

2012-13  
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Annual Report  
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**EDUCATIONAL SERVICE UNIT**



# Administrator's Message

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Nebraska's Educational Service Unit system began with the passage of LB 301 by the Nebraska Legislature in 1965. Educational Service Unit 2 became fully operational in 1967. Since that time the educational service unit system has expanded and improved service delivery.

In 1997 the Nebraska Legislature established Core Services and cast ESUs in a significant supporting role to the school improvement process. Core services were prioritized into three categories, each aimed at the improvement of teaching and student learning: staff development, technology, and instructional materials. Additionally, the Legislature outlined an advisory and approval process that requires ESUs to annually prepare a core service plan, which must be approved by 2/3 of the public school districts being served whose student population represents more than 50% of the total student population of the unit.

Nebraska Department of Education Rule 84 supports educational service units in effectively and efficiently supporting school systems and establishes a minimum level of performance for ESU accreditation. One of the requirements of Rule 84 is that each ESU conducts a comprehensive evaluation of its programs and services at least once every five years, using an NDE-approved strategic improvement process model.

There exists, however, an alternative, voluntary accreditation option through the prestigious, nongovernmental organization now known as AdvancEd (a merging of North Central and Southern regional accreditation and school improvement entities that have been in existence since 1895). During the October 17, 2011 Board Meeting, the ESU 2 Board of Directors approved the application for pursuing AdvancED Accreditation; therefore, the commitment regarding the AdvancED continuous improvement process was initiated.

As a result of this initial commitment, an AdvancED Readiness Review was scheduled for October 31, 2012; whereby, ESU 2 was approved for the AdvancED Accreditation Process. The AdvancED External Review has been scheduled for April 27-30, 2014.

The ESU 2 Commitment to Quality Service mission now compasses 16 public school districts in the counties of Burt, Cuming, Dodge, and Saunders; and integrates delivery of Core Services, along with special education services and other requests for teacher and staff support services.

Unit Staff, along with the Board, strive to exemplify in the character and conduct of working relationships a core belief in communication, education, leadership, and collaboration with a constant vision to developing effective partnerships while providing leadership and learning for all.



*David M. Ludwig*  
David M. Ludwig, Administrator

Vern Gibson, President  
Dean Chase, Vice President  
Harlan Schrieber, Secretary  
Ron Briggs  
Rich McGill  
Ed Rastovski  
George Robertson  
Louise Nabb

# Service Programs

## Service Programs

### STATE CORE PROGRAMS

**State Law requires that ESU Core Funds be prioritized for school staff development, technology training, instructional media, and Internet connectivity.**

Core Funding was \$421,588 for 2011-12 and \$429,981 for 2012-13. Core funding for 2013-2014 is \$399,285.



For 2010-11, Core Funds were reduced \$ 271,900 because LB 1071 removed the hold harmless from Distance Education costs. Core Funds for 2011-12 year were reduced \$90,588. As a result of the combined decreases from 2010-11 and 2011-12 (\$366,488), local levy dollars were needed to fund all Internet Infrastructure and Connectivity services, all Instructional Media services, and most Technology Training services during the 2011-12 year.

As the result of a resignation, a reduction of 1.00 FTE in Staff Development occurred during the 2012-13 year, thereby, leaving sufficient Core Funds for all Staff Development, all Technology Training, and most Instructional Media. Local Levy dollars were still needed to fund a portion of Instructional Media and all Internet Infrastructure/Connectivity.

Core Program Services	2011-12 Budget	2012-13 Budget	2013-14 Budget
Staff Development	413,546	316,971	332,654
Technology Training	116,181	113,788	118,883
Instructional Media	105,929	49,174	56,811
Internet Infrastructure	362,311	387,120	381,097
Internet Connectivity	<u>47,884</u>	<u>48,400</u>	<u>29,715</u>
Total	\$ 1,045,851	\$ 895,353	\$ 919,160

The focus of Core services continues to be school improvement. The Instructional Media & Technology departments work closely with the Professional Development and Special Education service areas to provide technical assistance to staff development offerings and assessment support.

Core Programs Staffing	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	Funding Source
<b>Professional Development</b>				
Team Leader	1.00	1.00	1.00	Core
Consultants w/Fed. Programs	4.00	3.00	3.00	Core/Grant
Department Assistant/Fed. Program	<u>0.50</u>	<u>0.50</u>	<u>0.50</u>	Core/Grant
TOTAL FTE	5.50	4.50	4.50	
<b>Technology/Network</b>				
Team Leader/Systems Engineer	1.00	1.00	1.00	Levy
Technicians: Internet & Web	<u>2.50</u>	<u>2.50</u>	<u>2.15</u>	Levy
TOTAL FTE	3.50	3.50	3.15	
<b>Instructional Media</b>				
Team Leader/DL/IMAT/Grant Projects	1.00	1.00	0.80	Grant/User
Media/Production/Coop Clerk	1.00	1.00	0.45	User/Levy
Grant Assistant	<u>0.50</u>	<u>0.50</u>	<u>0.05</u>	Grant
TOTAL FTE	2.50	2.50	1.30	



# Service Programs

## Service Programs

### SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

School districts partner with ESU 2 to provide cooperative special education services for students. Program rates are based on the projected budget needs. Schools make five (5) payments to ESU 2 with the final payment being adjusted if budgeted Special Education funds are not spent.

The following 2013-14 rates are calculated on estimates of school needs and salary costs:

Program Rates	2011-2012	2012-13	2013-14
Speech Language Pathology	\$55 per hour	\$57 per hour	\$57 per hour
School Psychology	\$550 per day	\$569 per day	\$569 per day
Occupational Therapy	\$61 per hour	\$63 per hour	\$65 per hour
ESU 2 Independent School Tuition	NA	NA	\$18,000 per year
Administrative Services	\$14,000 per year	\$16,000 per year	\$16,500 per year

As in prior years, an 8% fee is charged for administrative supervision of contracted ESU 2 speech pathologists, psychologists, and/or occupational therapist. The special education department director and consultants provide assistance to all ESU 2 school districts for federally funded programs and for the administrative services contracted by each school district.



As a result of the discontinuation of contracted Level III program services provided by a local district effective the 2013-14 School Year, the ESU 2 Advisory Committee of Superintendents requested that ESU 2 initiate a program for behavioral disordered students beginning with the 2013-14 school year. An ESU 2 Special Education Level III Advisory Committee of Superintendents, Special Education Directors and Principals was formed in September 2012, and a behavioral program and facility—the ESU 2 Independent School—began serving students in August 2013.

Special Education Staffing	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	Funding Source
Director	1.00	1.00	1.00	User
Consultants (205 days)	2.00	2.00	2.00	User/Fed
Department Assistant	1.00	1.00	1.00	User/Fed
Service Coordinators	4.00	4.00	4.00	Fed/Grant
Psychologists (185-195 days)	4.00	4.00	4.00	User
Speech Language Pathologists (185 days)	8.40	9.60	10.00	User
Speech Language Technicians	NA	1.00	2.00	User
Occupational Therapist (185 days)	1.00	1.00	1.00	User
ESU 2 Independent School Instructor	NA	NA	1.00	User
ESU 2 Independent School Classified Staff	NA	NA	3.00	User
TOTAL FTE	21.0	22.60	26.60	

### ADMINISTRATION & COOPERATIVE SERVICES

The governance of ESU 2 includes the administration and financial support of all programs.

Administration & Cooperative Staffing	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	Funding Source
Administrator	1.00	1.00	1.00	Levy/User
Business Manager	1.00	1.00	1.00	Levy/Grant
Administrative Assistant	0.50	0.50	0.46	Levy
Elementary School Counselors	2.20	1.80	1.80	User
TOTAL FTE	4.70	4.30	4.26	

# Service Programs

## Service Programs



### FEDERAL & CONTRACTED PROGRAMS:

ESU 2 manages consortium and cooperative programs (i.e. Title I, Perkins, Special Education Cooperative, Distance Education, etc.) for area schools that choose to participate. If management expenses exceed those “covered” by the approved costs under Federal guidelines, the school districts involved determine how those expenses will be covered.

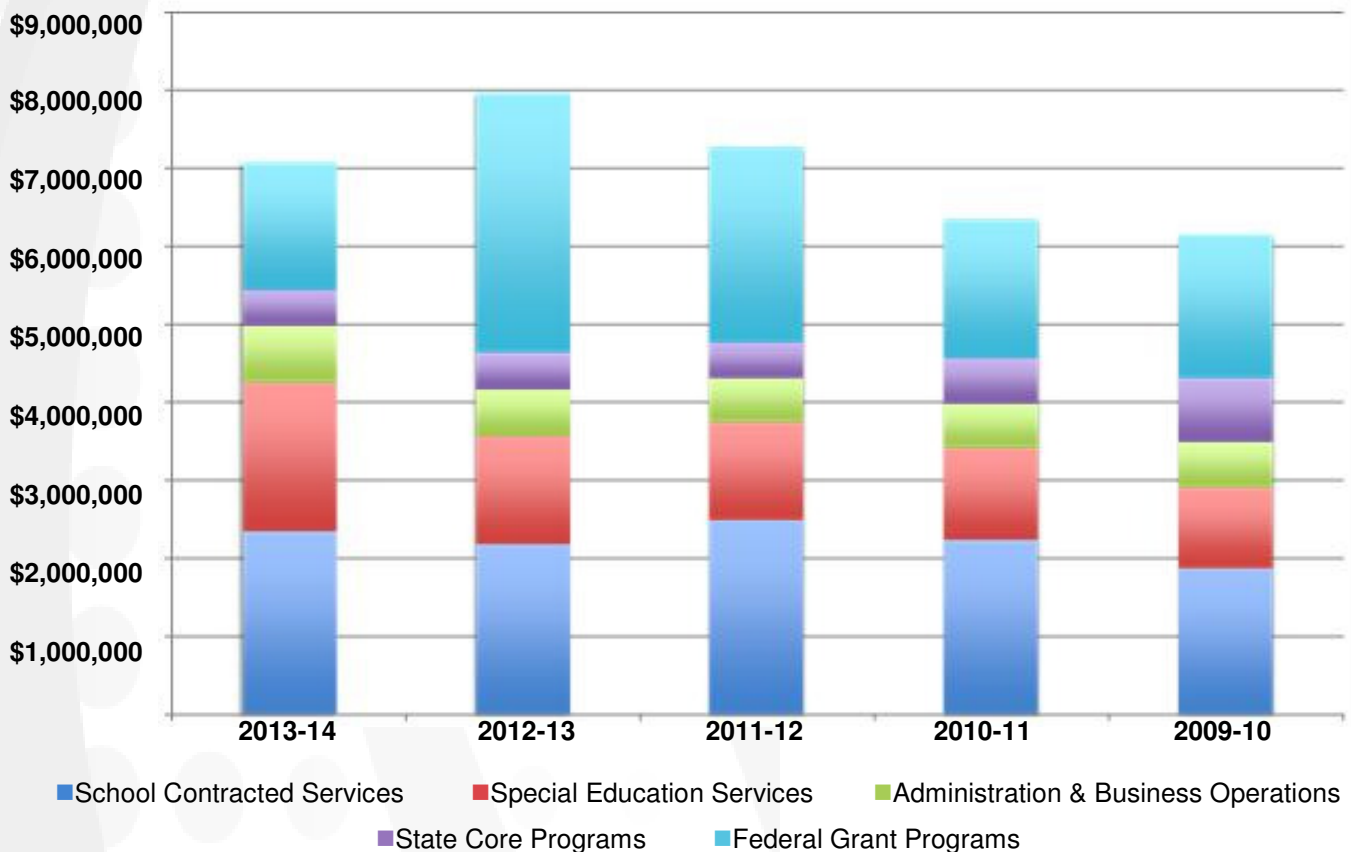
### LOCAL LEVY FUNDING FOR PROGRAMS FOR SCHOOLS

ESUs operate under the constraints of two budget limits, a levy limit of 1.5 cents per \$100 of actual valuation and a lid limit that states the current year’s budgeted restricted funds (defined as property taxes and state core funds) cannot exceed the prior year’s budgeted restricted funds plus growth. Growth is defined as a 2.5% basic growth factor plus an additional 1% with the approval of 75% of the Board or 110% of needs.

### SERVICE CREDIT

Service Credits, generated from local levy funds in the amount of \$330,000, will be used to provide a variety of school services as determined locally. Individual school district Service Credit amounts will be calculated on 50% student enrollment and 50% district valuation based on grades of instruction listed in the NDE Directory. School districts may carry over only the unused portion of their 2013-2014 Service Credit for use in 2014-2015.

**Budget by Service Program Categories**

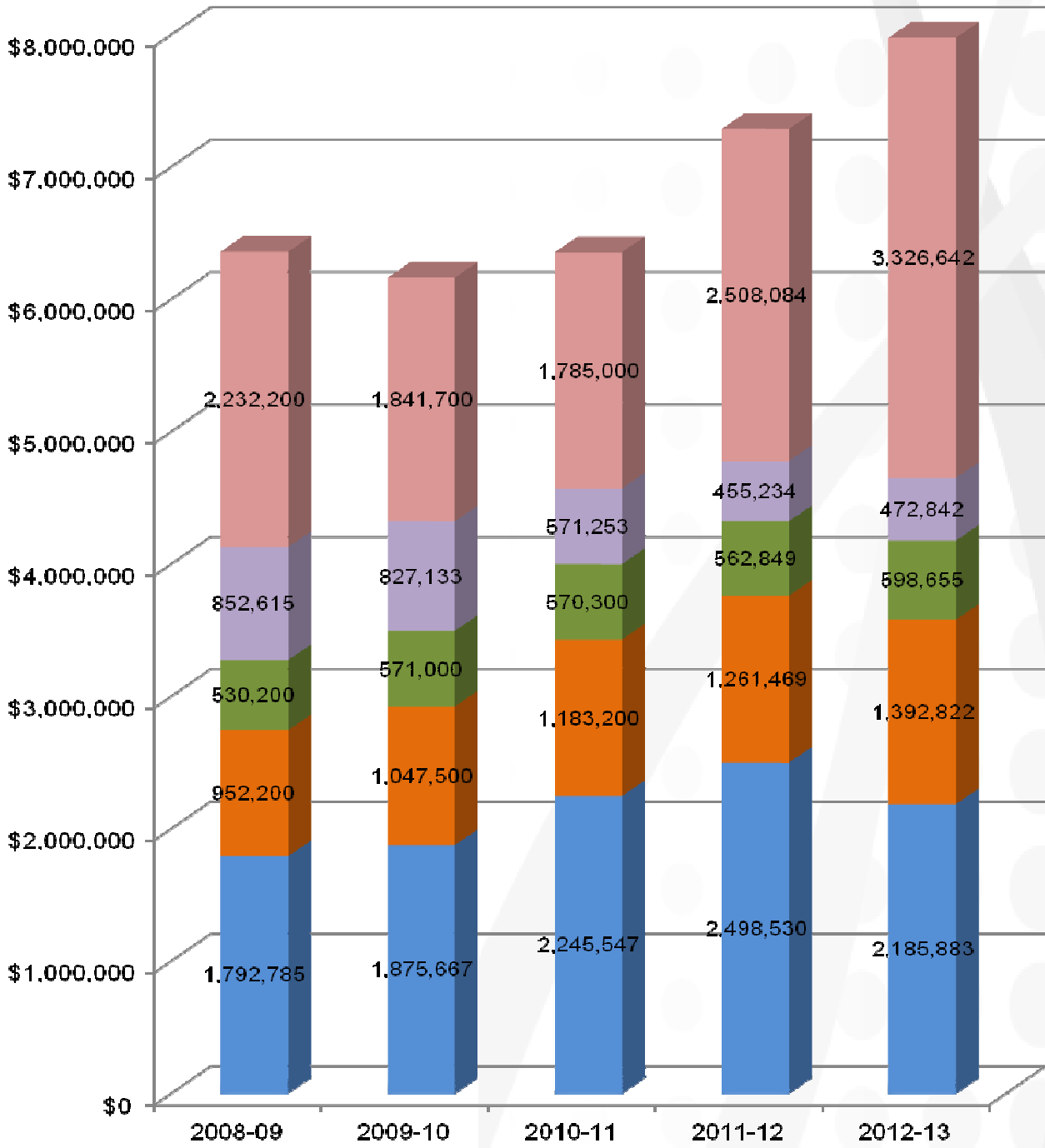




# Expenditures

## Expenditures

### Budget Expenditures



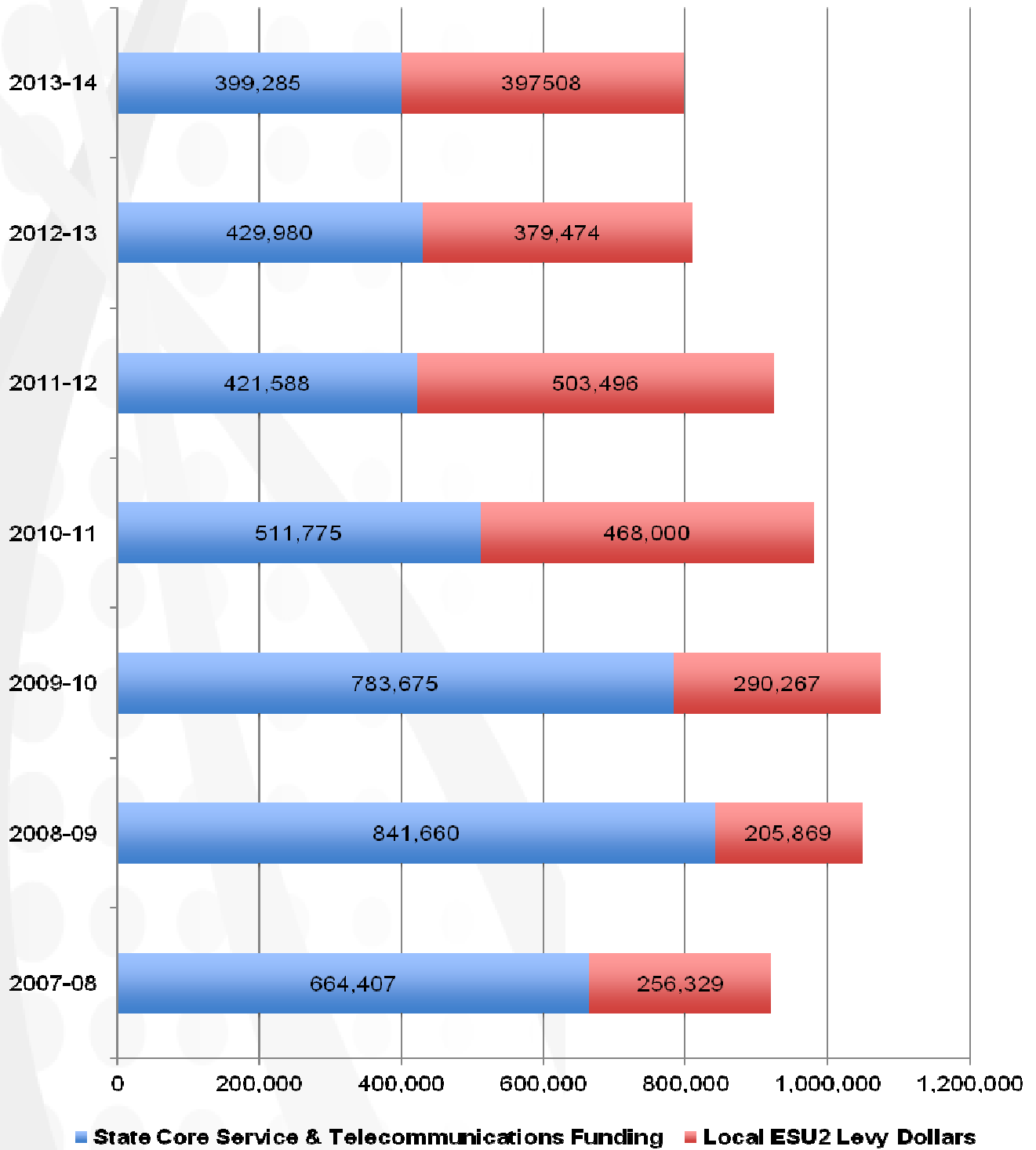
- School Contracted Services
- Special Education
- Business Operations
- State Core Programs
- Federal Grant Programs

# Funding Sources

## Funding Sources



### CORE Services Funding

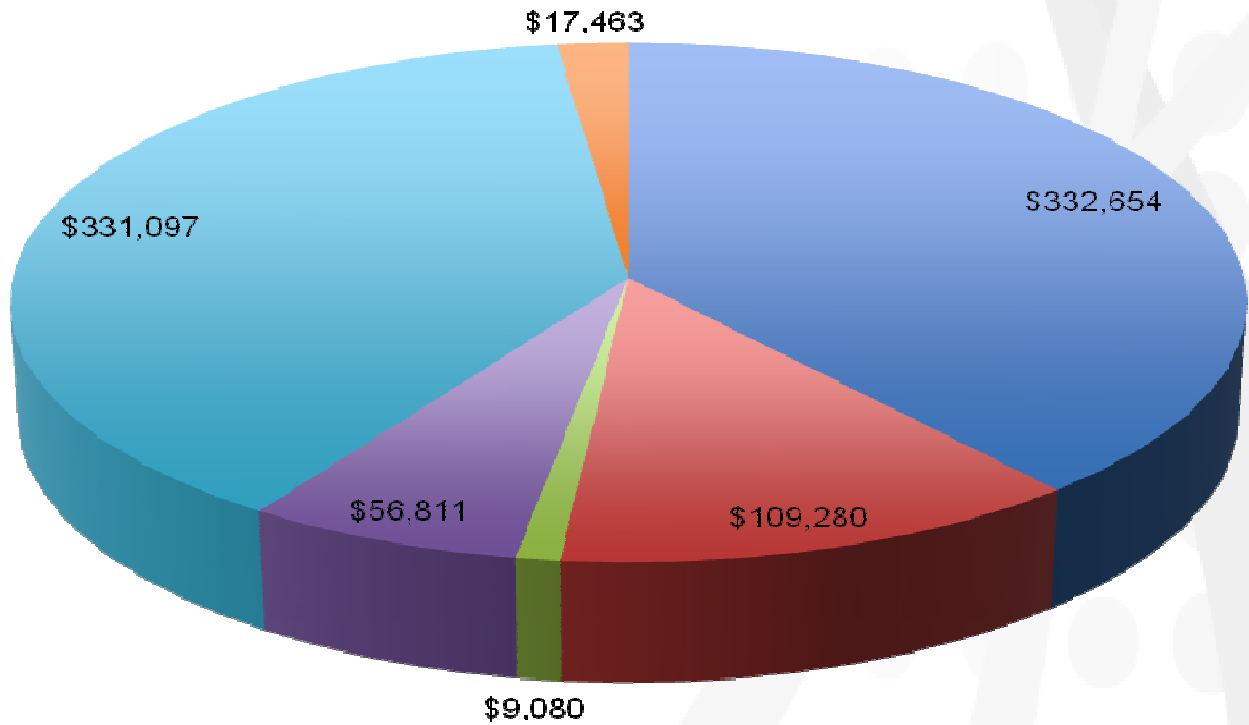




# Funding Sources

## Funding Sources

### CORE Projects



- Staff Development CORE Funds
- Tech Training CORE Funds
- Tech Training Local Levy Funds
- Instructional Materials Local Levy Funds
- Internet Connectivity Local Levy Funds
- Distance Ed Consortium Contract Source Funds

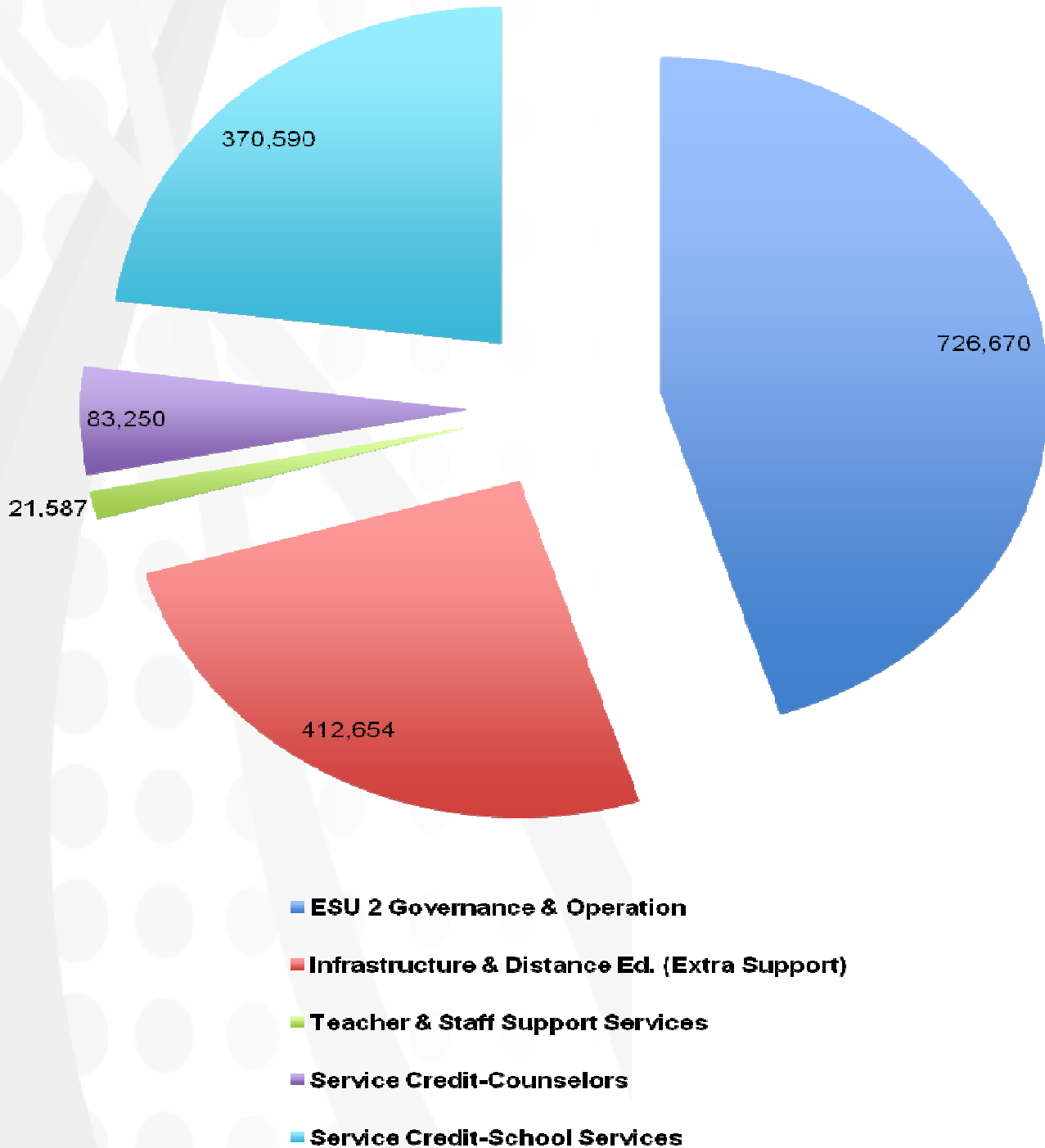


# Funding Sources

## Funding Sources



### Levy Funds





# ESU Initiatives

## ESU Initiatives

**B**lended learning is an educational environment in which a student learns at least in part through online delivery of content and instruction and has some element of control over time, place, path or pace. While still attending a brick-and-mortar school structure, traditionally effective face-to-face classroom methods are combined with computer-mediated activities.

Many elements of blended learning are already in place for our schools —students and teachers and career professionals at distant geographic locations can find one another via the Nebraska Virtual Instruction Source (NVIS) and come together via satellite and desktop video conferencing technologies (VCT), as well as chat, discuss and share content via learning management systems (LMS).

Negotiated contracts with highly respected digital content providers Discovery Education, World Book Online, Cengage Learning, Noodle Tools, Think Map, Odysseyware and Baylor, already afford access to streaming media and other digital learning objects, to academic research databases, to vocabulary and writing tools, and to curriculum and instruction for K-12.. Open-source educational resources include Hippocampus, KHAN Academy, and the National Repository of Online Courses (NROC) .

Now, it's time to amass these separate resources, as well as create a cloud space to share locally-created resources, by means of a **Learning Object Repository**. An **Active Federation Directory Services** system means users sign on to a single dashboard and, by virtue of complex authentication and certification mechanisms, gain secure access to all virtual resources, without multiple logons, usernames and passwords. Powered by Safari Montage, the statewide LOR is projected to be operational by September 2014.

The Educational Service Unit Coordinating Council (ESUCC) —along with Nebraska Virtual partners the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE), Nebraska Educational Telecommunications (NET) and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Independent Study High School— cite customization of instruction and assessment and the opportunity for data collection as major BlendEd benefits expected to boost student achievement outcomes.

Moreover, a **Statewide Longitudinal Data System** project is underway. Its ultimate goal is data-driven instructional design. A warehouse of student assessment data operating in conjunction with data analysis tools and common metadata tags will generate standards-based, individually-appropriate LOR lessons from content publishers and exchange student performance data with content developers. The data dashboard component is projected to be operational by September 2014, and **Bancroft-Rosalie (Jon Cerny, Superintendent) is a pilot project school**.



**DIGITAL Library** **E**books are exciting student readers. ESU 2 formed a regional digital school library consortium in contract with publisher and book distributor Baker & Taylor.

Compatible with mobile iOS and Android smart phones and tablets, but also with Windows desktops and side-loadable onto Kindle Fires, B&T's proprietary Blio and Axis e-reader apps accommodate most user devices.

Blio offers an interactive, 3D graphic experience that is great for emerging young readers and accommodates students with vision disabilities. Text-to-speech software syncs the book to the audio while a cursor moves along so you can read as you listen. Many books have studio recorded audio —a real person's voice— further enriching the pleasure of the reading experience.

In addition to its own imprints, B&T has negotiated agreements with over 350 other publishers. Based on a one-book one-user model, B&T offers over 550,000 titles.

Axis 360 is B&T's digital distribution (circulation) platform; it features an enticing Magic Wall where book covers revolve magically in a changing display and open with a touch to reveal summaries, as well as related titles, other works by the same author and reader reviews. The Elementary wall boasts 2,744 books; the Secondary, 2,056.

The consortium began with 10 ESU 2 member schools in 2012. Now open to any Nebraska K-12 district, membership has more than doubled for 2013-14, with 22 districts to date.



## ESU Initiatives

### Behavioral ED



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otice of the discontinuation of a contract Level III Special Education program operated by a local district in September 2012 caused the ESU 2 Advisory Committee of Superintendents to authorize that ESU 2 develop a program for behavioral

disordered students to be ready for the 2013-14 school year. An ESU 2 Special Education Level III Advisory Committee of Superintendents, Special Education Directors and Principals was convened, and 11 months later a behavioral program and facility —**the ESU 2 Independent School**— began serving area students in a least restrictive educational environment at 1102 County Road W, south of Fremont, close to their home districts.

An open house was held August 15; the first day of school was August 19. To date, 11 students are enrolled. Length of stay varies with each student's behavioral needs and progress and concludes with a staffed transition period with students at their home district.

The program is staffed by one full-time highly experienced BD-endorsed teacher and two paraeducators who also have teaching certificates. Three ESU 2 staff with appropriate certifications and endorsements share daily administrative duty.

ESU 2 Administrator David Ludwig appreciated the trust of and praised the cooperative role of Advisory Committee members during months of discussions and decision making, citing in particular a pay-it-forward tuition investment plan, also presented to the Nebraska Department of Education, that provides a necessary source of start up funds.



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n recent years, national, state, and local educational leaders have come to realize that improving teacher and principal effectiveness is the key to increasing student achievement and developing better school systems.

The State Board of Education authorized drafting of teacher & principal performance standards in January, 2011, and on November 9, 2011, adopted a framework of 7 effective Teacher practices and 8 Principal practices, and a voluntary performance evaluation procedures and tools.

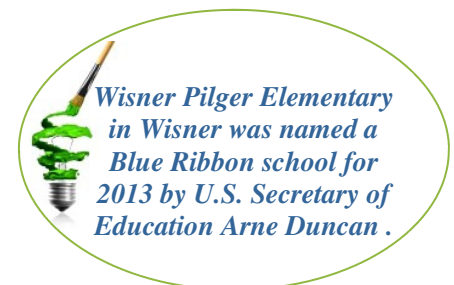
Along with ESU staff developers, 17 Nebraska schools, including **Ashland-Greenwood (Zach Kassebaum, Superintendent) and Wisner-Pilger (Chad Boyer, Superintendent) are designing and piloting**

**teacher & principal evaluation processes and tools**, in accordance with specific phases and activities:

1. Knowledge-building activities
2. Develop procedures and products
3. Develop training
4. Implement
5. Collect recommendations, improve process and make available to other districts

Danielson or Marzano Instructional Frameworks inform instruction and form the basis of classroom observation, reflection, and discussion during teacher evaluation. Districts may choose either Framework. Ashland-Greenwood invested in Marzano and Wisner-Pilger in Danielson.

In collaboration with other units, ESU 2 has twice hosted Robert Mazano in Fremont to introduce his framework, detailed in his book *The Art & Science of Teaching* (ASCD, 2007), as a prelude to an intensive week-long academy conducted by credentialed trainers during the summer. The academy is followed by further study within district Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) and by periodic implementation meetings facilitated by ESU staff developers throughout the academic year. All together, 5 leadership teams from 3 ESU 2 districts —a total 47 educators— have become skilled in Marzano's instructional framework and are training others in their districts.





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**Commitment to Quality Service**

*developing effective partnerships while providing leadership and learning for all*  
**Collaboration Education Leadership Communication**

**Nebraska Educational Service Unit 2**

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