

Annual Meeting – April 9, 2025

REPORT FROM THE BOARD PRESIDENT

Lisa Israel

On behalf of the Eastern Suffolk BOCES Board, welcome to the agency's 32nd Annual Meeting. As we complete the final year of our seven-year strategic plan, and finalize preparations for a reaccreditation visit from Middle States, we have accomplished a great deal. This report lists some of the major accomplishments this year to date. It includes many changes and innovations.

DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT

Commissioner's Representative in the Region

On behalf of the Commissioner of Education, the District Superintendent has:

- Served as member of the Standards, Instruction, and Assessment committee.
- Communicated key information regarding pertinent SED initiatives to component school district leadership.
- Drafted an Interim Progress Report for the Regionalization Initiative.

Component School District Superintendents Visits and Events

- The District Superintendent met five new superintendents, continuing the practice of introducing the services and support available through Eastern Suffolk BOCES, while also gaining insight into the unique characteristics of each district. In addition to meeting with new superintendents, the District Superintendent met individually with more than half of the region's 51 superintendents of schools either virtually or in person.
- Accompanied SED representatives for special events held at the Brentwood School District and William Floyd School District.
- Participated in a Joint Student Forum hosted by all three Long Island BOCES.
- Attended and presented at regional cluster meetings for the Brookhaven, East End, and Islip Clusters to update superintendents on SED updates.

Liaison between SED and the Region

The District Superintendent supported school district leadership and boards of education within the region by:

- Keeping component school district superintendents informed about the guidance from the Board of Regents related to Graduation Measures, Literacy Initiatives, and Regionalization.
- Actively participating in discussions regarding the Strengths & Needs Survey, district collaboration, and state policies.
- Collaborating with SED leadership to provide input regarding the Regionalization Initiative and hosted several regional convenings.
- Facilitating an Accountability presentation to administrative leadership with guest speakers from the State Education Department.

Federal and State School Support Initiatives

In order to support the work of the Federal and State School Support Initiatives (FSSSI), the District Superintendent:

- Continued the direct supervision of the FSSSI network administrators.
- Supported leadership with existing grant-funded programs.
- Attended the Angelo Del Toro Puerto Rican/Hispanic Youth Leadership Institute (PRHYLI) event, a partnership with the New York State Education Department, the Office of Bilingual Education and World Languages, the NYC Public Schools, the RBERNs statewide, Institutions of Higher Education, and other agencies.

Advocacy

Acting as an advocate for the school districts in the region and the students that they serve, the District Superintendent:

- Attended BOCES Advocacy Day with BOCES District Superintendent leaders to meet with elected officials from across the state.
- Participated in several Legislator Roundtable meetings and hosted a webinar for school board members related to state initiatives.

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

ESBOCES Budget

- Developed the 2024-25 budgets with stakeholder involvement at different stages of the process.
- Collaborated with the Associate Superintendent for Management Services and the Business Office to develop an administrative and capital budget that successfully met the growing needs of the agency, while being as sensitive as possible to the fiscal challenges of our component school districts.
- Successfully worked with Administrative Council members and budget planning teams to develop our various program budgets.
- Developed communication strategies to communicate the Eastern Suffolk BOCES budgets to all stakeholders.

ESBOCES Leadership Transitions

- Assisted in the onboarding of a new District Superintendent.
- Facilitated the search for and the onboarding of the new Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

Support to Component School District Superintendents and Boards of Education

- Facilitated Chief School Administrators' meetings to update and inform school district leaders regarding regional and ESBOCES initiatives.
- Attended and presented at formal and informal cluster meetings for the Brookhaven, East End, and Islip Clusters to update superintendents on regional and ESBOCES issues.
- Provided consultation and leadership for component district school boards of education engaging in superintendent searches.

Strategic Planning and Middle States Association Work

- Continued work with Cabinet and Administrative Council members to oversee the implementation of the Eastern Suffolk BOCES Strategic Plan.
- Continued the implementation, monitoring, and oversight of the 2017-2024 Strategic Plan.
- Worked with the internal coordinator to gather information relative to our annual progress in preparation for our stakeholder meetings.
- Continued to work to improve the monitoring of the Strategic Plan so the process is more meaningful and effective when obtaining and sharing feedback.
- Developed an internal Reaccreditation Steering Committee to help guide the agency through the upcoming reaccreditation process.

Employee Assistance Program (EAP) and Student Assistance Services (SAS)

- Continued direct oversight of the EAP and SAS programs, including program development, budget oversight, grants management, and staffing.

DIRECTOR OF DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

The Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Continues to serve as an internal and external resource for the eastern Suffolk Long island region by aligning agency practices, policies, and procedures with an equity lens via the ESBOCES Board Policy 2431 and NYSED DEI Policy Framework.

Internal Coordination

- Attended and participated in various organizational committees to promote an equity-focused approach. These included:
 - Strategic Planning Advisory Committee
 - Central Shared Decision-Making Committee
 - Communications Advisory Committee
 - DASA Committee
 - Superintendent's Conference Day Committee
 - DEI Parent/Family Advisory Council
- Collaborated with ESBOCES instructional leaders to develop building/program equity action plans, utilizing NYSED's CR-S Education Framework and the DEI Policy Framework.
- Supported the Division of Management Services, Educational Services, Regional Information Center, and the Human Resources Department in setting DEI goals within each department using the Building Equity form, and facilitated workshops.
- Provided an annual update to the ESBOCES Board regarding agency DEI goals and initiatives, in compliance with Board DEI Policy and Regulation 2431.R.1.
- Continued the ESBOCES Monthly Cultural Heritage flyer to raise awareness about the diversity of our agency and region.
- Led the agency-wide observance of "P.S. I Love You" week for mental health awareness and suicide prevention.
- Awarded the ESBOCES Annual Equity Champion Awards to recognize individuals advancing educational equity.
- Partnered with Special Education to continue the mentoring program involving HAC staff members, Jefferson Middle School, JAC @ Oregon MS, and Sequoya High School students.

Regional Advocacy

- Co-facilitate the monthly ESBOCES Regional Diversity, Equity, and Inclusivity Professional Learning Community, with 18 school districts participating.
- Contributed to the regional Curriculum Advisory Board to plan future Curriculum Council topics through an equity lens.
- Attended monthly Regional Curriculum Council meetings and presented on DEI and CRSE in Curriculum and Instruction.
- Participated in the monthly Regional Personnel Administrator's Council meeting, presenting on DEI and Human Resources.
- Organized and presented at the DEI Conference: "Empowering Every Child: Innovating for an Inclusive Future" featuring keynote speaker Cornelius E. Minor and special guest speaker Dr. Diane M. Wynne.
- Presented at "Salute to Black History Month" event at Bay Shore UFSD.
- Attended the inaugural Black History Month Celebration "The Dream Continues..." hosted by Brentwood UFSD.
- Participated in the NYSED DEI Leaders Network Facilitator Orientation Meeting.
- Attended the NYS ESSA Accountability Reimagine Phase presentation.
- Engaged in the Longwood Legislative Session.
- Attended the Suffolk County School Superintendents Association's Legislative Committee Advocacy workshop.
- Participated in the New York Statewide Conference "Uplifting All Students."

Professional Development

- Developed and facilitated professional development workshops on DEI for the following departments/groups:
 - ESBOCES August Leadership Day Presentation
 - Superintendent's Conference Day: "Annual DEI Update"
 - Administrative Council Monthly DEI Learning Agenda Item
 - ESBOCES Board DEI Committee
 - ESBOCES DEI Agency Advisory Council – Co-facilitated four meetings
 - Instructional Induction Program – DEI Book Study: *Blind Spot* by Mahzarin R. Banaji and Anthony G. Greenwald
 - ESBOCES DEI Liaisons (3 meetings per year)
 - Annual presentations to various administrative meetings (e.g., CTE Principal meeting, Special Ed Principal meeting, ESS Administration meeting, RIC staff meeting, O&M staff meeting)

DEI CoSer

- Year four of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusivity shared service aimed at supporting school districts in achieving their DEI goals:
 - 18 school districts participate in the service at tiered levels (Basic, Enhanced, and Premium).
 - The DEI CoSer Service provides:
 - Consultation with School District Administration
 - District needs assessment report and end-of-year summary
 - Participation in the Regional DEI PLC monthly meetings
 - Participation in the annual ESBOCES DEI Spring Conference
 - Professional in-district support, divided into three strands: Phase I, Phase II, and Phase III

Career and Technical Education (CTE)**CTE Enrollment**

Regional enrollment at the Eastern Long Island Academy of Applied Technology remained steady for the 2024-25 school year, reaching 2,436 students (including In-District, adult, and secondary CTE programs). In addition to consistent growth over the past several years, this year saw waitlists primarily in the automotive, construction, and manufacturing trades, as well as in cosmetology and health-related programs. A total of more than 3,000 applications were received.

This high level of student interest, coupled with strong district support, is an exciting trend. Expanding available spaces and exploring public-private partnerships may help address regional workforce needs while meeting student and district demands. Given the current trajectory, these trends are expected to continue for the foreseeable future.

SCE Enrollment

For the 2024-25 school year, 471 students are enrolled in our 12:1:1 programs, and 101 students are enrolled in our 8:1:1 programs. Enrollment in these programs has remained steady over the past three years.

Last year, 151 students participated in internships, and 444 engaged in at least one work-based learning opportunity. The mission of the Islip Career Center—to provide quality career education programs that transition students from secondary education to competitive employment—continues to drive programming and student support.

Project SEARCH students are continuing their work at the Medford Multicare Facility for the 2024-25 school year. This program enables students to develop independence and employment skills in real-world settings, with the ultimate goal of securing employment. Participants learn to arrange public transportation, replicating real-world work responsibilities. As a national model of excellence, Project SEARCH boasts a high post-graduation employment rate, with students receiving job coaching services after graduation to support job retention and career success.

The Islip Career Center (ICC) continues to foster a culture of care and intentionality, emphasizing inclusion and diversity. The ICC mantra, “*ICC, the place to be!*” is not only spoken—it is felt by students and staff alike.

Career and Technical Education Department

The 2024-25 school year saw a 15% increase in new CTE, SCE, and In-District staff, with new colleagues joining as school counselors and program instructors across various career clusters.

Every building and program continued efforts in diversity, equity, and inclusivity (DEI). Program- and building-based DEI teams revised and refined Equity Plans tailored to individual program needs and goals, aligning them with the Culturally Responsive and Sustaining Education framework published by NYSED.

The ESBOCES In-District model continues to expand access to high-quality Career and Technical Education (CTE) throughout the region, enabling component districts to offer NYSED-approved programs within their own facilities. Two new programs were introduced this academic year:

- Carpentry/Residential Construction & Home Improvement at Mattituck High School
- Clinical Medical Assisting at Southampton High School, located on the Stony Brook Hospital campus

Additionally, several In-District programs have been operating for multiple years, including:

- Automotive Technology at East Hampton High School
- Carpentry/Residential Construction & Home Improvement at Southampton High School
- Cosmetology at Brentwood High School

Many of these established programs now welcome students from surrounding districts, broadening regional access to specialized career training.

What's New

Applications to the Eastern LI Academy of Applied Technology exceeded expectations for the 2024-25 school year. Waitlists have persisted for nearly all Construction and Manufacturing trade courses over the past several years, and where space was available, an additional class was added. The greatest challenge remains securing new space to accommodate growing demand for both established and emerging programs.

Several renovation projects are planned to enhance service centers and program offerings:

- MTC Welding – Classroom updates
- HB Ward – Addition of a new Welding classroom
- BTC – Relocation of all Animal Science opportunities
- BTC – Renovations to B-Wing, Professional Photography, TV/Digital Film Production, Emergency Medical Technician, and Dental Chairside Assisting classrooms
- WTC – Continued renovations in select Cosmetology classrooms
- ICC – Installation of a faculty room partition

During the 2023-24 school year, six programs received NYSED CTE Program Reapproval, enabling students to pursue the CTE 4+1 graduation pathway, earn a Technical Endorsement, and access high-quality instruction, work-based learning, and industry certifications. The NYSED program approval process includes:

- A two-part application
- A comprehensive self-study involving internal stakeholders and a Suffolk County Department of Labor partner
- Development of a self-study report
- External reviews ensuring alignment with industry, district, and post-secondary partner needs

The CTE Academic Team plays a vital role in integrating content-area learning within CTE programs. Students and districts may allocate earned credits to academic content areas per NYSED program approval. As of the 2023-24 school year, all team members hold dual or multiple teaching certifications, enhancing the department's ability to meet diverse learner needs, with grant funding supporting these efforts.

Grant funding has also been leveraged to enhance teacher professional development, particularly through the department's Induction Program. The program expanded to include a leadership learning series to further develop new educational leaders.

This year also marks the first in which the department oversees JROTC services for districts. Previously housed under ESS, JROTC now aligns with the In-District model, mirroring its national placement under the Association for Career & Technical Education (ACTE). The transition allows CTE to bring its expertise to ESBOCES-run JROTC programs, benefiting participating districts.

Instruction – Adding Value

Every building and program have established DEI goals tailored to student and staff needs. The CTE Shared Decision-Making Committee continues to analyze data reports to ensure equitable outcomes and opportunities for all students.

Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) provides secondary students who are eligible—or potentially eligible—for ACCES-VR services with individualized support in:

- Preparing for employment
- Exploring post-secondary education and career training options
- Developing self-advocacy skills
- Acquiring employment-related soft skills
- Securing job placements

While Pre-ETS is grant-funded, its impact extends far beyond funding, creating pathways for students facing significant employment barriers. This initiative exemplifies the "CTE for ALL" philosophy, ensuring every student has the opportunity to contribute meaningfully to the workforce.

All CTE programs strive to offer students industry-recognized certifications. Available certifications include OSHA, CPR, Narcan, and many others, adding tangible value to students' educational experiences.

In 2021-22, the department launched a post-secondary coursework initiative for early-career teachers to fulfill CTE certification requirements. Now in its fifth year, the CTE

Induction Program welcomed a new cohort of teachers in 2024-25. The program kicked off in August with a half-day session focused on launching a successful school year. Continuous feedback is gathered to refine and enhance support for new educators.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Special Education Enrollment

- Last year, we projected an enrollment of 1,711. Based on our ongoing trend analysis, we anticipate an 8% increase in student enrollment, bringing our projected total to 1,849 for the 2025-2026 school year.
- We currently have 112 pending packets and 17 students on a waitlist.
- Continued support component school districts in reintegrating students into their home districts while providing ongoing consulting services.

Department Changes

- Due to increasing requests for BOCES placements from component districts, we continue to seek additional classroom space. Notably, we have seen a rise in enrollment for students with Autism Spectrum Disorder at the kindergarten level. Currently, we operate sixteen kindergarten developmental classes for students with autism.
- The Department of Special Education continues to host job fairs to recruit Teaching Assistants and Special Education Aides. This approach has been instrumental in staff hiring. Additionally, Indeed's online application platform has significantly supported our hiring efforts, yielding weekly applicants.
- We remain committed to supporting our component districts by providing services to students with psychiatric concerns at both the elementary and secondary levels. In collaboration with Sagamore Children's Center, Eastern Suffolk BOCES continues to offer intensive therapeutic counseling services at three locations: Jefferson Middle School, Tecumseh Elementary School, and Sequoya High School. Additionally, we consult with outside psychiatrists to support students at Bellport Academic Center and Islip Academic Center.
- To address increasing enrollment at both the elementary and secondary levels for students with developmental disabilities, we have reviewed staffing practices and pursued innovative approaches to accommodate growth while ensuring student support. As part of these efforts, we implemented a new instructional model at four of our special education programs. This new 8:2:1 class model (eight students, two special education teachers, one teaching assistant, and shared classroom aides) enhances curriculum, instruction, and services for students and districts. The co-teaching approach has improved student outcomes, leading to an expansion from last year's total. We now operate twenty-nine (29) 8:2:1 classes—thirteen more than last year—across:
 - Brookhaven Learning Center (3 classes)
 - Masera Middle School (3 classes)
 - Sayville Elementary School (4 classes)
 - Premm Learning Center (17 classes)
 - Westhampton Beach Learning Center (2 classes)

Last year, Eastern Suffolk BOCES entered a lease agreement with West Islip School District for their vacant building at 650 Udall Road, West Islip. This facility has allowed us to enhance programming at Brookhaven Learning Center, Premm Learning Center, and Sayville Elementary School, accommodating increased enrollment. Masera Middle School opened on September 1, 2024, serving students with moderate to severe developmental disabilities in grades five through eight. The program now operates 18 classes, serving 123 students.

- Sequoya High School remains committed to mirroring a traditional high school experience while supporting students in a 12:1:1 setting. The school continues its partnership with Suffolk Community College, enabling students to earn college credits before graduation. This year, the partnership expanded to St. Joseph's University, which now honors credits earned through Suffolk Community College's Beacon Program. Eligible seniors can participate in this dual enrollment program, which currently offers:
 - College 101
 - Math 101
 - Biology 101
 - Freshman Composition

Focus on Student Outcomes

- Our Special Education Summer Services Program will operate across all ten locations. Regents exams will be available at the secondary level, but as in previous years, the August exam dates fall outside the summer school program. Students and staff will return for these exams.
- We continue to offer accelerated classes at Jefferson Middle School, now providing seven sections of Algebra and seven sections of Living Environment, with a total of 41 students enrolled.
- Lead Teachers continue to support all Special Education programs, sharing best practices, providing onsite support, and coordinating instructional shifts aligned with Next Generation Standards. Across all core subjects, students are encouraged to engage in learning that mirrors these new expectations.
- As we undergo reaccreditation, we are revising and developing new Strategic Planning goals with a strong focus on student outcomes.
- Our ongoing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusivity (DEI) initiatives include building liaisons working with the DEI office and administrators to provide turnkey training and serve as resources for students and staff. Each special education building now has a DEI Action Plan tailored to its specific needs and goals. Additionally, our newly established Student Advisory Council provides students with a voice in shaping these efforts. Our DEI Action Plans continue to evolve, supported by data demonstrating progress.
- Last year, we secured the Peace Grant, enabling high school students to document their educational journeys through writing, drawing, and speaking. Our "Stand Tall" video was presented to various internal and external stakeholders. We are honored to have been awarded this grant for a second year.
- We have expanded the use of Active Floors and the Learn Pro 2 system from Denmark's Active Floor Company. This interactive technology projects lessons onto the floor, responding to touch from feet or foam hockey sticks. Teachers have access to a preloaded lesson bank and can create custom lessons. The technology integrates with ULS and teacher-developed lessons, while also offering

sensory and movement activities popular with students. Both students and staff have embraced this innovative instructional tool. Schools currently utilizing Active Floor include:

- Brookhaven Learning Center
- Premm Learning Center
- Sayville Elementary School
- Tecumseh Elementary School
- Westhampton Beach Learning Center
- The Department of Special Education, in collaboration with the Department of Career, Technical, and Adult Education, continues to expand career-focused courses. Current offerings include:
 - Islip Academic Center: Introduction to Personal Enhancement, Introduction to Baking, Introduction to Carpentry
 - Jefferson Middle School: Introduction to Culinary (with plans to add Introduction to Personal Enhancement next year)
- In response to NYSED mental health education mandates and the social-emotional needs of our students, Eastern Suffolk BOCES is developing and implementing comprehensive Mental Health Training Modules. These modules, delivered by our mental health staff, cover topics such as general mental health awareness and addiction, scaffolding knowledge to equip staff with skills to support students effectively.
- The Regional Alternative High School Program continues expanding its services, offering fiscally responsible, local programming for students pursuing a Local, Regents, or Advanced Regents Diploma. The program provides multiple pathways for credit accrual, including traditional coursework, credit recovery, test preparation, and tutoring. Currently, we operate programs at:
 - Bellport Academic Center
 - Connetquot School District (serving Connetquot and South Country school districts)

EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT SERVICES (ESS)

Arts-in-Education Program

The Arts-in-Education program served 68 school districts in Eastern and Western Suffolk.

- We exceeded 3,500 performances and experiences this year. On average, the program provides over 2,000 artistic experiences, including more than 400 residencies.
- Partnered with the Patchogue Arts Council to provide professional learning for the PEACE (Partners in Education, Arts, and Community Empowerment) program, a U.S. Department of Education-funded grant.
- Distributed the *Spotlights* newsletter featuring new presenters and programs in the arts.
- Continued updating program descriptions and search criteria for a more user-friendly experience for districts and parent organizations.
- Introduced the new Instructional Musical Instrument Service within the Arts-in-Education program.

Exploratory Enrichment Program

- Served 27 school districts in Eastern Suffolk BOCES and several Western Suffolk districts, providing approximately 500 enrichment experiences.
- Worked with approximately 100 presenters to deliver workshops, programs, and

- in-school and field trip experiences.
- Provided a virtual STEAM Conference for Kids during winter.
- Distributed *Spotlights* newsletter featuring new presenters and curriculum-aligned programs.
- Continued offering virtual and outdoor programs through the Exploratory Enrichment catalog.

Summer Enrichment Programs

- Provided Summer Enrichment programs to 840 students in grades 1-9.
- Collaborated with five school districts that hosted the programs.
- Continued seeking new vendors and resources to provide high-quality and cost-effective enrichment curriculum and services.

School Year Enrichment Programs

- Delivered School Year Enrichment programs to 650 students
- Aiming to expand the number of districts and students participating in Extended Day Enrichment programs for the 2025-2026 school year.
- Continuously seeking new vendors and resources for high-quality, cost-effective enrichment curriculum and services for before- and after-school programs.

Regional Summer School

- Provided summer school services to 1,175 students from component districts.
- Issued 644 course credits to students from 23 districts.
- Administered 1,140 Regents exams.
- Enrolled 253 students in targeted review sessions.

School Library System Automation

- Serves 42 school districts.
- 29 schools use the Follett Destiny automation system.
- 13 schools, including two nonpublic institutions, utilize the MediaFlex OPALS automation system to enhance resource accessibility.

Library Services/Media

- Serves 44 school districts, including two nonpublic schools and three Western Suffolk districts, for the Virtual Reference Collection (VRC).
- The VRC serves over 150,000 students across 53 school districts and several private schools.
- Plans to add various online resources to the VRC for 2025-2026 with minimal financial impact to member districts.

School Data Bank Services

- 55 districts participate, receiving customized data support and post-secondary reports.

Staff Developer/Shared Data Expert Support

- 47 districts utilize this service for data initiatives and targeted support.

Ellevation Platform Subscription

- Five districts subscribe to this web-based platform to enhance instruction, improve collaboration, and simplify compliance for English Language Learners.
- 2025-26 initiatives include piloting a web-based data visualization platform for

Suffolk County administrators and ESB departments.

Full-Service Scoring for Regents Exams

- A pilot initiative will offer full-service scoring through Optimum Solutions Corporation for Regents Exams, eliminating the need for in-house scoring.

Expanded Staff Developer Service

- Continuing efforts to increase district participation, enhancing support for data initiatives through timely workshops and training sessions.

ESS/SDBS Regional Curricula Database Enhancements

- Enhancing the database by incorporating additional vendor products and data points to improve utility and effectiveness.

Professional Development, Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment

- Serves 51 school districts, coordinating high-quality in-person, hybrid, and virtual professional development workshops with local and national presenters.
- Offers customized, in-district professional development, including coaching and embedded support for teachers, administrators, support staff, and Boards of Education.
- Provides curriculum writing, revision, and alignment with State standards, along with assistance in coordinating in-district curriculum writing and printing services.

Model Schools

- 45 school districts currently subscribe.
- Expanding Artificial Intelligence training through educator workshops

Third-Party Assessment Service

- Provided help desk and training support for nine third-party assessment applications:
 - AIMSweb – 16 districts
 - Right Reason Technologies – 14 districts
 - Northwest Evaluation Association – 7 districts
 - Renaissance Learning STAR – 12 districts
 - LinkIt! – 2 districts
 - iReady – 29 districts
 - Panorama – 4 districts
 - Data Recognition Corp LAS Links – 5 districts
 - Education Analytics – 2 districts
- Plans to add Thought Exchange, College Board SAT Suite of Assessments, and AP exams for 2025-2026.

REGIONAL INFORMATION CENTER (RIC)

Virtual Learning Services

- Services are currently provided to approximately 70 school districts.
- In partnership with multiple BOCES across New York State, we delivered a variety of virtual learning opportunities.
- Online Learning Academy: In collaboration with vendor partners, districts select virtual learning solutions on a student-by-student basis, covering credit/credit recovery, homebound instruction, electives, test preparation, blended courses, and content.
- Immersive Experiences (Videoconferencing): Provides an entry point for students to engage with expert content providers, including access to free New York State collaborations and a videoconference directory. Video conferences can be integrated into lesson plans or used for enrichment. The key focus for 2024-2025 is continuing to offer services to meet the diverse needs of students, including tutorial services, language translations, coding virtual learning services, and Zoom licensing.
- 2025-2026 Goals: Maintain and grow district participation, enhance existing services, and continue to meet the evolving needs of districts.

Technology Acquisition Services

- Currently provided to over 45 component school districts.
- Acquisitions focus on both instructional and administrative technology.
- Network copier projects are available through this program.
- Financed, multi-year projects: Available for both instructional and administrative acquisitions, requiring Board approval, NYSED approval, and bank financing.
- 2025-2026 Initiatives: Continue to support districts with an emphasis on Education Law 2-d compliant software agreements and cybersecurity-related acquisitions. Explore and develop additional emerging technology offerings as appropriate.
- This service also provides an opportunity for districts to utilize ESBOCES for grant-funded acquisitions, though acquisitions will not be BOCES aid-eligible and will remain district property. Service fees may be BOCES aid-eligible.

Instructional Technology / Internet Services

- Services provided to 13 school districts.
- Includes project management and maintenance of Internet services, such as network monitoring, monthly utilization reports, and trouble ticket management. Direct connection to ESBOCES Regional Information Center for secure transit of hosted services is available for an additional fee.
- 2024-2025 Initiatives: Continue supporting districts' implementation of internet access redundancy and load balancing solutions, alongside DDoS protection. Work on increasing district subscriptions and support for bandwidth upgrades.

LAN / WAN Support

- In 2024-2025, 36 districts are participating, with 35 proposed for 2025-2026.
- Comprehensive LAN/WAN network support is provided, including project management for installation and maintenance of district-based fiber WAN connectivity. This service does not cover desktop computer repairs.
- Security, Surveillance, and VoIP services include design, implementation, and support for network-based video surveillance, door access control, and other

systems.

- 2025-2026 Initiatives:
 - Focus on security infrastructure enhancements and centrally managed network solutions to strengthen RIC's cybersecurity posture.
 - Expand the number of subscriptions through outreach.
 - Strengthen vendor partnerships and district relationships.
 - Ensure vendors are aware of published security vulnerabilities.

Hosted NOC Management

- Centrally managed/private cloud computing infrastructure is hosted within the Regional Information Center, transparent to school district end-users.
- Possible Hosted Applications:
 - Facilities Management
 - Financial Systems
 - Point of Sales
 - Student Management Systems
- 2024-2025 Initiatives:
 - Enhance disaster recovery site functionality.
 - Support migration of Data Warehouse to SQL Server with full disaster recovery.
 - Continue to advance NIST compliance and SOC Type 2 initiatives.
 - Expand multi-factor authentication for access to hosted NOC and SMS solutions.
 - Decommission legacy infrastructure to reduce costs and improve security.

Security, Surveillance, and VoIP Services

- Services include the design, implementation, and support for network-based video surveillance, door access control, and other systems.
- Visitor Management System: Implementation and support for the ScholarChip and Raptor systems, with future exploration of additional vendor solutions.

Financial and District Services

- Services provided to approximately 190 school districts (average of four to five services per district).
- Business Office Application: Supports the nVision business and financial software, including modules for payroll, accounting, human resources, and budget. Hosting, W2/1099 printing services, and ongoing updates are available.
 - 32 districts participate in support services.
 - 24 districts participate in hosting services.
 - 20 districts use W2/1099 printing services.
- Backup Services: 86 districts participate in off-site backup services.
- Emergency Notification systems (Blackboard Connect, ParentSquare, and School Messenger) complement staff and student management systems.
- Cafeteria Management Systems: Web-based solutions supported by 33 districts.
- Facilities Management Systems: 45 districts use one of three systems: Q Ware, Brightly, or Master Library.
- Election Management Systems: Offered to 98 districts with a choice of two vendors (BOLD, NTS).
- Data Privacy & Security Core Service: Provided to 45 districts, including resources, inventory tools, and professional development to comply with NYS Education Law

2d.

- Visitor Management System: Available for Raptor and other vendor solutions, with 23 districts participating.
- 2025-2026 Focus: Continue supporting districts in cybersecurity preparedness, data retrieval, disaster recovery, and secure communications, with expectations of growing shared services.

District Data Protection Officer Service

- Provided to 27 districts across Suffolk County.
- Supports districts' adherence to NYS Ed Law 2d.
- 2024-2025 Initiatives: Expand service deployment and increase subscriptions. Add cybersecurity and governance services, including assistance with incident response, disaster recovery, business continuity plans, IT asset management, and security.

Intellipath

- Services provided to 51 school districts as part of a consortium.

Data Warehousing

- All 68 Suffolk districts participate in required data warehousing services.
- Syracuse City School District contracts with Eastern Suffolk BOCES for data warehousing.
- Jewish Education Project (JEP): Supports data warehousing services for approximately 300 nonpublic schools across New York State.
- The Digital Resource Survey Service helps districts collect and report data for NYS surveys, with 11 districts participating.
- One-on-one remote help sessions for District Data Coordinators to assist with data reporting and verification.

Student Management Services

- Student Data Services provides support for four student management systems, all compliant with NYSED data reporting requirements. Participating systems include:
 - eSchoolData: 32 districts, one preschool, one Charter School.
 - Infinite Campus: 18 districts.
 - PowerSchool: 12 Suffolk districts, plus schools from Northeastern RIC, Rockland BOCES, Broome Tioga, Dutchess BOCES, NYC Charter Schools.
 - SchoolTool: 5 districts and Western Suffolk BOCES Regional Summer School.
- 2025-2026 Initiative: Expand NYC Charter School participation in Student Management Support services.

Test Scanning and Reporting Services

- Over 350,000 assessments processed annually, including NYSESLAT, NYSITELL, Grades 3-8 ELA, Math, Science, and Regents exams.
- Support: Assistance with NYSED data reporting requirements and quality control.
- 2025-2026 Initiatives:
 - Expand Level 1 support for Regents and AP exam data loading services.
 - Support districts transitioning to computer-based testing (CBT) for grades 3-8.

Special Education Student Management Systems

- Supported systems for managing special education data, compliant with NYSED reporting requirements, include:
 - Clear Track 200: 2 districts, one nonpublic school.
 - Frontline IEP Direct: 53 districts.
 - Frontline RTI Direct: 9 districts.
 - Frontline Medicaid Direct: 21 districts.
- 2025-2026 Initiative: Expand participation in programs such as Branching Minds, HearBuilder, Enome Inc. dba Goalbook, n2y, and TeachTown.

New York City Charter Schools – Data Warehousing

- RIC serves as a vendor for NYC Charter Schools, hosting 281 schools in 2024-2025.
- Support: Provides technical resources, compliance assistance, and help desk support for data reporting.

Rate Changes

- RIC services are expected to increase by no more than 1.99% for 2025-2026, except for data warehouse and student management system support, which will increase by 2.99%.
- Vendor licensing costs may vary based on contract terms.

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES

HR Operations and Contracts

- Managed the transition of multiple Human Resources personnel, enhancing efficiency and effectiveness.
- Consulted legal counsel on labor law and contractual disputes, leading to updated agency practices.
- Provided and contributed to staff communications and memos across the agency.
- Successfully negotiated two (2) Collective Bargaining Agreements: BOCES Educators of Eastern Suffolk (BEES) and United Public Services Employees Union (UPSEU), ensuring alignment with the agency's long-term interests.
- Supported 4,590 part-time and full-time employees across all HR functions.
- Continued to assess and approve NYS COVID-19 Leave in accordance with guidelines.
- Ensured full compliance with Affordable Care Act requirements.
- Expanded the Human Resources webpage to enhance transparency.
- Collaborated with the Business Office to identify cost-effective vendors for ACA reporting.

- Developed a Progressive Discipline manual to support supervisors and administrators.
- Worked with SchoolFront to optimize system utilization.
- Processed 32 retirements from April 1, 2024, to June 30, 2024.
- Processed 39 retirements from July 1, 2024, to March 31, 2025.
- Developed multiple forms to streamline internal HR processes.
- Successfully addressed all external audit recommendations.
- Partnered with external auditors to develop new HR forms.
- Successfully onboarded approximately 179 new staff members for the opening of Masera Middle School.

Recruitment and Retention of a Culturally and Demographically Diverse Workforce

- Analyzed various data sources to inform future recruitment efforts.
- Transitioned to a digital platform for employee recruitment and onboarding.
- Revised the Hiring Manual to incorporate DEI principles and ensure process consistency.
- Supported the revision of certificated staff postings and expanded posting platforms.
- Introduced an additional platform for advertising non-certificated positions.
- Engaged with Civil Service representatives in multiple high-level meetings to enhance processes.
- Onboarded over 600 employees, with a significant percentage from diverse backgrounds.
- Collaborated to refine promotional language through an equity and inclusivity lens.
- Incorporated compensation details in all postings ahead of the NYS requirement.
- Led the pay equity process for Cabinet in collaboration with Salary.com.

Employee Culture

- Organized an Employee Awards Ceremony, recognizing more than 23 employees.
- Reintroduced and facilitated regular in-person New Employee Orientations.
- Oversaw all compliance training and worked to enhance virtual training experiences.
- Provided multiple formal training sessions to administrators on strategic leadership thinking.
- Focused on recognizing employees for both personal and professional achievements.
- Investigated and addressed employee concerns and complaints.

Regional Support

- Provided guidance and support for the Health Care Worker Bonus Program.
- Conducted numerous countywide Personnel Administrators' Council meetings.
- Supported new Human Resources administrators through additional council meetings and direct assistance.
- Delivered Civil Service presentations to component school districts.
- Provided presentations on employee supervision and management best practices.
- Conducted certification presentations and supported component school districts.
- Processed 687 certification applications and completed 653 evaluations (Teacher certificate evaluations: 284; Teaching assistant evaluations: 188; Coaching license evaluations: 181).

- Shared resources related to the Hiring Handbook and equitable committee processes.
- Expanded the Human Resources webpage to provide administrators with additional resources.
- Conducted conflict resolution training for regional leaders across multiple school districts.
- Developed customized personnel guidance for districts managing complex HR issues.
- Offered direct personnel capacity support to school districts in need.
- Presented at the NYASPA state-wide conference and the LIASPA conference.
- HR Administrators participated in planning for the NYASPA state conference.
- Delivered professional development sessions on "Creating a Safe, Supportive, and Affirming School Environment for Transgender and Gender Expansive Students" (2023 Legal Update and Best Practices) to multiple districts.

Substitute Services

- Successfully integrated substitute services into the Human Resources Department.
- Provided per diem substitute teachers, nurses, aides, assistants, custodians, and other employees for Eastern Suffolk BOCES programs and participating component school districts.
- Offered three (3) levels of service to 37 component school districts and four (4) Eastern Suffolk BOCES programs.
- Added a new component school district to the program.
- Clarified departmental roles and responsibilities.
- Worked with SchoolFront to streamline substitute employee onboarding.
- Enhanced recruitment efforts by participating in various job fairs.

MANAGEMENT SERVICES DIVISION

Regional Support

- Provided regional support to school business officials in all Suffolk County school districts, Western and Eastern Suffolk BOCES.
- Held school business official meetings on various topics, including state aid, transportation, and employee benefits.
- Attended area cluster meetings, such as the East End Business Officials, to discuss district-specific topics.
- Presented "School Finance 101" and "School Finance 201" as part of the new superintendent workshops.
- Provided mentoring to newly appointed school business officials.
- Consulted with superintendents on school finance-related matters.

Administrative Services

- Reviewed and updated recommended insurance requirements in agency bids to ensure proper risk transfer and agency protection.
- Responded to 239 Freedom of Information requests and over 633 student record inquiries.

- Received, inventoried, and securely stored over 25,000 ELA, math, and science assessments and Regents exams, distributing more than 2,500 exams to 47 school districts through distribution centers at the James Hines Administration Center and the Westhampton Beach Learning Center.

Capital Asset Management (CAM)

- Sold \$125,130 worth of surplus equipment and vehicles for Eastern Suffolk BOCES and its component school districts.
- Completed full building inventories at multiple locations, including Westhampton Beach Learning Center, Islip Academic Center, and Premm Learning Centers.
- Managed over 3,455 of the agency's record retention boxes.

Cooperative Bidding Program

- Created new bids for Parking Lot Sweeping and Locksmith Supplies and Services.
- Held Ad Hoc Committee meetings with school districts and participating municipalities to refine specifications and evaluate alternative submissions for various supply categories.
- Maintained and managed 66 contracts, including 59 bids and seven RFPs, covering numerous commodities for 74 participants.
- Continued active involvement with the Joint Procurement Council for Suffolk County's SuffolkShare Program, aligning with former Governor Cuomo's shared services initiative.

Health & Safety and Security

- Conducted ongoing legislative reviews and updates to Public Employees Safety and Health (PESH) compliance templates.
- Provided Health & Safety seminars for safety and facilities personnel.
- Participated in various state and national safety and health programs and legislative conferences.
- Held regular meetings with the Agency's Safety Team and Health & Safety Committee.
- Reviewed emergency response protocols with faculty and trained staff in new procedures.
- Conducted lockdown drill debriefs with individual buildings to reinforce understanding of protocols.
- Expanded faculty and staff participation in the RAVE Panic Button app through annual presentations.
- Assessed and implemented recommendations from professional security assessments.
- Enhanced training for building greeters on security protocols, including updates for new employees.
- Provided daily and emergency informational guidelines for Allied Universal security guards.
- Increased security posts at agency campuses and upgraded security technology, including cameras, access control, electronic locksets, and lockdown functionality.

- Initiated a K-12-specific training program for security guards, covering emergency response, situational awareness, de-escalation, and disability awareness, delivered by in-house staff and third-party security experts.

Operations and Maintenance

- Partnered with BBS Architects to develop the Eastern Suffolk BOCES Building Conditions Survey, Capital Facilities Plan, and Master Planning.
- Evaluated space needs and inspected potential lease properties for agency use.
- Engaged with the Eastern Suffolk BOCES Chief Custodian Committee to foster teamwork and discuss building needs and best practices.
- Integrated DEI learning into Custodial Supervisors' meetings and hiring processes.
- Chaired East End Facilities Directors Meetings, collaborating with 12 East End school districts.
- Conducted Ad Hoc Committee meetings with Purchasing, enabling Facilities Directors to assess vendor submissions.
- Completed extensive renovations at Masera Middle School, including roofing, HVAC, ceilings, lighting, flooring, electrical and fire alarm upgrades, and new technology infrastructure, in preparation for reopening in September 2024.
- Finalized the auto body spray booth project at Bixhorn Technical Center (BTC).
- Scheduled replacement of main electrical disconnects for BTC buildings two, six, and seven in April 2025.
- Submitted the H.B. Ward welding shop project for NYSED approval, with anticipated awarding in Spring 2025.
- Awarded the Edward J. Milliken Technical Center's welding shop ventilation upgrade project, scheduled for completion by August 2025.
- Completed structural support and partition panel replacement at the Islip Career Center faculty room.
- Initiated kitchen renovation and parking lot projects at Masera Middle School, set for completion by September 2025.
- Awarded the security foyer and main entrance projects at the Premm Learning Center, with completion expected by August 2025.
- Scheduled exterior painting for Westhampton Beach Annex Building #3, anticipated completion by July 2025.

Leases

- Amended leasehold space agreements with Sachem Central School District in 2024 for Merrimac Elementary and Samoset Middle Schools to continue utilizing the same space for the special education program.
- Renewed a leasehold space agreement with East Islip Union Free School District for the special education program to continue at Timber Point Elementary School for 2025-2028.
- Negotiated a lease agreement with Commack Union Free School District for additional space to accommodate the administration of the Summer Enrichment Program, beginning March 2025.
- Initiated a new lease agreement in 2024-2025 with Mattituck-Cutchogue Union Free School District for an in-district high school career and technical education program. Plans to renew this agreement in 2025-26, alongside similar agreements with Brentwood, East Hampton, and Southampton Union Free School Districts, all at the lower of 2% or the CPI-U.
- Negotiated a new lease agreement for the Employee Assistance Program in Hampton Bays, effective July 2025.
- Secured an additional two-year extension on the lease agreement with the Family Service League for the Adult Education, Adult Literacy, and GED Programs at Bay Shore, reflecting facility updates made to the space.

Communications Services/Public Relations

- Added four new school districts to the Communications/Public Relations service, bringing the total to 62 participating districts.
- Continued to support school districts in meeting their public relations and communications needs through contracted consulting firms.
- Provided foreign language and American Sign Language translations and interpretations through an established RFP.

Nonpublic Textbooks

Processed applications and distributed textbooks for the start of the school year to nonpublic school students in grades K-12 residing in 71 participating school districts across Nassau, Suffolk, and Westchester Counties. Textbooks are distributed from three Suffolk County locations. Program staff communicate directly with nonpublic schools and parents. Pooling both textbook and operational resources results in significant time and cost savings for public school districts.

Office of Communications and Research (OCR)

- Provided high-quality public relations services, including graphics, photography, videography, press releases, newsletter articles, media outreach, and website and social media content promoting Agency and Academy students, staff, events, and programs.
- Facilitated Superintendent's Conference Day for 12-month non-instructional staff on November 5.
- Supported the 21st Annual Regional Longwood Legislative Workshop on February 1, assisting the Chief Operating Officer in developing his presentation for the event.

- Completed several annual research projects to support advocacy efforts for the District Superintendent, Chief Operating Officer, and Agency, including analyses of school district budgets, trends in school district wealth, student enrollment/demographic trends, the Executive Budget proposal, and the Enacted/Legislative Budget. Several projects were further refined for visual presentation and publication.
- Collaborated with the Department of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion to foster a more inclusive teaching and learning environment and ensure that the Agency's diversity is represented in all print and digital publications.
- Promoted the Parent-Family Advisory Council, securing translations and interpretations for all materials and events.
- Organized advertising campaigns for job fairs held at Sequoya High School. These fairs featured on-site interviews and hiring for special education aides, teaching assistants, and substitutes. Promotional efforts included flyers, boosted social media posts, radio ads on WBAB and WBLI, and website recruitment postings. Outdoor "Hiring Now" signage was also developed for display at ESBOCES locations.
- Participated in professional workshops and trainings for continued growth in authentic and inclusive school communications.
- Developed documents and surveys to assist with superintendent searches for several school districts.
- Supported Agency leadership in drafting public messages and coordinating delivery via ConnectEd phone and text messaging, ensuring Spanish translations for Spanish-speaking households. Messages were also posted on the Agency website in both English and Spanish when necessary.
- Completed the 2025 update to the Delegate Facemap for Nassau and Suffolk Counties, featuring photographs of each Member of Congress and state legislator, along with a list of the school districts they represent.
- Provided ongoing support through the Public Relations Liaison Program, which includes representatives from every instructional building, Educational Support Services, the Family Outreach Program, and the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.
- Conducted data collection and analysis for the 14th Annual School Budget Impact Survey for the Long Island Education Coalition (LIEC), assessing the effects of the property tax cap and the historical impact of the Foundation Aid Formula.
- Assisted the Unkechaug Nation in designing and organizing an Unkechaug-to-English glossary as part of the Algonquian Language Revitalization Project through the office of the District Superintendent.

Printing

- Utilized state-of-the-art equipment to produce a wide variety of materials, including booklets, brochures, business cards, calendars, letterheads, NCR forms, newsletters, postcards, posters, envelopes, and other educational visual aids. A range of paper types and finishing options are available. Post-printing tasks include collating, binding, trimming, folding, hole-punching, and stapling.
- Continued to provide high-quality printed materials to participating school districts, helping reduce expenses by outsourcing printing and duplication needs. Printing

capabilities range from quick-copy duplication to custom-printed materials. This service is available to all Suffolk County school districts and is eligible for BOCES aid if the school district subscribes to the Library Services/Media base service. Materials that become the property of the school district are not eligible for BOCES aid.

- Provided pickup and delivery services to school district central offices at no additional cost.

School Lunch Program

- The breakfast and lunch programs continued to experience significant growth, with a 13% increase in the number of meals provided to students between July and December 2024 compared to the same period last year.
- Successfully applied for and was awarded multiple National School Lunch Program Equipment grants totaling \$43,334.
- Secured \$4,872 in grants to help offset the increased costs of procuring minimally processed and locally sourced foods.
- Continued collaboration with the Operations and Maintenance department to design a kitchen at Masera Middle School in West Islip, scheduled for construction in the summer of 2025.
- Successfully opened a temporary serving line at Masera Middle School for the 2024-25 school year. Meals are prepared at the Sequoya High School kitchen and transported to Masera Middle School as an interim measure until the kitchen is completed. The Whitsons' staff looks forward to preparing fresh, hot meals on-site to better serve students, many of whom have special dietary needs.
- The Meal Program continues to operate under the United States Department of Agriculture's Community Eligibility Provision, allowing Eastern Suffolk BOCES to serve breakfast and lunch to all Special Education students at no charge. This initiative promotes educational equity by eliminating barriers such as language limitations, literacy challenges, and concerns about immigration status. It also removes the stigma associated with free or reduced-price meals, supports food-insecure families with incomes slightly above eligibility limits, and ensures all students receive nutritious meals regardless of financial circumstances.
- Sustained operational efficiencies under the Community Eligibility Program by eliminating the need for free and reduced-price meal applications. This reduces staff workload related to collecting, processing, and verifying applications. Additionally, the program eliminates unpaid school meal debt, saving staff time previously spent on payment collection and processing.
- Supported the nutritional needs of students attending non-traditional programs, including the Pal-O-Mine Program, and provided meals to students at included sites even when the host school district was closed.
- Continued participation in the Fresh Produce Pilot Program, sponsored by the United States Department of Agriculture, by diverting a portion of the entitlement to this program. A wide variety of fresh fruits and vegetables were received at no cost.

Technology Integration

- The implementation of Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) marks a significant advancement in OTI's cybersecurity strategy. MFA has been successfully deployed across all Agency user accounts, covering critical applications, remote access Virtual Private Network (VPN), and sensitive data repositories. OTI ensured a smooth transition through a comprehensive user adoption strategy that included targeted training sessions and informational resources.
- The Microsoft Exchange upgrade has been successfully completed, enhancing the Agency's email system with improved security, scalability, and advanced communication features to meet evolving organizational needs.
- The department continues to execute significant network upgrades across the organization. This initiative enhances infrastructure resilience, aligns with evolving National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) security requirements, and supports the growing technological demands of educational programs. The network backbone upgrades across Agency locations are progressing on schedule, improving network reliability, bandwidth capacity, and management capabilities to support digital learning resources.
- The Office of Technology Integration remains committed to improving technology service availability by engineering high availability in all systems and network infrastructure deployments. Notably, this period saw the completion of Avaya phone system upgrades, enhancing security, increasing resilience against potential failures, and expanding concurrent call capacity.
- In collaboration with the Operations & Maintenance Department, OTI is upgrading all building electronic door locks to align with current security best practices. New features include integration with law enforcement and real-time email and SMS alert notifications.
- The full deployment of next-generation Endpoint Detection and Response (EDR) solutions across all Agency devices represents a major advancement in cybersecurity. The new EDR solution enhances threat visibility, proactively detects threats, and enables rapid responses to bolster overall cyber resilience.
- Universal laptop data storage drive encryption is now in place for all new devices. This encryption safeguards sensitive data, mitigating unauthorized access risks in case of device loss or theft, further aligning the Agency's technology standards with NIST guidelines.
- OTI continues to enhance employee security awareness through periodic assessments and training evaluations. These efforts have led to a measurable decrease in successful phishing attempts.
- OTI's improvements in IT operations, infrastructure deployments, and security awareness initiatives have contributed to a significant reduction in the Agency's overall cybersecurity risk profile, moving from "High Risk" to "Low Risk" as measured by third-party providers.
- Looking ahead, OTI is focusing on expanding automated threat response capabilities, strengthening security infrastructure to support AI applications, and implementing enhanced endpoint data protection measures.

Transportation

- Provided transportation and related services, including field trip and coach transportation and school bus safety programs, to 61 school districts during the 2024-25 school year.
- Delivered regional special needs and non-public school home-to-school transportation services for 4,523 students enrolled in ESBOCES and district programs.
- Transported 1,556 students during the summer of 2024.
- Operated student shuttle services between morning and afternoon sessions across various ESBOCES campuses.
- Offered shared transportation management services.
- Provided New York State DMV and State Education Department (SED) training programs for drivers, monitors, and attendants.
- Coordinated required drug and alcohol testing and driver physicals.