiated the RESC concept during 1967. Each center was funded by Title III ESEA Federal Funds. Each of the five centers was located in the rural areas with each serving five or six counties; the number of counties was dependent on the total population of each respective area. Each center was initially awarded a one year grant of \$103,000. The RESC in Florida were practically founded under an arrangement that permitted participating counties to contribute a

base amount of \$3,000 for each county that it served plus an additional \$1.50 per pupil within the area that it served. This provided approximately \$90,000 to each RESC budget. Governmental grants for programs administered by the RESC provided an additional \$100,000 (Christian, 1973).

The state of New York has been divided into regional service areas. These regions submit proposals yearly for funding based upon the needs of the LEA in its region. In order for a LEA to qualify for RESC services it must have: (1) expended more than \$860 per weighted average daily attendance (as defined in New York State law) in approved operating expenses in the 1971-72 school year and (2) a local tax rate for 1971-72 in excess of \$20.23 (the State average tax rate for 1971-72) per \$1,000 of actual property valuation. (New York Board of Regents of the state of New York, n.d.).

The RESC in New York are funded by state, local and federal funds. The state funds are allocated based on the ADA of the region's qualifying ADA. The federal funds are granted based on the proposals submitted by the RESC. Local funds may be solicited for the following cooperative services: school nurse, teacher, attendance supervisor, dental hygienist, teachers of art, music, physical education, vocational subjects, guidance counselors, maintenance and operation of cafeteria or restaurant service for the use of pupils and teachers while at school, and such other services as the commissioner of education may approve (New York Board of Regents of the state of New York, n.d.).

Oklahoma possesses RESC and the State Department of Education's Prescriptive Teaching Resource Centers. The RESC located at Elk City, Stillwater, and Wilburton are funded in their entirety by Title III ESEA

funds. In an interview with Fisher (1974) it was learned that the State Department of Education's Prescriptive Teaching Resource Centers are funded with a block grant of \$60,000 per center from funds appropriated and allocated by the State legislature (Fisher, 1974).

At the present time the RESC in Michigan are financed through tax levying authority granted through legislation and each RESC is eligible for and receives additional state financial support (Michigan State Board of Education, 1971).

Pennsylvania's RESC budget is called a general Revenue Budget. The total of this budget comes from state appropriated funds based on an equalization factor that considers the wealth of the region as compared to the statewide wealth figure.

An additional budget in the state of Pennsylvania is called the sub-budget which includes requests for funds by the LEA. The amount the LEA contributes toward the RESC in Pennsylvania is determined by the LEA wealth ratio to the region in addition to the services that the LEA contracts with the RESC (Pennsylvania State Board of Education, 1967).

Currently there are many differences in the manner in which RESC are supported. Some of the potential funding avenues would be funds from LEA, fees from pupils, business and industry, state education agencies, foundations and federal grants. Most of the financial support in Florida and Oklahoma comes from federal aid. A large portion of funds in New York and Pennsylvania is from state aid. In Wisconsin a large segment of the aid is from the LEA. In many instances there are combinations of local, federal, and state financing.

The combining or blending of funds seems to possess the greatest potential for comprehensive services and survival of the RESC. Federal

funds seem to offer the greatest opportunity for innovation. Funds from the LEA tend to offer the appropriate assistance for needed educational improvement at the local level.

It seems that an important consideration of a funding pattern for a RESC should be that the method of financing regional programs be in harmony with the state's total finance plan for education. Texas bases its state dollar allocation on numbers of students per region which coincides with Oklahoma's present funding practice which allocates state funds to school districts based on the ADA of the prior school year.

In all states that have the RESC concept and receive state funds, a budget is prepared and presented to a state agency for approval. It seems appropriate that a budget approval process leads to wise and prudent planning on the part of the RESC and its governing board.

Service Patterns

Since state school systems differ in some respects and the circumstances in which educational programs are provided vary from state to state, variations in the organization and program offering of the RESC will undoubtedly exist. Yet, various state plans indicate that each state that possesses the RESC encompasses a core of basic services. Some states rely on the governing board of the RESC to choose, within its budget limitations, the services they deem necessary and vital to the region they represent.

The state of Pennsylvania allows a great deal of autonomy for the selection of services. The board of directors, together with the executive director, must collect and analyze informational data and develop a program of services to be provided to its region (Pennsylvania State

Board of Education, 1967).

In Florida the RESC assists the LEA in designing plans for solving educational problems and coping with educational change. Some of the approaches used in Florida to achieve this were: identifying a region's needs, developing basic goals and objectives for education, program budgeting, and program evaluation (Christian, 1973).

The state of Kentucky offers a core of services and permits the LEA to choose from the services. The services offered are: in-service training, central purchasing, audio-visual center, library services and media centers, and data processing (Kentucky Department of Education, n.d.)

The state of Texas offers a spectrum of core services to its constituent LEA. The services include media, data processing, guidance and counseling, library and curriculum materials; also, the RESC serves at the request of the state commissioner on selected statewide projects (Texas Education Agency, 1970).

The state of Oklahoma Regional Prescriptive Teaching Resource Centers were established in 1973 to provide special education services to all school districts in Oklahoma. They provide core services for special education in psycho-educational student appraisal, prescriptive teacher-counseling, in-service training, and curriculum development (Oklahoma State Bulletin, 1973).

A reason for the wide variety of services offered by RESC seems to be the extreme diversity of LEA needs within each state. A similar diversity of needed services would seemingly exist among school districts within a region. The diversity among pupils, schools, geography, and even the weather exists in Oklahoma.

It would seem, however, that a basic core of services which would represent the common educational needs of the state would be necessary for coordination and evaluation purposes. This central core of services should represent the targets for quality improvements to be measured by acceptable evaluation methods such as yearly visits to each center to investigate the quality of service.

The state of Pennsylvania permits complete local autonomy by allowing individual RESC Board of Governors to develop their own priorities and to present a budget reflective of its goals. The state of Texas possesses state-set priorities which are enacted by the legislature.

In order to accomplish state-set priorities an allocation of state funds is made. It is unlikely that any legislature would allocate funds to a RESC that could not indicate how funds would be used. It would therefore seem likely that state funds in Oklahoma would be attached to services similar to the central core service now operative in the state of Texas. It would further seem likely that by the LEA having the opportunity to contribute their funds for additional service each LEA would then develop local autonomy. In addition the RESC should be permitted to make application for federal funds which could provide additional resources for demonstration projects and for regional initiatives in producing desirable changes.

Governance Patterns

A total of sixteen states have adopted locally elected governing boards to control services of the RESC, as well as their funds and their expenditures.

In 1965 Colorado passed laws that allowed school districts to join

together in cooperative programs. The act allowed the formation of the Board of Cooperative Services. Each LEA that participates in a RESC program is entitled to at least one member to the Cooperative Board. The Board members terms shall expire when the term on the LEA board expires. The Board must, according to law, meet at least quarterly (Colorado Department of Education, 1967).

In Nebraska the Board of Directors' members are appointed from the region by the Governor of the state. The Board is generally responsible for (1) providing within its geographical area supplementary services such as guidance and counseling, remedial instruction, school health, adult education including area vocational technical schools, special education, and instructional material centers; (2) planning and coordinating educational services within its geographical area whenever such services are offered on a cooperating basis between local school districts; and (3) contracting for educational services with the board of any other educational service unit, any other educational agency, or with any appropriate state or federal officer or agency (Schroeder, 1968).

In the state of New York, Boards of Cooperative Services were authorized to be established in 1948. The provisions for the Board of Cooperative Services which now blankets the state of New York are as follows:

1. The boards of education and school trustees of a supervisory district which is not part of an intermediate district, meeting at a time and place to be designated by the district superintendent of schools, may, by a majority vote of their members present and voting, file with the commissioner of education a petition for the establishment of a board of cooperative educational services for the purpose of carrying out a program of shared educational services in the schools of the supervisory district and for providing instruction in such special subjects as the commissioner may approve.

2. Upon the establishment by the commissioner of such a board, members of boards of education and school trustees, by a majority vote of those present and voting, shall elect a board of cooperative educational services consisting of five members. These shall serve for five years.
3. The boards of cooperative educational services in any two or more contiguous supervisory districts may cooperate in the provision of educational services (New York Board of Regents of the state of New York, n.d.).

In Pennsylvania the RESC Board of Directors is composed of nine members, chosen for terms of three years from among members of the school districts served by the unit. Votes are cast according to the district's weighted average daily membership in comparison to the total weighted average daily membership within the RESC (Pennsylvania State Board of Education, 1967).

In Wisconsin the governing board of the RESC is appointed by the LEA governing boards. The individual referred to as a delegate is a member of the LEA board and serves a one-year term. The RESC, however, may have only 11 members.

If there are more than 11 LEA in the service agency, the state superintendent shall convene a convention composed of one delegate from each school district in the agency which shall formulate a plan of representation for such agency including no more than 11 representatives (Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 1969).

In the state of Oklahoma, the Title III ESEA Regional Educational Service Centers and the State Department of Education Prescriptive Teaching Resource Centers are governed by the State Board of Education and the State Superintendent of Public Instruction. However, the Title III division of the State Department of Education strongly urges the establishment of RESC Advisory Councils representing the regions served.

It is recommended that the advisory councils include persons broadly representative of the cultural and educational resources of the region.

The state of Texas RESC possesses two formal board of supervisors for its governing process. The first committee is referred to as the Joint Committee of the Regional Educational Service Center. The joint committee is selected by each local board of trustees with one representative from each school district in the region. Each member of the joint committee serves at the will of the local board of trustees.

The joint committee shall elect a Board of Directors to supervise the activities of the RESC. The Board of Directors may be composed of five or seven members. The members serve for a term of three years and may be re-elected (Texas Education Agency, 1970).

The state of Ohio presently has a plan before the state legislature for approval establishing the RESC concept in that state. The Ohio plan for the selection of a board of directors seems to be a very equitable plan. The plan calls for a nine-member board who will serve a six-year term. The nine members will be selected from the existing LEA Boards of Education. The plan further allows no more than two members from a single LEA board of education and requires that one be selected from each county (H. B. 475, Ohio State Legislature, 1973).

Many states seem to grant to the Board of Governors of the RESC the same powers and duties it encompasses in the Board of Education for the LEA. It would seem feasible to connect the rules and regulations of the RESC Board of Governors directly to the rules and regulations that currently exist in the school laws of Oklahoma for LEA Boards of Education.

Some Key Considerations in the Development
of an RESC

In light of various patterns and programs that are being operated by the several states, it might be appropriate to attempt to distill from those some of the features which may be crucial to the optimum functioning of the RESC. It would seem that governing agencies of the RESC should be delegated broad authority in the development of operational details. Such concerns as service center boundaries, administrative and control structures, advisory committees, the range of services that may be offered, and staff qualifications are examples of operational details that might be handled better by State Department of Education regulations than by legislation.

RESC should be made an integral part of statewide educational planning, and all LEA of the State should be included in the system of service centers. Some possible advantages are: The service center staffs are well acquainted with local needs and desires because they have day-to-day contact with local school administrators and teachers; a statewide system makes it possible for State Department planners to secure information about educational needs and to disseminate information to LEA quickly and economically; local administrators have convenient access to an effective medium for communicating with leaders in the State Department of Education (Regional Educational Service Centers, 1972).

The consensus seem to be that the RESC should be controlled primarily by their constituent LEA. Also, there is strong agreement that the primary orientation of the regional center should be toward service rather than toward regulation. It seems reasonable to expect LEA personnel to be more accepting and supportive of locally controlled

service agencies than they would be for other type of regulatory agencies.

A system in which the control of the RESC is shared between the State Department of Education and the constituent LEA is preferable to exclusive control by either. The greatest difficulty in implementing such a control structure is to develop a clearly defined and mutually acceptable statement of the kind and degree of control that will be exercised by the State Department and the LEA.

It is appropriate for the State Department of Education to specify certain basic services to be offered by all RESC and the quality standards expected of them. It is also important that local educators be permitted to identify the services that are particularly relevant to the needs of their individual region.

RESC could be governed by a regional board of Governors selected by the local school board members. The regional board of Governors would employ a professional staff to operate the service agency, approve the service agency's budget and expenditures, and formulate policies that would be needed to ensure proper operation of the RESC within the general framework of regulations promulgated by the State Department of Education. The service center's annual plan and operational budget would also be subject to review and approval by the State Department of Education.

In this study a partnership of local and state control of RESC has been advocated. Such a partnership would make it possible and desirable to use a combination of local, state, and federal funds for the support of regional services. Each funding source offers certain advantages and disadvantages for the support of regional services.

Legislative approval is needed for locally supported services.

Continuation of local support will require the service center to be attentive to providing the type and quality of services desired by the LEA. The extent of local participation in and support for a particular service is an easily observable evaluative criterion. Disadvantages of local support include the fact that some schools--perhaps the very school that needs these services most--may not be financially able to participate in these services; and it is impossible for the RESC to make long-range plans because of the instability of local support levels.

The great advantage of state support is its stability--particularly when this support is made a part of a state foundation program for financing basic costs of public education. This stability makes it possible for RESC to make meaningful long-range plans and to obtain staff and facilities more economically. The disadvantages of state support are it is relatively difficult to obtain, and there is often a lack of flexibility in the uses to which it can be put.

Federal support, though often categorical in nature, still offers more flexibility of usage. Federal funds offer the greatest support for developing and testing new ideas. They can also be used to increase the quality or quantity of certain existing services. Disadvantages of federal support are: Funding levels of programs are often not finally settled until the school year is well under way; and the level of funding will often vary from year to year as older programs are phased out and replaced by other programs.

By combining the sources of support discussed above, it would be possible to initiate some prototype service centers with a statewide system of RESC that receive a basic support allotment from the State. Additional services might be financed with a combination of local and

state funds. The amount of state support for regional services might be made to depend upon the extent of local participation in and support for these services. Federal support could then be used for research and development of promising practices that have not yet gained widespread local and state support.

There is a need to delineate in a clear and mutually acceptable manner the roles that are appropriate for the teacher training institutions and the RESC. To do this will require the best thinking of educators representing local schools, RESC, institutions of higher education, and the State Department of Education. Also needed will be the affirmative leadership of the State Department of Education and probably some degree of regulation and financial incentive.

In many states regional agencies are being formed to serve purposes other than education. This regionalization is receiving strong support from the Federal and State governments. The logic that supports the establishment of various kinds of regional service agencies with their emphasis upon cooperation and shared services also supports the desirability of cooperation among service agencies. Sharing of electronic data processing and in the collection of statistical information about regional population characteristics seem to be among the initial areas in which inter-regional and inter-agency cooperation might prove profitable. For this reason, it would be desirable that the boundaries of RESC be made coterminous with the boundaries of other types of regional service agencies (Regional Educational Service Centers, 1972).

The emphasis on quality and equality of opportunity in education accompanied by the growing demand for economy and efficiency argue for

the establishment of effective statewide systems of RESC. The role of State Departments of Education is to conceive well reasoned plans for initiating and developing regional service agencies and to provide effective leadership to the emerging service agencies. It is crucial that the State Departments of Education assist the service agencies to develop the staff competencies needed to plan well, evaluate the effectiveness of regional operations, and account for the utilization of the resources made available to them. The structure and operational plan is reflective of the Texas concept (Regional Education Service Centers, 1972).

A Method of Cost Measurement

Cost measurement seems to present a problem for cost efficiency. The cost of providing an education falls on the individual, the community, and the entire society. However, placing these costs in dollar terms is exceedingly difficult. This study relates program objectives to dollars; for if the costs and objectives cannot be measured in monetary terms, then it will be impossible to measure the total cost of a RESC. It is much more difficult to measure cost effectiveness than to assess the cost of a teacher, a custodian, or an administrator over a yearly period.

It appeared that a logical method of costing a RESC's activities would be through the number of LEA contact hours. It seems also that RESC administrators need to know the cost of establishing new programs and where priorities need to be established in existing programs. Also the RESC administrators need to be aware of the program costs of programs that are cooperatively done with other centers or agencies. In most instances administrators have few if any idea of how efficient their

programs are. Therefore, it seems they are making decisions on the allocation of public money with a small amount of regard for the cost or effectiveness of their decisions. It seems program cost information must be made available to the local, state, and governmental authorities for decision-making purposes. They should also have information on the effectiveness and impact of their decisions on the LEA.

It is clear that a major function of the RESC is to develop an efficient decision-making process. Efficiency is defined as achieving the most with a given amount of resources or achieving a given goal with the least amount of resources. An efficient management process assures that all the objectives are in fact stated and that there is a regular process of determining the degree to which they are achieved and at what cost. It also assures that there is a way of describing the relationship between elements of the services provided and educational outcomes which can be defined in terms of dollars. Unless administrators have access to such information on a regular basis, one cannot expect them to make the best decisions. Therefore, an optimum management process for RESC services is dependent upon a continuous flowing information system which describes the goals and objectives of an RESC, the degree to which they are accomplished, and the primary methods used for attaining those stated objectives. All this information is needed in terms of costs.

The following two steps have been developed for determining comparative costs in an RESC: (1) The determination of cost absorption on a percentage basis by the LEA involved; and (2) the cost absorption of a specific LEA such as Elk City Independent School District on a percentage basis of the services that would be received from the RESC. The following two steps have been developed for evaluating the cost of a

RESC: (1) the identification of a feasible cost evaluation model; and (2) the identification of major portions of the LEA and the RESC's budgets as they relate to a major percentage expenditures of the total budget of both agencies.

Summary

The survey device sent to each state clearly indicated that the RESC are a national educational trend. Thirty states indicated that the RESC is an active part of their state educational program while two states currently have pending legislation before their state legislative branches for state funding.

A method has been presented by which RESC activities can be evaluated for cost analysis. The basic unit for determining cost analysis is LEA contact hours.

Two steps were used to indicate cost. They were: (1) cost absorption on a percentage basis; and (2) cost absorption of RESC services by a specific LEA. Two steps were used to indicate the procedure for implementing the cost model of evaluation analysis: (1) identification of a cost model of evaluation analysis for future implications; and (2) identification of major budget portions of both agencies for mathematical and comparison purposes.

The RESC in the various states which have been studied and reviewed have taken a variety of forms which appear to be in a constant state of flux. For example, in Texas RESC currently function as service centers and nothing more. Today with a scarcity of all our resources, public education in the state of Oklahoma cannot afford to ignore the crucial concerns of every section of our State. Hence, RESC are being recommended

to get the best that is known into actual school practice and serve as the vehicle for improving delivery systems, for developing cooperative arrangements for educational services, and the resources for desirable changes. Furthermore, these centers should not become a branch office of the State Department of Education but should provide the way for strengthening the autonomy and the initiatives of local school boards and superintendents at a time when the prospects of more federal financing and decrees risk a greater centralization of decision making in Washington and elsewhere.

Based upon the state plans of New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Texas, and the writer's own extended rationale the following 14 points seem to reflect the most viable and practical considerations for developing a statewide network of regional educational service centers in the state of Oklahoma. The first eight points are of critical importance to the implementation of the RESC.

1. Regional Educational Service Centers shall function as catalysts for positive change whereby LEA are aided and abetted in achieving their goals of public education and criteria of effective management. In other words, they would provide the services needed to participating school districts when they need them and in the manner they need them. This would mitigate against the RESC becoming regulatory, enforcement, and maintaining agencies of the State Department of Education (Texas and New York).
2. RESC shall function as an agency servicing pupil populations ranging from 20,000 to 100,000. Serving large populations which in some areas could diverse in a variety of needs and characteristics would give local control to the RESC in order to meet these needs and in essence represent the special needs of the region to the State Department of Education (Texas).
3. RESC shall function under the guidelines of existing law which in essence authorized the State Superintendent of Education to exercise appropriate authority and to place the regulation of such an agency in the

domain of the State Board of Education.

4. RESC shall be eligible for research and development funds allocated by the State Department of Education through either state or federal funds (Texas, New York, and Pennsylvania).
5. RESC state appropriation for general support shall be distributed on the basis of \$125,000 per regional center. This figure may be altered in order to more adequately measure the needs of the RESC constituency, e.g., standardized test growth increments, professional appraisals of students' needs (Texas).
6. The RESC shall be charged with the responsibility for a central core of six services which shall represent the targets for quality improvements to be assessed by acceptable measurements periodically applied. These six services are of the kinds which can be offered at a higher level of quality and/or at a lower unit cost, than if each school district undertook separately to do the same thing (Texas).
7. RESC shall be cognizant of and responsive to the needs of management effectiveness, services accountability, and cost effectiveness as they relate to the stewardship of public resources, in other words establish a relationship between costs and measured results, outcomes and consequences of public education; a comparison of what was actually achieved in the end with what was planned in the beginning (Florida and New York).
8. The RESC shall function in accord and to a system of priorities established by the State Department of Education. The priorities need to be reviewed periodically in order to enable the RESC to distinguish levels of importance to a variety of requests. Net results are in effective use of staff.
9. The governing of the RESC shall be conducted by the elected Board of Governors through their selected Executive Director with particular concern for the appropriate delivery system of educational services to equalize educational opportunities between school districts and for greater accountability for end results by the public education system (Texas, New York, and others).
10. RESC should function as a vehicle for the channeling of field experience into consideration of policy, program and service developments by the State Department of Education in setting priorities and in making

useful decisions (Pennsylvania).

11. RESC should function in a plan making inter-agency liaison role with the various school districts in their area. This would be an educational planning region where one RESC staff member would be delegated to a group composed of a representative from each school district within the region; this would provide for an educational planning unit responsive to the needs of the region.
12. RESC delivering system of services should be enhanced through the development of a satellite office when the needs of LEA dictate. This would have the effect of reducing limited participation by a substantial portion of the constituents in the services provided by the RESC (Texas).
13. The RESC should strengthen the policy making and administrative capabilities of local boards of education, superintendents, and principals by providing training, relief from report preparation, and meaningful interpretation of recent relevant judicial decision (New York and Florida).
14. The RESC should integrate community, regional, and state resources, both private and public, and cite programs of education which are needed to fulfill the requirements of LEA needs (New York and Pennsylvania).

CHAPTER IV

COST ANALYSIS OF A REGIONAL EDUCATION

SERVICE CENTER

Introduction

This section has been developed to suggest a preliminary basis for the exchange of comparable unit cost information which will aid in the analysis of Regional Educational Service Center (RESC) expenditures. A necessary part of such information exchange is a standard taxonomy or uniform classification system which identifies and categorizes the activities of the programs of the RESC in a consistent manner. For the expressed purpose of this study, two general classifications have been used--i.e., administrative category and instruction category--in order to reflect what may be the singularly most significant aspect of RESC expenditures: the direct services to school districts for instruction. The sections following provide a general overview of unit cost analysis. As one limited but available approach to determining costs, this application is demonstrated through empirical data (Gulko, 1970).

One of the more commonly used measures for the analysis of an educational program is the unit cost of instruction in terms of students, units taken, and diplomas. Such measures are useful for evaluating the requirements of an operation and for comparing the relative educational costs of various programs. Although one unit cost datum in education does not have the same economic meaning as its industrial counterpart

(i.e., it does not mean the unit cost of production), the connotations of production cost has caused some educators to reject the concept. It is not the general case that cost analysis is universally ignored by educational management. Rather the application of cost analysis to education is gaining wider acceptance in the academic community. One unit cost in education would be student contact hours, whereas in industry a unit cost factor might relate to hours on the assembly line. The major difference is the relationship between people in the former and the usual lack of it in the latter.

There are various ways to illustrate the data concerning the costs of instruction. Several studies have focused on unit cost (Joyal, 1960; Butter, 1966; Bowen, 1969), and each of these studies has validity in certain specific contexts, but their use has been restricted because of the problems associated with developing comparability between and among independent and isolated studies. The development of a standard determination of unit costs will aid public education in evaluating the relative efficiency of operation by providing a benchmark for comparison with other school districts. However, the comparison of educational cost data will be incomplete without output measures to relate comparability and relative quality to cost. Educators must guard against improper use of cost data, particularly comparisons between school districts or agencies that are not comparable in terms of mission, scope of operation, and quality of instruction. Nonetheless, cost analysis can be of significant value to the management of school districts and service centers because of the extent to which such data can provide helpful insights into the costs of operation. Such data are merely a shorthand representation of cost, and if they are not interpreted cautiously, they may

lead to faulty analysis.

Program Absorption on a Percentage Basis

by the Local Education Agency

This section has been developed to provide a meaningful comparison of existing costs to an educational service center with projected costs to a given school district within Area 14--i.e., the counties serviced by the Area 14 Regional Educational Service Center. The school district being compared with the service center is Elk City Independent School District (See Table II). Table II reflects the aggregate expenditures from the Title III ESEA and Title VI ESEA funds in the respective areas of instruction and administration in the service center in order to provide services to each school district within Area 14. It also indicates expenditures in similar categories by the Elk City Independent School District.

The method for calculating projected costs to a given school district is as follows. A determination can be made of the expenditures of the RESC in the two areas of instruction and administration. The assumption was made that these two areas would account for more than seventy-five percent of the expended funds and, therefore, would reflect a reasonable unit cost factor for each school district based on its respective ADA. The expenditures by the RESC in instruction and administration, as designated by its budget, is the sum of their Title III ESEA and Title VI ESEA programs in these respective areas. Table II indicated these values. The ratio of the ADA for Elk City to the total ADA for Area 14 was calculated (See Table III). This value (.072) was then multiplied by the total expenditure for instruction (\$135,990.26) resulting in a

TABLE II
 EXPENDITURES IN ELK CITY AND AREA 14 REGIONAL
 EDUCATION SERVICE CENTER FOR THE
 1972-73 ACADEMIC YEAR

	Elk City	Service Center
Administration	\$ 85,096.00	\$ 35,664.24
Instruction	957,606.05	135,990.76
Total Budget	1,373,515.60	235,959.00

TABLE III

AVERAGE DAILY ATTENDANCE FIGURES PER SCHOOL DISTRICT
IN AREA 14 WITH THE AMOUNT NEEDED TO PROVIDE
ADMINISTRATIVE AND INSTRUCTIONAL SERVICES
TO THE RESPECTIVE SCHOOL DISTRICT WITHOUT
ESEA TITLE III AND TITLE VI FUNDS

LEA	ADA	Instruc- tion*	Per Cent of Region ADA	Total Amount Needed With- out ESEA Funds	Needed for Instruction Above Cur- rent Amount	Adminis- tration*	Needed for Administration Above Current Amount
Merritt	223	135,990.26	1.0	1,716.54	1,359.90	35,664.24	356.64
Elk City	1,672	135,990.26	7.2	12,359.16	9,791.33	35,664.24	2,567.83
Sweetwater	121	135,990.26	0.5	858.27	679.75	35,664.24	178.32
Sayre	747	135,990.26	3.2	4,948.99	3,807.73	35,664.24	1,141.26
Carter	130	135,990.26	0.6	1,029.92	815.94	35,664.24	213.98
Erick	308	135,990.26	1.3	2,231.51	1,767.87	35,664.24	463.64
Custer	209	135,990.26	0.9	1,544.89	1,223.91	35,664.24	320.98
Arapaho	242	135,990.26	1.0	1,716.54	1,359.90	35,664.24	356.64
Thomas	459	135,990.26	2.0	3,433.09	2,719.81	35,664.24	713.28
Weatherford	1,148	135,990.26	4.9	8,411.07	6,663.52	35,664.24	1,747.55
Butler	179	135,990.26	0.8	1,373.23	1,087.92	35,664.24	285.31
Hammon	272	135,990.26	1.2	2,059.85	1,631.88	35,664.24	427.97
Clinton	1,967	135,990.26	8.4	14,418.98	11,423.18	35,664.24	2,995.80
Mangum	854	135,990.26	3.7	6,351.21	5,031.64	35,664.24	1,319.57
Granite	389	135,990.26	1.7	2,918.12	2,311.83	35,664.24	606.29
Gould	107	135,990.26	0.8	1,373.23	1,087.92	35,664.24	285.31
Arnett	174	135,990.26	0.7	1,201.58	951.93	35,664.24	249.65
Hollis	703	135,990.26	3.0	5,149.64	4,079.71	35,664.24	1,069.93
Navajo	288	135,990.26	1.2	2,059.85	1,631.88	35,664.24	427.97
Martha	96	135,990.26	0.4	686.62	543.96	35,664.24	142.66
Duke	219	135,990.26	0.9	1,544.89	1,223.91	35,664.24	320.98

TABLE III (Continued)

LEA	ADA	Instruc- tion*	Per Cent of Region ADA	Total Amount Needed With- out ESEA Funds	Needed for Instruction Above Cur- rent Amount	Adminis- tration*	Needed for Administration Above Current Amount
Altus	5,982	135,990.26	25.6	43,943.56	34,813.51	35,664.24	9,130.05
Eldorado	188	135,990.26	0.8	1,373.23	1,087.92	35,664.24	285.31
Olustee	200	135,990.26	0.9	1,544.89	1,223.91	35,664.24	320.98
Blair	331	135,990.26	1.4	2,403.16	1,903.86	35,664.24	499.30
Southside	150	135,990.26	0.6	1,029.92	815.94	35,664.24	213.99
Hobart	1,054	135,990.26	4.5	7,724.45	6,119.56	35,664.24	1,604.89
Lone Wolf	237	135,990.26	1.0	1,716.54	1,359.90	35,664.24	356.64
Gotebo	160	135,990.26	0.7	1,201.58	951.93	35,664.24	249.65
Snyder	471	135,990.26	2.0	3,433.09	2,719.81	35,664.24	713.28
Mt. Park	155	135,990.26	0.7	1,201.58	951.93	35,664.24	249.65
Roosevelt	203	135,990.26	0.9	1,544.89	1,223.91	35,664.24	320.98
Mt. View	263	135,990.26	1.1	1,888.20	1,495.89	35,664.24	392.31
Reydon	169	135,990.26	0.7	1,201.58	951.93	35,664.24	249.65
Cheyenne	335	135,990.26	1.4	2,403.16	1,903.86	35,664.24	499.30
Crawford	50	135,990.26	0.2	343.23	271.91	35,664.24	71.32
Sentinel	435	135,990.26	1.8	3,089.78	2,447.82	35,664.24	641.96
Dill City	220	135,990.26	0.9	1,544.89	1,223.91	35,664.24	320.98
Burns Flat	397	135,990.26	1.7	2,918.12	2,311.83	35,664.24	606.29
Washita Heights	232	135,990.26	0.9	1,544.89	1,223.91	35,664.24	320.98
Canute	314	135,990.26	1.3	2,231.51	1,767.87	35,664.24	463.64
Cordell	791	135,990.26	3.3	5,664.60	4,487.68	35,664.24	1,176.92

Total ADA for Area 14 - 23,325

Total ADA for State - 566,857

Total ADA for Area 14 - 588

*Current RESC Instruction Cost

*Current RESC Administration Cost

product of \$9,791.30 as the amount which would have to be added to the Elk City budget in the area of instruction in order to acquire the services currently being provided by the RESC. The ratio of .072 was multiplied by the total expenditures for administration (\$35,664.24) resulting in a product of \$2,567.83 as the amount which would have to be added to the Elk City budget in the area of administration in order to acquire the services currently being provided by the RESC. Thus, the total additional appropriation needed by the Elk City School district to provide the current number of services would be \$12,359.13. This is an amount which the school district in some cases will not be equipped to finance with its present budget.

The services of a regional service center do become basic and vital to many school districts' instructional program. However, one must realize that certain remote school districts would be reluctant to accept the budgetary expense on a pro rata or ADA basis of a Regional Service Center. It seems plausible that many districts would be both capable and willing to share the expense of a Regional Service Center. Thus, a dilemma exists in that several districts would volunteer financial resources; yet, some districts either would not or could not obligate their financial support. Thus, a problematic situation exists in that the districts that would vote to support the RESC after federal funds subsidy would find themselves in an extremely high-cost program that would be financially prohibitive.

Program Absorption by Elk City Independent

School District on a Percentage Basis

The following areas are currently reflected in the stated objectives

of the RESC at Elk City and are considered in the area of instruction: Speech, Testing, and Inservice Training. These areas are listed in Table IV, which indicates a sample of the rated costs of the center for services in each of the areas being provided the Elk City Independent School District, the cost to the Local Education Agency (LEA) prior to the center providing the services, and the add-on costs needed to provide similar services to the LEA without the services of the center.

In the "Prior" column, the LEA is currently expending \$8,000 for one full-time-equivalent speech therapist and has had this cost for the past several years. On a pro rata basis the RESC (under "ESC" column) is expending \$3,000 to provide additional services which are needed by the LEA for all children in the school system who have been diagnosed as needing these services. The "add-on" column reflects the amount needed to continue the services for the area of speech if the RESC were to be unable to provide them any longer. The \$4,000 amount reflects the services to be provided by a half full-time-equivalent (FTE) person, shared on a similar basis by a neighboring LEA. The amount reflects what the two LEA would need to replicate center services. Those services could not be provided without this minimum expense. In other words, in order to achieve the State's objectives of the center in the area of Speech, a minimum expenditure is needed; and, therefore, if an LEA was to assume the same objectives, it would have to assume similar functions.

In the area of testing, under the "Prior" column, the \$26,000 amount reflects the expenditures by the LEA for three counselors plus materials. In typical LEA, the testing function is carried on by the counseling department. Under the "RESC" column the center is currently spending \$40,000 to achieve its objectives through the function of developing and

TABLE IV

SAMPLE COST ANALYSIS BETWEEN LOCAL EDUCATION AGENCY
AND REGIONAL EDUCATIONAL SERVICE CENTER

Area	Local Education Agency		Regional Educational Service Center
	Prior	Add On	
Speech	1 FTE \$ 8,000	.5 FTE \$4,000	\$ 3,000
Testing	3 FTE + Mat'ls. \$26,000	.5 FTE \$4,000	\$40,000
In-Service Training	Travel \$ 2,000	\$1,000	\$ 5,000
Total	\$36,000	\$9,000	\$48,000

maintaining a testing program for diagnostic and remediation purposes. Under the "Add-on" column, an additional \$4,000 would be needed to provide a half full-time-equivalent (FTE) shared with a neighboring LEA to achieve the same objectives assured by the LEA which would be consistent with the services currently being offered by the Center.

In the area of inservice training, under the "Prior" column, the \$2,000 amount reflects the expenditures by the LEA for the staff and faculty to attend training meetings during the academic year. Under the "RESC" column the Center expended \$5,000 to achieve its objectives of providing training sessions with consultants for special education classes, developing psychomotor skills, test interpretation, and educational procedures. Under the "Add-on" column, an additional \$1,000 would be needed to provide similar services in order to enable the LEA to achieve objectives purporting to accomplish the same thing. Achieving this objective would most easily and economically be achieved by providing the services locally as opposed to sending staff and faculty to other states or other parts of the state; in addition a greater number of personnel could be trained more frequently.

A Cost Model for an Evaluation Analysis of RESC

The following section shall describe a proposed structure for identifying and organizing the activities of an educational service center in a program oriented manner. It shall discuss the structure as it relates to some analytic methods and underlying rationale.

The need for a more complete understanding and analysis of the functions and programs of educational agencies is increasingly being

acknowledged by the academic community. Frequently, information which is needed by the administration is unavailable within a particular operational framework, and consequently there is little opportunity to relate costs to the programs and services that serve the agency's objectives.

Different techniques must be developed and applied in order to improve planning and analysis by relating resource data to the achievement of the agency's objectives. These data would provide the basis for the evaluation of the costs and benefits of various programs and services. In some instances, the evaluation of an educational service center's expenditures and benefits could correlate with other RESC by comparing their data. The proposed structure is intended to facilitate the comparison of information by establishing a basis for acquiring comparability in the exchange of agency data. Although educational institutions in general and educational service centers in particular may continue to maintain varied yet traditional reporting structures, a means needs to be developed for viewing these agencies as a series of goal-oriented activities related to the mission and specific objectives of the center. A system which will help to sort out and trace the utilization of all resources channeled into the educational service center will aid management in determining how available resources are utilized by the various activities. By relating expenditures to objectives, management will be better able to evaluate alternatives and consider decisions regarding the allocation of scarce resources.

It is increasingly apparent that the conceptual tools of economics and management science can play a valuable role in the management of local education agencies in general and educational service centers in particular. The advent of modern computer technology has made the use

of such management tools a reality. In the years ahead, the application of program budgeting, cost-benefit analysis, analytical models, cost-exchange procedures, and unit costing will be a commonplace occurrence in public education. The program described herein has been developed to enable the application of these techniques to educational service centers. The following paragraphs describe the relation of the proposed program to some of these conceptual tools.

Rapid change in the size and complexity of public education, coupled with its rapidly rising cost, has been one of the causes of increased public interest in public education expenditures. Such public concern has highlighted the need for a better understanding of resource allocation processes in public education. Today's public school administrator is faced with an array of difficult decisions as he contemplates the increased cost for maintaining existing programs, worries about providing for an ever changing number of students, needs to improve the quality of education, and attempts to meet the demands for new and expanded services. In addition, the public school administrator often must contend with taxpayers' reluctance to provide additional resources without a plausible justification for the increased costs. Thus, intelligent decision making in public education requires more and better information, and administrative decision makers are seeking new techniques to aid in the collection and interpretation of data. However, very few educational units of LEA can provide their chief administrators with this capability to evaluate the costs of alternative programs and relate these expenditures to serve as a measure of achievement of agency objectives. Faced with limited resources, increasing demands for services, and an anxious public, school administrations are forced into severely

constrained decisions sometimes causing management by crisis rather than by orderly planning.

Public school administrators are now seeking ways to develop capabilities and techniques which satisfy traditional accounting needs while at the same time support the decision functions of the administrator. A major tool to aid the administrator in making resource allocation decisions is a public school program budgeting system. This would not be a new accounting system nor is it a more effective bookkeeping system; instead it is a system which identifies and organizes the activities of an agency in terms of its objectives, displays the costs of these programs or activities over an extended time frame, and relates these activities and their costs to the outputs associated with the achievement of the institutional objectives. Thus, the implementation of a program budget in an educational service center must be based on the identification of specific agency objectives. Further, the program budgeting approach requires that dollars and other resources be aggregated in relation to such output producing programs as students serviced, as well as organizational units, and that this program output be defined in a measurable fashion.

The imbalance that presently exists between decision requirements and available information is becoming evident as educational resources grow increasingly scarce and the demand for services expands. The development of analytic models to evaluate the current operations and to analyze the future consequences of alternative courses of action will help to alleviate this imbalance. An analytic model may be defined as a replication of a real or hypothetical system which specifies relationships between the various components of the system. For any educational

agency, the development of such models would be a difficult and costly task; however, models can be developed in a generalized form for use by many institutions. A central clearing house for the development of educational research, such as the State Department of Education, could develop generalized models in a number of areas of fundamental importance. This central development effort would have the effect of reducing the cost to LEA to that of adopting the general model to the LEA's unique needs. Previously, the development of generalized models has been restrictive, due to the numerous data systems in public education and the need to tailor the models to the unique structure of each LEA. However, the adoption of a common standard for classifying agency data permits the development of such generalized models by allowing the model to be designed to a general structure that can be related to each agency's data system. Thus, the propositions embodied herein can serve as a basis for the development of a common currency of exchange for all agencies participating in the implementation of an analytic model as indicated above. In other words, all educational service centers which will be developed would start their operation with a common standard for classifying their data (Gulko, 1970).

Historically, LEA have tended to concern themselves with their own needs rather than with the general needs of public education. One of the significant shifts of public school education in the United States is the public-school administrator's growing concern for the educational needs of an entire state and/or region, and how the goals of an individual LEA or RESC fit into these broadened educational objectives. Further, the emerging importance of program budgeting in public school education is resulting in the need for improved criteria to evaluate the

effectiveness of public education programs such as those provided by an educational service center responding to the needs of people in a multi-county area. However, objective measures of efficiency for a LEA are difficult, if not impossible, to devise without comparable data from similar agencies or other RESC.

This concern for public education programs on a state and regional basis, coupled with a growing interest by LEA to have comparable data from similar agencies or centers to aid in planning and analysis, appears to be heading toward the identification of the need for developing standard procedures for data exchange. In order to accomplish the exchange of comparable data, it will be necessary to develop a taxonomy of RESC activities that will serve as a structure for categorizing the various kinds of information relating to the programs of any particular center. An agreement by participating LEA or RESC to adopt a common reporting structure is prerequisite to the exchange of comparable program data. An important and relative concern will be the future development and adoption of a standard set of expenditures, revenue, resource, activity, and output data categories; for when the various measures of a RESC activities are developed and accepted by the participating agencies, a basis will then have been established for the exchange of meaningful and consistent analytic data to assist in making better resource allocation decisions at both the intra- and inter-center level (Downey, 1974).

There are many measures for analyzing public school education; one of them is the unit cost of instruction. There are also various ways to array the data concerning the costs of a pre-school through high school education. One possible way is through the use of a unit cost

per unit of study, cost per diploma or certificate, and cost per student (Gulko, 1970). All of these measures would have validity in certain specific contexts, but their use could be restricted because of the problems associated with developing comparability between independent or isolated studies; thus, by developing standard procedures for reporting unit costs of instruction, comparability would be established in this area. These procedures will determine the costs of instruction by: area of study and course level of instruction, level of student, diploma, and major area of study.

Area of study refers to the instructional activities within a particular area, such as driver education. This may be further distinguished by the target level of instruction. Thus, course level refers to the level of sophistication at which instruction in a particular area may be applied, such as advanced driver training. The students' field of study refers to the mix of courses which typically may be credited toward a specific certificate or diploma. Instruction by student level would be based on the total accredited work by a student and reflects his level of progress toward a diploma or certificate--e.g., a tenth grade student in second year French.

Sometimes the program concept might become clouded in its application to major area of study instructional programs because of the dual nature of the instruction producing activities. For example, all the courses available in French comprise the French area of study instruction program whereas French students may also take some courses in English, some in chemistry, and some in driver education to constitute a secondary education program leading to a high school diploma. Thus, the components of an instructional program may be reviewed in terms of

their contribution to a diploma or in terms of their contribution within an area of study.

Costs of area of study instruction by course level can be accommodated if instruction program elements are defined as course offerings by level, such as kindergarten reading instruction. With such data, a total direct instruction cost report may be a product of processing instruction program elements.

Table V is an example of an area of study matrix using sample data to indicate relative cost by area of study category and course level. Such costs would be direct instruction expenditures, i.e., acquired directly from identified instruction program elements. In addition to cost information, activity indicators such as weekly contact hours would be included as part of the characteristic data associated with these program elements. With such data, the area of study instruction cost matrix in Table V may be changed to a unit cost matrix by dividing each matrix element by the total number of units associated with the element, such as student contact hours. A sample of a unit cost matrix is shown on Table VI. Making the change from unit costs by area of study instruction and course level to unit costs by field of study and student level necessitates data on the arrangement of courses taken by students of various levels in different areas--e.g., the courses taken by elementary students in language. Table VII is a sample of the contact hour distribution matrix for students taking language which describes the total number of student contact hours developed by these students at a particular point in time. Dividing the elements of each column in Table VII by the total number of students for the column results in an average distribution of student contact hours by level. For example, suppose

TABLE V
 SAMPLE OF AN AREA OF STUDY
 INSTRUCTION COST MATRIX

First Semester

Area of Study Category	Course Level					Total
	Pre-School	Elementary	Junior High	Senior High	Other	
Language	200	300	400	500	---	1,400
Counseling	700	800	900	1,500	1,200	4,600
"	---	---	---	---	---	---
"	---	---	---	---	---	---
"	---	---	---	---	---	---
Total	1,500	1,600	1,700	1,800	1,500	8,100

TABLE VI

SAMPLE OF AN AREA OF STUDY INSTRUCTION
UNIT COST MATRIX

Cost Per Student Contact Hour
First Semester

Area of Study Category	Course Level					
	Pre-School	Elementary	Junior High	Senior High	Other	Average
Language	4.80	5.90	8.10	12.10	7.80	7.74
Counseling	6.10	7.20	9.10	13.60	10.40	9.28
"	---	---	---	---	---	---
"	---	---	---	---	---	---
"	---	---	---	---	---	---
Average	5.80	7.20	8.90	13.40	10.10	9.90

TABLE VII

SAMPLE OF A CONTACT HOUR DISTRIBUTION MATRIX

Field of Study - Language
Contact Hours by Semester

Area of Study by Course Level	Student Level													Total
	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
Language														
Kindergarten	500	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	1,200
Elementary	---	400	300	500	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	1,600
Junior High	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	700	800	---	---	---	---	1,900
Senior High	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	800
Counseling														
Kindergarten	100	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	200
Elementary	---	---	---	300	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	400
Junior High	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	100	---	---	---	---	---	400
Senior High	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	50	---	100
Total	1,000	900	800	---	---	---	---	800	800	---	---	50	---	6,600

there were ten elementary students in special education classes, and they created the contact hours shown in Column I of Table VII, dividing each of the column entries by ten will result in the distribution of average contact hours per elementary student taking special education. Table VII describes the distribution of the average load placed on the instruction progress, level by level, made by students pursuing various programs.

Instruction in this context refers to services provided in any given instructional area to the LEA requiring services and receiving them. Each of the other existing and to-be developed RESC could be cost analyzed in a similar fashion provided that comparable program taxonomic structures are developed. It is within this comparability that meaningful cost and program comparisons and projections can be made, to the mutual benefit of each educational agency and each LEA.

Summary

The cost comparisons suggest that the continuation of current activities to achieve operationally defined objectives will be exceedingly difficult for an LEA with the faculty, students, and resources of Elk City which has an ADA figure of approximately 1,600. School districts with smaller ADA figures--and seventy-nine percent (See Table III) of the districts in Region 14 had an ADA of less than 500--may not be able to accept the "add-on" cost of existing RESC services to meet their objective. In other words the cost analysis indicate that approximately seventy-nine percent of the student population in Area 14 would have to be deprived of the services of the center which otherwise might be provided and thereby enable these students to have greater educational benefits today and greater opportunity for the "good life" in later years.

The costs relating to the services to be provided by the RESC and the achievement of operationally defined objectives would be prorated for Elk City using a \$125,000 basic grant to be raised by a statewide allocation of \$4 per pupil. From studying the states, such as Texas and New York RESC, it appears that this method of funding is far superior to other forms of funding such as millage levies. Area Vocational-Technical schools are funded in this manner where the amount per thousand is multiplied by the total evaluation of the area in order to arrive at the assessment to be used for the support of the school. Certain inequities sometimes arise. In one region an excessive amount of money might be generated in relationship to the achievement of the operationally defined objectives, while another region could generate an insufficient amount of money to achieve the stated objective. This type of disparity or possible inequity in funding to meet unique needs and objectives would be to the detriment of all school districts.

By virtue of constitutional authority, and state statute, the state and local boards of education have assumed the authority and concomitant responsibility for educating all children in the most equitable manner possible. The development of a RESC to provide a broad spectrum of services in a manner consistent with the needs of its constituency is a viable and cost effective way to educate a maximum number of students in an educationally effective manner. The allocation factors described on page 61 provide a reasonable way for providing services, directed by objectives, in proportion to the number of students who should accrue benefits from the state educational system.

A cost model for evaluation analysis has been developed using LEA contact hours as the basic unit for determining program cost. Sample

data have been developed to illustrate the techniques for transforming behavioral objectives (of LEA) into operational activities of the RESC. A common statement of terms is recommended as the basic currency of exchange in order to develop common cost figures for meaningful comparison of services offered to LEA among RESC.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Considerable research has been accumulated in the state of Oklahoma on the subject of Regional Education Service Centers (RESC). Such Oklahoma based studies as Fitzgerald (1956), Adams (1960), Hopkins (1970), Hall (1970), Casey (1970), and Williams (1973) have explored the philosophy, potential services, geographic make-up, population data, feasibility, possible state models and attitudinal responses of participants concerning potential contribution of RESC to Oklahoma's educational system.

A recent trend in the state of Oklahoma has been the establishment of Regional Special Education Service Centers. Currently there are 16 such centers providing special education services to Local Education Agencies (LEA) in psychological testing, prescriptive teaching, media assets, etc. These centers have provided much needed services, and their coordinated impact has been widely acclaimed in Oklahoma by citizens, teachers, legislators, State Department of Education personnel, parents, and school leaders across Oklahoma.

Thirty states in the United States possess the various components of the RESC. Two additional states, Maryland and Ohio, have proposals for funding before their legislators, and several states have indicated an interest in the development of the RESC concept in their educational systems. The states of Texas and New York seemingly offer the broadest

services to the LEA located in their respective states. Those states offer a network of core services yet maintain a responsive environment to their regional constituency. Texas and New York are able to maintain such a balance through active and responsive elected governing boards. The election of a regional board of governors seems to offer a viable procedure for input by the LEA located in the respective region. Although it was found in an interstate comparison that scope, mission of purpose and organization vary, a definite national trend is that the RESC should perform service activities rather than regulatory functions. The state of Texas' philosophy of "doing things for the LEA rather than to the LEA" seems to characterize national trends concerning the purpose of the RESC.

The study of RESC in the various states has revealed that the Centers exist in a variety of forms. In Texas, for example, the RESC is strictly a service center. However, it is recommended that, in light of today's scarcity of resources, the RESC become more involved in actual school practice to improve delivery systems, to develop cooperative arrangements for educational services and to serve as a vehicle for desirable change. Furthermore, it is maintained that the RESC should not become a branch office of the State Department of Education but provide a way for strengthening the autonomy of the LEA. The study reflects the writer's commitment to accountability to the public for both cost effectiveness and quality education in Oklahoma. It is through the RESC that competence and expertise of educational institutions can be increased, showing evidence of reduced unit costs and more favorable cost benefit ratios.

The section of this paper relating to a cost analysis of the

operation of a RESC is intended to provide a basis for examining the relationship among the input of dollars to a service program, the activities of that program, and the operationally defined objectives of the program. Such an analysis is predicated on a uniform taxonomic structure of activities and terms which can be applied to any RESC. A sample of costs is provided to illustrate the viability of this approach, using currently operationally defined objectives of an existing RESC. Tables II - VII illustrate the manner by which costs data per given instructional area can be related. The data are samples which use student contact hours as the basic unit of instruction as defined by the RESC. Since the RESC is in the business of providing services to participant LEA, it is maintained that this unit cost of instruction most appropriately reflects the true measure of cost related activities to the services received by the LEA.

A cost analysis using percentages to prorate costs over major areas of an educational program, i.e., instruction and administration, has been developed. It indicates that the costs of implementing and receiving the current services being provided to LEA in Region 14 will be impossible without the existence of an agency such as the RESC. Individual school systems cannot afford such add-on costs.

The need in the state of Oklahoma to provide educational services to all children in our public education system is increasing. However, not only must the state's children be provided an education, but that education must be of the highest quality permitted by our existing resources. One viable way to focus the impact of our resources is to provide a vehicle, e.g., RESC, which can bring these resources to the people who need them most. No other vehicle, to date, in Oklahoma has

demonstrated the potential to serve this purpose. Furthermore, the RESC must be a cost effective and cost conscious agency which in addition to bringing the highest possible quality education to all children must do so in the most economical and practical way. It is suggested that in order to do this, costing procedures must be developed which provide meaningful indices of the achievement of goals and objectives. It is with this intent that this paper is proposed, to provide the springboard for consideration and development of more refined techniques. In light of this summary, the following recommendations would serve as a model for implementation of a statewide network of RESC in Oklahoma.

Recommendations

Organization of the Administration

1. The State Board of Education shall be the jurisdiction body to which the Regional Educational Service Centers are ultimately responsible.
 - A. The State Superintendent of Public Instruction shall be the supervising official.
 - B. In the State organization, there shall be an Assistant Superintendent in charge of RESC.
2. Each region shall have a Board of Governors.
3. Each RESC shall have a superintendent selected and employed by the Board of Governors.

Boundaries of the Regions

1. It is recommended that the RESC be set up using the geographical

boundaries previously proposed by the Oklahoma State Department of Education.

A. The proposed boundaries divide the state of Oklahoma into 15 regions as follows:

1. Region #1 consists of the Tulsa Public School District.
2. Region #2 consists of the Oklahoma City Public School District.
3. Region #3 consists of the counties of Canadian, Caddo, Grady, and western Oklahoma.
4. Region #4 consists of the counties of McClain, Cleveland, and eastern Oklahoma.
5. Region #5 consists of the counties of Payne, Lincoln, Creek, and southern Tulsa.
6. Region #6 consists of the counties of Garvin, Pontotoc, Murray, Coal, Johnston, Atoka, Carter, Love, Marshall, and Bryan.
7. Region #7 consists of the counties of Comanche, Tillman, Cotton, Stephens, and Jefferson.
8. Region #8 consists of the counties of Wagoner, Cherokee, Adair, Muskogee, Sequoyah, and McIntosh.
9. Region #9 consists of the counties of Kay, Osage, Pawnee, Washington, and northern Tulsa.
10. Region #10 consists of the counties of Pittsburg, Haskell, Leflore, Latimer, Pushmataha, McCurtain, and Choctaw.
11. Region #11 consists of the counties of Alfalfa, Grant, Garfield, Major, Blaine, Kingfisher, Logan, and Noble.
12. Region #12 consists of the counties of Pottawatomie, Okfuskee, Seminole, Hughes, and Okmulgee.

13. Region #13 consists of the counties of Nowata, Craig, Ottawa, Rogers, Mayes, and Delaware.
14. Region #14 consists of the counties of Roger Mills, Custer, Beckham, Washita, Greer, Kiowa, Harmon, and Jackson.
15. Region #15 consists of the counties of Cimarron, Texas, Beaver, Harper, Woods, Ellis, Woodward, and Dewey.

Board of Governors - Selection of the Board

1. It is recommended that the Regional Educational Service Centers be directed by Boards of Governors, each consisting of nine members.
 - A. It is recommended that Regions #1 and #2, which serve only the Tulsa Public School district and the Oklahoma City Public School district, respectively, be under the autonomy of the Board of Education of the district served by each Educational Service Center.
2. A caucus of the presidents of the Boards of Education of all member school districts within each of the 13 regions (exclusive of Regions #1 and #2), convene for the purpose of electing the Board of Governors for the Educational Service Center in each of the respective regions.
 - A. The caucus shall convene no later than October to elect the Board of Governors.
 1. The Board shall notify the State Department of Education by January 1 of its establishment and desire for funding for the following school year.
 2. The State Department of Education shall, in turn, seek allocation of funds for the region's Educational Service Center from the State Legislature.

- B. The caucus shall select from its membership a moderator to pre-
side over the selection of the Board of Governors.
- C. The Board of Governors shall have in its membership a minimum of
one member from each county in the region and a maximum of one
member from any one school district of the region.
1. It is recommended that Region #4 which has three counties,
elect three members from each of the three counties.
 2. It is recommended that Regions #3 and #5, each of which has
four counties, elect two members from each county and one
member at large.
 3. It is recommended that Regions #7, #9, and #12, each of which
has five counties, elect one member from each county and four
members at large.
 4. It is recommended that Regions #8 and #13, each of which has
six counties, elect one member from each county and three
members at large.
 5. It is recommended that Region #10, which has seven counties,
elect one member from each county and two members at large.
 6. It is recommended that Region #11, #14, and #15, which has
eight counties, elect one member from each county and the
ninth member be elected at large.
 7. It is necessary that Region #6, which has ten counties, take
exception to the stipulation of minimum per county member-
ship on the nine-member Board. It is recommended that
Region #6 elect one member from each of nine counties and
that the tenth county be assured by assuming the first seat
to be vacated.

- D. Nominations for members of the Board of Governors shall be made from the floor of the caucus, and election shall be by the majority vote of the entire caucus.
3. The positions of the members of the Board of Governors shall be designated as seats one, two, three, etc., inclusive of seat nine.
 4. A regular term shall be for the duration of three years.
 - A. In the initial term only, seats one, two, and three shall serve one year; seats four, five, and six shall serve two years, and seats seven, eight, and nine shall serve three years.
 - B. The members of the Board of Governors, when all are elected, shall draw lots for the names of each of their positions, (e.g., seat one, seat two, etc.), each to serve for the duration previously assigned to his respective position.
 5. Members of the Board of Governors shall select officers of the Board from among its membership.
 6. Election of new members to fill vacancies created by expired terms will be done in the same manner as the original members were elected, by a caucus of the presidents of the Boards of Education of all member school districts in the region.
 7. Members of the Board of Governors are eligible for re-election.
 8. Should a vacancy occur due to death or resignation, the seat shall be filled for the unexpired term by appointment by the remaining members of the Board of Governors.

Meetings of the Board

1. The Board of Governors shall meet monthly at a time and place to be established by the Board itself.

2. Special meetings may be called by the chairman of the Board of Governors or by a majority of the members of the Board.
3. Five members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.
4. Meetings shall be open to the public except that portion of any meeting devoted to the discussion of personnel.
5. Consistent with the standard set by the state of Oklahoma for its employees, members of the Board of Governors shall be compensated for travel expense to and from regular and special meetings of the Board at the rate of \$.09 per mile.
 - A. Members of the Board shall be compensated at the rate of \$.09 per mile, if driving, for travel expense while attending to official business of the Board.
 - B. If another mode of transportation is required, the Board member shall be compensated for actual travel and living expenses.
 - C. At any time that the State should adjust its compensation rate, the compensation prescribed above shall also be adjusted.
6. Official minutes of meetings of the Board shall be kept in the office of the Superintendent of the Educational Service Center and shall be available to any citizen for examination.

Functions of the Board

1. The Board shall select and employ a superintendent who shall serve as the executive director of the Regional Educational Service Center.
2. The Board of Governors shall select a site for the Educational Service Center of its region.
 - A. This power shall be extended only to the Boards in those regions

where Educational Service Centers have not already been established prior to the selection of the Board.

- B. Both the site and the superintendent chosen by the Board of Governors shall be subject to the approval of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction.
3. The Board shall select a depository for money belonging to the Board for the operation of the Educational Service Center.
 4. The Board shall secure needed physical facilities.
 5. The Board shall assure that data processing needs of the region are met.
 6. The Board shall make application for federal funds available for educational programs that are needed by the region, and the Board shall administer and coordinate federal programs and projects for which funds are allocated to the Center.
 7. The Board shall develop and approve an annual operating budget for the regional Center.
 8. The Board shall approve all fiscal arrangements, policies, and agreements.
 9. The Board shall develop policies to govern the operation of the Center.
 10. The Board shall plan for the utilization of all available educational and cultural resources and services located both within and outside the region.
 11. The Board shall confirm the appointment of professional personnel upon recommendation by the superintendent.
 12. The Board shall coordinate an annual evaluation of the activities of the Center.

13. The Board shall make annual reports required by the State Department of Education.
14. The Board shall acquire, hold title and sell real property for Service Center purposes in accordance with statutes governing the authority of Boards of Trustees of Independent School Districts.

Superintendent of the Educational Service Center

1. The superintendent employed by the Board of Governors shall be certified as a superintendent by the Oklahoma Department of Teacher Certification and shall have demonstrated, through experience, a high degree of ability in administration, program development, and experimental programs in education.
2. The Board's selection of a superintendent must be approved by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction.
3. The superintendent shall perform all duties and functions as required by the Board of Governors.
4. The superintendent shall submit required reports to the Board of Governors for their approval and forwarding to the State Department of Education.
5. The superintendent shall maintain records pertaining to all functions of the Educational Service Center.
6. The superintendent shall appoint staff members subject to confirmation by the Board of Governors.
7. The superintendent shall recommend to the Board of Governors the acquisition of instructional media and equipment needed for the purposes of carrying out the programs of the Service Center.
8. The superintendent shall serve as supervisor of professional and

non-professional personnel employed at the Educational Service Center.

Services of the Educational Service Center

1. The following core services shall be an integral part of the program of the Regional Educational Service Center.
 - A. Coordination of staff development through the inservice training for professional personnel.
 1. The coordinator should conduct a survey to identify staff needs in terms of goals and objectives.
 2. The coordinator should implement an inservice program which includes both the local school district level and the regional level.
 3. The Board of Governors should include in its budget finances for inservice programs.
 4. Appropriate use of school time and teacher time should be considered in developing inservice programs.
 5. The coordinator should make use of resources available to him in implementing the staff development program.
 - B. Coordination and supervision of special education programs.
 1. Evaluative testing and placement of exceptional children.
 2. Supervision of psychological services for the students of special education programs.
 3. Prescriptive Teaching Resource Centers for materials and services to aid in the education of exceptional children.
 - C. Coordination of guidance and counseling services.
 1. The guidance and counseling staff shall assist the member schools in assessment of student needs.

2. The staff may provide guidance and counseling services not available to the students at the local level.
- D. Coordination and supervision of curriculum development.
1. In-depth evaluation of educational programs in terms of goals and learner needs.
 2. Planning and implementation toward program development.
- E. Coordination and supervision of library services and instructional media.
1. Identify the instructional needs of the region.
 2. Media services should include lending of materials, duplication services, delivery and dissemination service.
 3. Media services may include other services which are within its capabilities.
- F. Coordination of data processing service for pupil accounting, attendance records, and financial accounting.
1. The coordinator at the Regional Educational Service Center should assure that computer services and data processing needs of the districts within the region are met.
 2. The coordinator shall assist in the application of uniform procedures and methods as developed by the State Department of Education.
 3. Computer services provided by the Center may include student scheduling, test scoring, grade reporting, pupil attendance, and payroll.
2. The following additional services offered by the State Department of Education may be coordinated by the Regional and the State Department of Vocational Education.

- A. Coordination of Migrant Education, Drug Abuse Education, Driver Education, and Adult Education.
- B. Coordination of instruction, transportation, and school lunches.
- C. Coordination of auditing and textbook services.
- D. Coordination of Agriculture and Home Economics and Vocational Education programs.

Finances of the Educational Service Centers

1. It is recommended that the three existing Centers at Stillwater (Region #5), Wilburton (Region #10), and Elk City (Region #14), which are now operating on ESEA Title III funds, be funded by the State Legislature for a period of one year.
 - A. An on-site evaluation of the three Centers should be made in March of the first year of state funding.
 1. The three Centers are now offering services other than the core services described herein. Funds from the State Legislature would allow the addition of the core services.
 2. Such an evaluation would validate the services provided by the Service Centers.
 3. It is recommended that the State Department of Education conduct the evaluation, using the services of reputable educators across the state.
 - B. It is further recommended that each Educational Service Center be evaluated in a similar manner after March 1 of the Center's first year in operation.
2. It is recommended that after the first-year evaluation and validation of services, the legislature make funds for the operation of the

- respective Regional Educational Service Center a part of permanent annual school appropriation.
3. The Regional Educational Service Center shall operate on funds allocated by the State Legislature, (.e.g., funds appropriated at the rate of \$4.00 per average daily attendance in Oklahoma public schools).
 - A. Each Center shall receive a minimum of \$125,000 annually from the State Legislature.
 - B. Remainder of the funds appropriated by the Legislature shall be allocated to the Centers on the basis of ADA of the schools in the various regions.
 - C. Based on the 1972-73 ADA in Oklahoma (566,857), \$4.00 per ADA would provide adequate funds for the block grants of \$125,000 to each of the 15 centers plus the amounts to be allocated to the regions on the basis of the ADA in each region.
 1. The figure of \$4.00 per ADA may require adjustment as additional services are offered by the Regional Educational Service Centers.
 4. Each school district within the region shall provide funds to the Center at the rate of \$3.00 or \$4.00, depending on need, per ADA of its own district; funds to be used for data processing and library services.
 5. Application for federal funds shall be made by the Board of Governors of the Educational Service Center to fit the needs of the LEA in the region.
 - A. All funds (local, state, and federal) granted to the Center shall be budgeted by the Board of Governors.

Cost Evaluation for the RESC

1. Statewide listing of services is to be developed by a Regional needs assessment.
2. Behavioral objectives of the RESC are reflective of the operational objectives of each LEA which it serves.
3. The activities of the RESC are transformed into the number of contact hours which it has with each LEA in the region in providing the services needed by the LEA and embodied in the stated objectives of the RESC.
 - A. The objectives of the RESC are costed through its activities which in turn are transformed into contact hours.
 - B. The contact hour concept becomes the basic unit for costing RESC services and can provide cost data relating to educational level serviced and programs developed.
4. The net effect of program costing is an increase in the qualitative services to students and increased efficiency in the management of our resources.

Alternate Proposal to Financing the RESC

1. An alternate proposal is recommended should the State Legislature find it unfeasible to provide full funding of the Regional Educational Service Center plan at once.
 - A. The special education phase of the Regional Educational Service Center concept has already been funded by the State Legislature in its grants of funds for Prescriptive Teaching Resource Centers.
 1. The Board of Governors of a region may decide upon a site

for the Educational Service Center other than the site where a Prescriptive Teaching Resource Center is already in operation.

2. In such an incidence, the Prescriptive Teaching Resource Center shall be operated as a satellite under the supervision of the Regional Educational Service Center.
- B. It is recommended in the alternate proposal that the Legislature progressively fund additional core services of the Regional Educational Service Center concept until full funding is operational.
1. One or two additional core services should be selected each year for funding until all are being funded.
 2. It is recommended that the six core services be funded in the following sequence:
 - a. Already funded: special education.
 - b. Step one: guidance and counseling.
 - c. Step two: administration, library services and instructional media, and curriculum development.

(The election of the Board of Governors would take place at this point.)
 - d. Step three: data processing and staff development.

It is with hope that this study might open avenues for the implementation of a statewide network of Regional Educational Service Centers in Oklahoma.

Findings

Five general conclusions were reached from an analysis of the

findings of the study:

1. The trend and the need for the Regional Educational Service Center is supported.
2. The need for local control can best be met through an elected board of governors working under the aegis of the State Department of Education.
3. The cost evaluation model determines the cost of the RESC providing new or existing programs to the LEA.
4. The most viable plan for financing RESC would be through legislative funding.
5. The Oklahoma Intermediate Unit can best be developed through the three currently existing Title III Regional Centers.

In the two and one-half decades since World War II, public schools have managed to meet the incredible demands on the postwar baby boom and the epochal flight of families to the suburbs, building new schools and improving old ones at an unprecedented rate. Through all of this, schools have somehow managed to cut teacher-pupil ratios, undertake new programs for helping the underprivileged, and vastly improve the equality of education.

A well-supported network of RESC can help ensure that every child will receive the resources he needs to meet his educational goals, no matter what the size, wealth or capacity of the school district in which the student resides.

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Dear Sir:

The enclosed questionnaire is a portion of a study that responds to a request by the State Department of Education and by the government branch of the state of Oklahoma. It is hoped from this study, that a state model can be developed for establishing a funding procedure for educational service centers. This study is also in the area of a doctoral study I am currently attempting at Oklahoma State University. Realizing that your state has had a provocative educational program, I would appreciate your input into this study. I would appreciate your help in completing the enclosed brief questionnaire and returning it to me at your early convenience. I would also appreciate receiving a copy of your state guidelines and state plan for regional educational service centers.

As a fellow educator, I am aware of the tremendous demands placed on your time. I have thus made the questionnaire brief and concise.

Your assistance in this study will be greatly appreciated. Thank you for your time and interest in this request.

Respectfully,

Joe E. White

QUESTIONNAIRE

Please respond to the following statement by (1) placing a check at the correct response, (2) briefly, indicating, on the lines provided your response to the questions which require a response. These comments are vitally important to this study.

1. Does your state possess the Regional Service Center Concept?
 Yes _____ No _____

2. If your state possesses this concept, who directs it?
 Administrative Assistant _____ Title III Director _____
 Department Director _____ Other _____

3. Are the Regional Service Centers in your state funded by:
 State _____ Federal _____ Local _____ Other _____
 Please explain _____

4. Do the Regional Service Centers in your state possess an elected Board? Yes _____ No _____
 If "yes" at what level? Local _____ State _____

5. Do the Educational Service Centers in your state possess local autonomy? Yes _____ No _____

6. Procedure for autonomy _____

7. Would you please send a copy of your state guidelines and state plan?
 Name _____
 State _____

VITA *J*

Joe Ellis White

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Thesis: A MODEL FOR IMPLEMENTING A STATEWIDE NETWORK OF REGIONAL EDUCATIONAL SERVICE CENTERS IN THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA

Major Field: Educational Administration

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, July 3, 1937, the son of Mr. and Mrs. Charley William White.

Education: Attended grade school and high school in Alex, Oklahoma; graduated from Alex High School in 1955; attended Murray State Junior College, Tishomingo, Oklahoma, 1955-57; attended Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma, 1957-59; received the Bachelor of Science in Education degree in May, 1959; attended Southwestern State College Graduate School, Weatherford, Oklahoma, 1965-67; received the Master of Teaching degree in Education from Southwestern State College in 1967; attended Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma, 1967-73; completed requirements for Doctor of Education degree in May, 1974.

Professional Experience: High school English teacher and coach, Alex, Oklahoma, 1959-62; high school English teacher and coach, Roswell Public Schools, Roswell, New Mexico, 1962-63; high school English teacher and coach, Minco Public Schools, Minco, Oklahoma, 1963-64; high school English teacher, athletic director, coach, and high school principal, Elk City Public Schools, Elk City, Oklahoma, 1964-70; Superintendent of Schools, Sentinel Public Schools, Sentinel, Oklahoma, 1970-71; Superintendent of Schools, Elk City, Oklahoma, 1971-74.

Professional Honors: President of Oklahoma Secondary School Activities Association, 1972-73; President of the Oklahoma Education Association's Southwest District, 1972-73; U. S. A. delegate to Russia for diplomatic exchange, 1973; President-Elect of Oklahoma Association of School Administrators, 1973-74.