

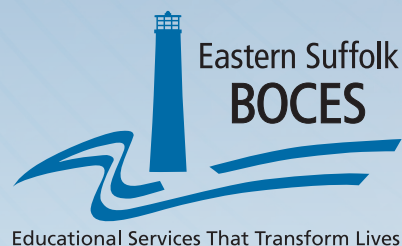
2025 Eastern Suffolk Regional Plan & Recommendations



**Facilitated by Eastern Suffolk BOCES in
Collaboration with Regional School Districts**



New York State
EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
Knowledge > Skill > Opportunity



Eastern Suffolk's Definition of Regionalization

“Regionalization is defined as the collaborative sharing of services, resources, and ideas among districts to maximize student access to opportunities, ensure equity, and support students and families. This approach aims to remove barriers, be fiscally responsible, and leverage strengths for the benefit of the community. It involves planning and facilitating equitable services, identifying needs and resources, and working together to address gaps and support educational programs. The definition aligns with the New York State Education Department's (NYSED) definition and emphasizes problem-solving and partnership opportunities.”

Regional Plan & Recommendations

Template for District Superintendents

Final Plan Due to NYSED by October 01, 2025

Overview & Instructions

The District Superintendent, in collaboration with the component districts, will facilitate the writing of the final regional plan and recommendations based on data and ideas discussed at the convenings. The regional plan has two parts:

- **Part 1: Regional Activity Plan** – Items the districts have agreed to work on together, that were identified and generated by the local school districts themselves.
- **Part 2: Regional Ideas & Recommendations** – Items the districts would consider pursuing in their region *if* they had additional resources, legislative changes, or regulatory changes.

The regional plans and recommendations seek to highlight the work local school districts are already doing, uplift the work they are planning to do, and identify the resources and supports they need to carry out their plans—especially those resources and support they wish to recommend that NYSED consider in shaping budget and legislative priorities and/or changes in policy or regulation. **Only information that local districts want to share should be included in the final regional plan.**

Instructions

For each part of the regional plan, districts will follow the prompts to describe each activity item (Part 1) and recommendation item (Part 2). There is no limit to the number of items that may be included in either part of the regional plan. Items in Part 1 should be numbered starting at 1.1. (1.2., 1.3., 1.4., etc.) and items in Part 2 should be numbered starting at 2.1. (2.2., 2.3., 2.4., etc.). Individual districts must certify that they have agreed to participate in any activity item for which they are listed. In their certification, the district must cite the specific item number(s) for which they have agreed.

The completed regional plan should be submitted to regionalization@nysed.gov.

Regional Plan & Recommendations

Name of Sole Supervisory District: Eastern Suffolk BOCES, Jasmin Varela, Ed.D.

District Superintendent's Narrative & Reflection

In this section, the District Superintendent should (1) provide a brief narrative on the content of the regional activity plan and (2) share their reflections on the regional ideas and recommendations.

1. **Narrative.** Briefly describe the regional plan and recommendations. Feel free to include any data that your region used in their conversations.
2. **Reflection.** Provide any reflections you have on the regionalization planning process.

Eastern Suffolk Response to “District Superintendent’s Narrative & Reflection”

1. Narrative

The Eastern Suffolk Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) regionalization plan is a multi-year, phased initiative designed to strengthen core instruction, expand enrichment opportunities, and build leadership and workforce capacity across component districts. Grounded in a collaborative structure of inquiry, the plan addresses equity, access, and innovation through three primary strands: Continuous Improvement (CI), Innovation & Enrichment Opportunities (IE), and Leadership & Workforce Capacity (LW).

➤ **Continuous Improvement (CI)**

The CI strand establishes a Regional Network of School Districts anchored in an inquiry framework to study shared instructional challenges. Core activities include inter-district learning visits, instructional rounds with standardized observation protocols, and the creation of a Regional Repository of Best Practices to capture research-based strategies, grading protocols, and implementation narratives. The plan also pilots Equity-Informed Program Design Reviews using a Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education (CR-SE) aligned tool to embed inclusivity into curriculum and program planning. Recommendations include institutionalizing professional learning models, legislative funding for instructional rounds, and creating a Regional Continuous Improvement Center to lead and scale these practices.

➤ **Innovation & Enrichment Opportunities (IE)**

The IE strand expands access to high-quality academic and co-curricular programs, particularly for small and under-resourced districts, through regional academic competitions, multi-district student clubs, Seal of Biliteracy and Seal of Civic Readiness recognition events, and shared virtual/specialized courses. It includes coordinated career awareness and experiential learning opportunities, facility-sharing systems, and a proposed Accredited Regional Virtual Learning Network for advanced coursework. Long-term recommendations call for sustained regional enrichment infrastructure, a club and activity consortium, and a Regional Career Pathway Continuum from elementary through high school, culminating in early exposure to Career and Technical Education (CTE) and work-based learning.

➤ **Leadership & Workforce Capacity (LW)**

The LW strand focuses on equitable recruitment, retention, and leadership development. Initiatives include Regional Aspiring Teacher and Leader Cohorts, a Future Educators Pipeline Initiative, targeted public awareness campaigns about careers in education, and internal mentorship models to grow leadership from within. Recommendations include a Regional Leadership Academy, a mentorship and credentialing platform, and a Regional Educator Workforce Equity Index to track representation and outcomes. Data dashboards will disaggregate metrics by demographics to ensure transparency and accountability in equity goals.

Data-Informed

Regional conversations and recommendations were shaped by a comprehensive review of multiple data sources. These included the Planning Strengths and Needs Survey Tool results, analyzed through infographics and Tableau dashboards, state-level public data from Data.NYSED.gov, IntegrateNY.org, and qualitative feedback gathered from districts and regional partners. These data revealed patterns in access, instructional

practices, educator pipeline health, and program availability, helping to identify both high-leverage strengths to expand and gaps requiring targeted intervention.

Overall Recommendations

The plan calls for Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES)-facilitated structures supported by state funding, legislative action, and policy alignment to:

- Sustain continuous improvement networks and professional learning models.
- Expand enrichment and specialized learning opportunities regionwide.
- Build robust, equitable pipelines for the educator workforce.
- Embed equity and inclusivity as foundational principles in program design.
- Leverage shared platforms for data, innovation, and credentialing.

The vision is to reduce fragmentation, promote equity of access, and ensure all students, regardless of district size or location, benefit from the region's collective resources, expertise, and innovation.

2. Reflection

From the outset, we established a clear mechanism for continuous engagement to ensure the regionalization planning process was collaborative, transparent, and aligned to the strengths and needs of our region. Throughout the school year, we hosted a combination of in person and virtual convenings, providing flexible opportunities for participation. These sessions invited superintendents, along with members of their leadership teams, to serve as lead facilitators in both small group and whole group discussions, positioning them as the primary drivers of the regional plan and recommendations. In this model, the District Superintendent and key stakeholders from the agency had a shared role of supporting and helping to advance the conversations, gather clarify questions, and ensure discussions remained focused and productive.

This work was carried out in close collaboration with Eastern Suffolk Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) cabinet, Educational Support Services, the Regional Information Center (RIC), and other key agency stakeholders, creating a cross-functional approach that integrated diverse perspectives and resources. The process was well attended throughout the academic year, enriched by rich discussions, peer sharing, and collective problem-solving that informed both the activities generated and the recommendations shared. While summer participation declined due to vacations, summer school, and district engagements, our superintendents remained informed of the process. More so, by that time, the activities that would form the regional plan had already been generated by the participating component districts themselves, ensuring that the final plan was aligned with their priorities and reflective of their collective vision.

Each session was intentionally and thoughtfully planned to ensure meaningful engagement and progress toward our regionalization goals. A balance of regional leaders, including members of Eastern Suffolk BOCES and component districts, participated in every convening, fostering shared ownership of the process. All sessions were grounded in data and structured to provide multiple opportunities for interactive dialogue. PowerPoint presentations were used to revisit key points from previous sessions and set the stage for the work ahead. Small-group facilitators were equipped with guided questions to help advance conversations and keep discussions focused. Feedback was systematically collected through ThoughtExchange, ensuring that all voices were captured and considered.

In addition, all resources shared at each convening, and later at each subcommittee planning session held in June and July, were compiled and widely distributed via email to all participating districts and members, ensuring transparency, accessibility, and the ability to continue the work between sessions. Following each convening, the planning team met to reflect on what worked well, identify areas for improvement at subsequent meetings, and review clarifying questions posed by participants, allowing for timely adjustments and strengthening of the process.

Part 1: Regional Activity Plan

Identify and describe each activity, its rationale, and the districts that have agreed to work together on this item. Include as many or as few items as identified and agreed to by local school districts in the region.

Item 1.1.

- a. **Activity.** Identify and describe the activity, its proposed implementation plan, and anticipated outcomes.
- b. **Rationale.** Describe the rationale for pursuing this activity, including how it would benefit students. To what extent, and in what ways, would this activity uplift regional strengths and address regional needs? Feel free to include any data that supports the rationale.
- c. **Participants.** List the local school districts that have agreed to work together on this item.
- d. **Non School District Partners.** List other partners for this item. (optional)

[Repeat a-d for each additional item (e.g., Item 1.2., Item 1.3., etc.). Include as many items as needed.]

Eastern Suffolk Regions' Response to "Part 1: Regional Activity Plan"

Part 1: Regional Activity Plan – Continuous Improvement (CI)

- **Item 1.1** – Launch a Regional Network of School Districts to come together with a structure of inquiry focused on instructional improvement and equity.
- **Item 1.2** – Implement Inter-District Learning Visits to observe successful programs and share feedback using normed protocols.
- **Item 1.3** – Develop a Regional Repository of Best Practices for instructional strategies, grading protocols, and research-based innovations.
- **Item 1.4** – Establish Instructional Rounds for Continuous Improvement with standardized observation protocols to build a shared language of practice.
- **Item 1.5** – Pilot Equity-Informed Program Design Reviews using equity checklists and subgroup impact assessments to embed inclusivity in planning and implementation.

Part 1: Regional Activity Plan – Innovation & Enrichment Opportunities (IE)

- **Item 1.6** – Establish and Expand Regional Academic Competitions and Enrichment Programs such as Math Olympiads, STEM clubs, and mock-trial events.
- **Item 1.7** – Form Multi-District Student Clubs and Affinity-Based Activities, including robotics, debate, DECA, GSA, and cultural groups.
- **Item 1.8** – Organize Regional Student Recognition and Enrichment Forums, including Seals of Civic Readiness and Biliteracy events.

- **Item 1.9** – Pilot Shared Virtual and Specialized Course Offerings to expand access to advanced and low-enrollment courses.
- **Item 1.10** – Coordinate Cross-District Career Awareness and Experiential Learning opportunities such as middle school career trips and early exposure to career pathways.

Part 1: Regional Activity Plan – Leadership & Workforce Capacity (LW)

- **Item 1.11** – Establish Regional Aspiring Teacher and Leader Cohorts to build equitable recruitment pipelines and leadership capacity.
- **Item 1.12** – Develop a Future Educators Pipeline Initiative to support high school Future Teacher Academies and student employment in education.
- **Item 1.13** – Coordinate Regional Guidance & Civil Service Education Campaign to increase awareness of careers in education and non-instructional roles.
- **Item 1.14** – Establish an In-District Leadership Identification and Mentorship Model to grow leadership candidates internally.
- **Item 1.15** – Create an Equity-Focused Metrics Dashboard to monitor progress, representation, and outcomes of educator pipeline programs.

Item 1.1 – Launch a Regional Network of School Districts

- a. **Activity.** Launch a Regional Network of School Districts to come together with a structured inquiry process focused on instructional improvement and equity. This involves establishing an inter-district Inquiry Framework, using the PLAN Pilot as a foundation, for studying shared challenges. This is a multiyear initiative, phased in as districts are at different starting points, with Years 1–9 dedicated to entering into the regionalization process. It includes surveying districts to assess current practices, identify strengths, and determine areas of interest. Anticipated outcomes include strengthening core instruction, building capacity in teaching staff, and improving student outcomes. The initiative will also build collaborative networks among school districts, mitigating isolation, particularly for smaller districts. Opportunities will be provided for districts to showcase existing structures to build upon, and to facilitate the creation of a repository of practices and resources.
- b. **Rationale.** This activity benefits students by promoting equity and access to quality instruction. It leverages the PLAN Pilot to share best practices and enables districts to learn from one another, expanding educator access beyond individual districts. A Curriculum Forum could serve as a launching point for regional best practice sharing. It also supports mentorship and peer learning to improve instruction. The professional development program aims to bring together educators from various content areas (e.g., shifting from APPR to STEPS) and provide a forum for educator collaboration. Ultimately, it strengthens teacher practice through structured inquiry.
- c. **Participants.** Including but not limited to: Districts partnering across Long Island.
- d. **Non-School District Partners.** Including but not limited to:
 - i. **Regional Bilingual Educational Resource Network (RBERN):** “The Regional Bilingual Educational Resource Network (RBERN) is dedicated to advancing the educational success of English Language Learners (ELLs) across New York State. Our mission is to provide comprehensive support to schools and districts, fostering an inclusive and effective learning environment. Through collaboration and

innovation, we strive to empower educators and students alike, ensuring equitable access to high-quality bilingual education.”

- ii. [Long Island Teacher Institute \(LITI\)](#): “The Long Island RBERN, in collaboration with the New York State Education Department (NYSED), hosts this annual conference for educators of English Language Learners (ELLs) and Multilingual Learners (MLLs). Each year, the program includes a wide variety of workshop offerings for K-12 English as a Second Language (ESL) and Bilingual educators.”
- iii. [PLAN Pilot Schools \(Performance-Based Learning and Assessment Networks\)](#): “To facilitate sustainable changes in school culture, schools participating in the PLAN Pilot are working together in networks to learn and support each other in successfully implementing performance-based learning and assessment practices.”
- iv. Long Island Educator Associations, e.g.,
 - [Long Island Latino Teacher Association \(LILTA\)](#): “The Long Island Latino Teachers Association (LILTA) is a not for profit organization with the mission to increase graduation rates and higher education enrollment, retention and completion for all students.” LILTA works “within the educational system and school community to address the common risk factors that impact the academic outcomes of the Latino student population and other ethnic groups.”
 - [Lead Educate Advocate Develop \(LEAD LI formerly LIASCD\)](#): LEAD LI’s “mission is to pursue excellence in supervision and instruction and to promote the development of curriculum consistent with quality education for all students.”
 - [Long Island New York State Association for Bilingual Education \(NYSABE Region 1\)](#): “NYSABE represents educators, parents, members of community-based organizations, private agencies, and institutions of higher education as well as advocates involved in the education of English language learners/bilingual students in New York State.” NYSABE’s purpose is to “promote the establishment, maintenance, and expansion of high quality bilingual education programs for students of diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds as a means to ensure equitable and enriched educational opportunities for all students; promote bilingual education as a valid and research-based educational process and approach by which academic success and socio-emotional development of students is ensured as they develop bilingualism and biliteracy; and advocate for broad public recognition of the importance of bilingualism and biliteracy as a path toward equitable participation in a global, multilingual and multicultural world.”

Item 1.2 – Implement Inter-District Learning Visits

- a. **Activity.** Implement Inter-District Learning Visits by coordinating a series of structured inter-visitations across districts to observe successful programs, with built-in feedback loops for both visiting and host districts. The proposed timeframe aligns with CI 1.1, embedded within phases and conducted quarterly. Anticipated outcomes include the opportunity to observe effective practices in action.
- b. **Rationale.** This activity builds on the rationale in CI 1.1. Structured inter-district visits are a component of the network, providing teachers with feedback on themes across programs and schools. Inter-visitations will be scheduled intentionally, with pre-visit and norming sessions. The objective of each visit will be clearly defined, and feedback will follow a normed protocol. Despite potential apprehension, research-based directions for learning walks will clarify their purpose and process. This approach encourages interdisciplinary visits using research-based frameworks and employs network protocols (e.g., Elmore and Fisher) and program resources (e.g., rubrics).

- c. **Participants.** Including but not limited to: (Not specified; likely those participating in the regional network or interested districts.
- d. **Non-School District Partners.** Including but not limited to:
 - i. District Instructional Coaches
 - ii. [SCOPE Education Services](#): “SCOPE Education Services, founded in 1964, is a private, not-for-profit 501 (c) (3) organization, permanently chartered by the New York State Board of Regents to provide services to school districts in New York State. Services offered to local school districts include programs for educators, parents and children. SCOPE offerings include professional development, conferences, training, child care, preschool, elementary enrichment courses, outdoor education, summer environmental adventure programs and workshops/speaker’s bureau for parents and students. In addition, SCOPE provides services for employment including courses required for New York State certification. SCOPE represents Long Island as a regional study council and is a member of the Study Council Alliance of New York State (SCANYS) and the National School Development Council (NSDC).”
 - iii. [Suffolk County School Superintendents Association \(SCSSA\)](#):
 - iv. [Lead Educate Advocate Develop \(LEAD LI formerly LIASCD\)](#), for professional development and networking: LEAD LI’s “mission is to pursue excellence in supervision and instruction and to promote the development of curriculum consistent with quality education for all students.”
 - v. [Center for Community Inclusion–LIU](#), for professional development and guidance creation: “The Center for Community Inclusion (CCI) at Long Island University (LIU) was founded in 2009 to empower LIU students (from a variety of majors), educators, other service providers, employers, medical professionals, and the community at large to support inclusive opportunities in our schools, workplaces, places of leisure, and residences. CCI provides assistance and enrichment through a variety of programs, resources, services, events, and workshops.”
 - vi. **Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs):** Universities, colleges, and other specialized schools that offer degree programs and vocational training beyond the high school level.

Item 1.3 – Develop a Regional Repository of Best Practices

- a. **Activity.** Develop a Regional Repository of Best Practices by creating and maintaining a digital archive of instructional best practices, including documentation and historical implementation narratives, to promote scalable, research-based innovation across districts. This activity will be ongoing for 10 years and updated with NY INSPIRES. Anticipated outcomes include reducing educator burnout, increasing retention, ensuring consistency in grading protocols, and fostering professional growth through research-based practices.
- b. **Rationale.** The repository will serve as a shared resource, allowing teachers to devote more time and energy to innovation and instruction. Examples include a repository of ELA lessons with timing and pacing guides, promoting grading alignment across districts. It will also include case studies (with redacted student information) and literature reviews.
- c. **Participants.** Including but not limited to: All interested districts.
- d. **Non-School District Partners.** Including but not limited to: (Not specified.)

Item 1.4 – Establish Instructional Rounds for Continuous Improvement

- a. **Activity.** Establish cross-district Instructional Rounds using standardized observation protocols to build a shared language of practice, elevate teacher leadership, and align improvement strategies regionally. The schedule will be determined by participating schools and districts, aligned with specific units and content areas. Anticipated outcomes include greater receptiveness to feedback, improved professional conversations, and consistent language for feedback, leading to more productive (non-evaluative) teacher evaluations.
- b. **Rationale.** This initiative provides districts with the tools and knowledge to conduct instructional rounds internally, accommodating each district’s culture and context. Participants will be able to observe practices and engage in meaningful discussions to drive improvement. Beginning with a few volunteers is expected to encourage wider participation. The initiative also builds community and transparency. Resources such as *The Power of Teacher Rounds* (Harvard faculty) and *Instructional Rounds* by Elmore are recommended.
- c. **Participants.** Including but not limited to: District specific.
- d. **Non-School District Partners.** Including but not limited to: (Not specified.)

Item 1.5 – Pilot Equity-Informed Program Design Reviews

- a. **Activity.** Pilot Equity-Informed Program Design Reviews for interested districts. This includes district-level audits of program design using equity checklists and subgroup impact assessments to ensure inclusivity during planning and implementation phases. Timeframe: TBD. Anticipated outcomes include embedding equity throughout planning rather than treating it as an isolated component.
- b. **Rationale.** This activity ensures curriculum alignment with the CR-SE Framework and addresses all its components. It promotes curriculum design with equity at the core, informing instructional decision-making. The goal is to have the right resources to build upon, revise, or implement effective practices (e.g., using the repository). It begins with an audit to assess current practices.
- c. **Participants.** Including but not limited to: Component districts working with the DEI Director.
- d. **Non-School District Partners.** Including but not limited to:
 - i. **Community-Based Organizations (CBOs):** Non-profit or non-governmental organizations that operate at the local level to provide services, support, and resources to a specific community.
 - ii. **NYU Metro Center:** “The NYU Metropolitan Center for Research on Equity and the Transformation of Schools (NYU Metro Center) is a comprehensive, university-based center providing research, professional learning services and supporting equity-focused, evidence-based innovations in educational research and programming. NYU Metro Center’s commitment to educational equity and school transformation, brings together scholars, educators, and innovators from diverse backgrounds to collaborate on projects to improve educational access and opportunity. NYU Metro Center focuses on driving equity in school settings especially when confronting issues of race, gender, gender identity, national origin, socioeconomic status, and other identities historically marginalized in educational spaces.”
 - iii. **Curriculum Tools for Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education (CR-SE) Score Card:** Tools used to evaluate the extent to which curriculum materials and practices are culturally responsive.

- iv. **Parent Organizations**
- v. **Learning for Justice:** A community education program that “seeks to uphold the mission of the Southern Poverty Law Center: to be a catalyst for racial justice in the South and beyond, working in partnership with communities to dismantle white supremacy, strengthen intersectional movements and advance the human rights of all people. By centering civic and political action education for everyone, Learning for Justice will complement the SPLC’s work to increase power and capacity for multiracial, inclusive democracy.”
 - i. [Randall Lindsey’s Cultural Proficiency Continuum](#)

Item 1.6 – Establish and Expand Regional Academic Competitions and Enrichment Programs

- a. **Activity.** Establish and expand regional academic competitions and enrichment programs, such as Math Olympiads, STEM clubs, and mock trial events, to increase access to rigorous academic opportunities for all students. Timeframe: Annually. Anticipated outcomes include enhancing student engagement, fostering healthy competition, and increasing participation in enrichment programs across districts.
- b. **Rationale.** These programs expand access to experiences that may be limited or unavailable in smaller districts, ensuring equitable opportunities for advanced learning and enrichment. They also provide venues for showcasing student achievement regionally.
- c. **Participants.** Including but not limited to: Students from participating districts.
- d. **Non-School District Partners.** Including but not limited to:
 - i. [Suffolk County Bar Association](#): “The purpose and objectives for which the Association is established shall be cultivating the science of jurisprudence, promoting reforms in the law, facilitating the administration of justice, elevating the standard of integrity, honor and courtesy in the legal profession and cherishing the spirit of the members.”
 - ii. STEAM-related industry partners (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics)
 - iii. Local universities

Item 1.7 – Form Multi-District Student Clubs and Affinity-Based Activities

- a. **Activity.** Form multi-district student clubs and affinity-based activities, such as robotics teams, debate clubs, DECA chapters, Gender and Sexuality Alliances (GSAs), and cultural or heritage-based student groups. Timeframe: Annually, with opportunities for ongoing collaboration. Anticipated outcomes include fostering diversity, inclusion, and student leadership while broadening social networks beyond district boundaries.
- b. **Rationale.** These opportunities encourage peer-to-peer learning and social connections, strengthen students’ sense of belonging, and provide space for identity-based and interest-based collaboration.
- c. **Participants.** Including but not limited to: Students, club advisors, and district activity coordinators.
- d. **Non-School District Partners.** Including but not limited to:
 - i. Local community organizations
 - ii. Cultural institutions
 - iii. Professional associations.

Item 1.8 – Organize Regional Student Recognition and Enrichment Forums

- a. **Activity.** Organize regional student recognition and enrichment forums, including events to celebrate recipients of the Seal of Civic Readiness, the Seal of Biliteracy, and other regional awards. Timeframe: Annually. Anticipated outcomes include increased recognition of diverse student accomplishments and greater visibility for regional academic and civic achievements.
- b. **Rationale.** Public recognition encourages student engagement, highlights a wide range of achievements, and strengthens community support for educational programs.
- c. **Participants.** Including but not limited to: Students, parents, district leaders, and educators.
- d. **Non-School District Partners.** Including but not limited to:
 - i. Cultural organizations
 - ii. Higher education institutions
 - iii. Community media outlets

Item 1.9 – Pilot Shared Virtual and Specialized Course Offerings

- a. **Activity.** Pilot shared virtual and specialized course offerings across districts to increase access to advanced placement, low-enrollment, and specialized courses. Timeframe: Pilot in Year 1 with phased expansion in subsequent years. Anticipated outcomes include expanded course options for students regardless of district size and reduced scheduling barriers.
- b. **Rationale.** Shared courses allow districts to pool resources, making advanced or specialized subjects viable even with small enrollments, while also increasing equity in access.
- c. **Participants.** Including but not limited to: High school students in participating districts.
- d. **Non-School District Partners.** Including but not limited to:
 - i. Higher education institutions
 - ii. Industry partners
 - iii. Online learning providers

Item 1.10 – Coordinate Cross-District Career Awareness and Experiential Learning Opportunities

- a. **Activity.** Coordinate cross-district career awareness activities and experiential learning opportunities, such as middle school career trips, job shadowing, and career pathway exploration. Timeframe: Ongoing, with at least one event per school year. Anticipated outcomes include increased career readiness and early exposure to diverse pathways.
- b. **Rationale.** Career awareness initiatives help students make informed decisions about postsecondary education and training, and expand their understanding of local and regional job markets.
- c. **Participants.** Including but not limited to: Students, career education coordinators, and guidance counselors.

- d. **Non-School District Partners.** Including but not limited to:
 - i. Local businesses
 - ii. Industry associations
 - iii. Workforce development agencies
 - iv. Higher education institutions

Item 1.11 – Establish Regional Aspiring Teacher and Leader Cohorts

- a. **Activity.** Establish regional cohorts for aspiring teachers and school leaders, focused on equitable recruitment pipelines and leadership capacity-building. Timeframe: Annual cohorts with ongoing mentorship. Anticipated outcomes include a stronger pool of qualified candidates and increased diversity in educational leadership.
- b. **Rationale.** Regional cohorts create pathways for talented educators to advance into leadership positions, while also addressing gaps in representation and leadership readiness
- c. **Participants.** Including but not limited to: Teachers, instructional coaches, and prospective administrators.
- d. **Non-School District Partners.** Including but not limited to:
 - i. Higher education institutions
 - ii. Leadership development organizations
 - iii. Teacher preparation programs

Item 1.12 – Develop a Future Educators Pipeline Initiative

- a. **Activity.** Develop a Future Educators Pipeline Initiative by supporting high school Future Teacher Academies, paid student employment in educational settings, and partnerships with teacher preparation programs. Timeframe: Ongoing. Anticipated outcomes include increasing the number of students entering the teaching profession and strengthening community-based recruitment.
- b. **Rationale.** Early exposure to the teaching profession supports recruitment efforts, particularly in shortage areas, and fosters homegrown talent who are more likely to remain in the region.
- c. **Participants.** Including but not limited to: High school students, guidance counselors, and teacher mentors.
- d. **Non-School District Partners.** Including but not limited to:
 - i. Colleges of education
 - ii. BOCES (Board of Cooperative Educational Services)
 - iii. Local teacher associations

Item 1.13 – Coordinate Regional Guidance & Civil Service Education Campaign

- a. **Activity.** Coordinate a regional guidance and civil service education campaign to raise awareness about career opportunities in education, including instructional, support, and non-instructional roles. Timeframe: Annual campaign. Anticipated outcomes include broader understanding of the variety of careers in education and increased applicant pools for hard-to-fill positions.

- b. **Rationale.** Many students and community members are unaware of the range of education-related careers available. This campaign can increase recruitment, especially in high-need areas.
- c. **Participants.** Including but not limited to: High school students, job seekers, and career changers.
- d. **Non-School District Partners.** Including but not limited to:
 - i. Civil Service departments
 - ii. Workforce development boards
 - iii. Community organizations

Item 1.14 – Establish an In-District Leadership Identification and Mentorship Model

- a. **Activity.** Establish a model for identifying and mentoring in-district leadership candidates, creating pathways for teachers and staff to advance into leadership positions. Timeframe: Ongoing. Anticipated outcomes include stronger internal pipelines and reduced reliance on external hires.
- b. **Rationale.** Internal leadership development helps districts retain top talent, sustain institutional knowledge, and maintain leadership continuity.
- c. **Participants.** Including but not limited to: Current teachers, instructional coaches, and building administrators.
- d. **Non-School District Partners.** Including but not limited to:
 - i. Leadership development consultants
 - ii. Higher education leadership programs

Item 1.15 – Create an Equity-Focused Metrics Dashboard

- a. **Activity.** Create an equity-focused metrics dashboard to track progress, representation, and outcomes of educator pipeline programs, disaggregated by demographics. Timeframe: Initial development in Year 1 with continuous updates. Anticipated outcomes include transparent data for decision-making and accountability in equity goals.
- b. **Rationale.** A centralized dashboard enables districts to monitor the effectiveness of recruitment and retention strategies, identify gaps, and adjust programs to meet equity targets.
- c. **Participants.** Including but not limited to: District HR teams, leadership, and data specialists.
- d. **Non-School District Partners.** Including but not limited to:
 - i. Data analytics consultants,
 - ii. BOCES (Board of Cooperative Educational Services)
 - iii. State education data services

Part 2: Regional Ideas & Recommendations

Identify and describe ideas for activities that local school districts would consider pursuing if they had additional resources, legislative changes, or regulatory changes—including recommendations for what supports they believe would enable them to pursue the innovation. Include as many or as few ideas and recommendations as were identified by local school districts in the region.

Item 2.1.

- a. **Idea.** Identify and describe the innovative idea that local school districts considered. Feel free to include any data that helps highlight this idea.
- b. **Benefits.** Describe how the local school districts believe this innovation would benefit students in your region as well as anticipated outcomes. Explain what regional needs the local school districts believe it would address.
- c. **Barriers.** Describe any barriers that local school districts believe impede them from pursuing this innovation in your region. Include discussion of barriers at the local, regional, and state levels, as applicable.
- d. **Recommendations.** Propose additional resources, legislative changes, or regulatory changes that the local school districts believe would enable them to pursue this innovation in your region.

[Repeat a-d for each additional item (e.g., Item 2.2., Item 2.3., etc.). Include as many items as needed.]

Eastern Suffolk Regions' Response to "Part 2: Regional Ideas & Recommendations"

Part 2: Regional Activity Plan – Continuous Improvement (CI)

- Item 2.1 – Create a Regional Continuous Improvement Center
- Item 2.2 – Institutionalize Regional Inter-Visitations as a Professional Learning Opportunity
- Item 2.3 – Build a Shared Regional Data & Innovation Platform
- Item 2.4 – Legislative Funding for Instructional Rounds as a Regional Resource
- Item 2.5 – Adopt an Equity Accreditation Model for School Programs

Part 2: Regional Activity Plan – Innovation & Enrichment Opportunities (IE)

- Item 2.6 – Sustained Regional Enrichment Infrastructure and Funding Models
- Item 2.7 – Regional Club and Activity Consortium
- Item 2.8 – Develop and implement a regional scheduling and facility-sharing system
- Item 2.9 – Accredited Regional Virtual Learning Network
- Item 2.10 – Regional Career Pathway Continuum
- Item 2.11 – Regional UPK

Part 2: Regional Activity Plan – Leadership & Workforce Capacity (LW)

- Item 2.12 – Formalize a Regional Leadership Academy
- Item 2.13 – Expand the Future Educators Pipeline with Regional Funding
- Item 2.14 – Launch a Suffolk-wide Educational Career Awareness Campaign
- Item 2.15 – Create a Regional Mentorship and Credentialing Platform
- Item 2.16 – Develop a Regional Educator Workforce Equity Index

Item 2.1 – Create a Regional Continuous Improvement Center

- a. **Idea.** Create a Regional Continuous Improvement Center. This innovative idea involves establishing a permanent regional hub dedicated to leading and scaling continuous improvement practices, such as inquiry cycles, coaching, and improvement science training. The center would be supported through BOCES, a lead district, and legislative funding.
- b. **Benefits.** Local school districts believe this innovation would strengthen core instruction and build capacity among teaching staff, ultimately leading to improved student outcomes. It would also foster collaborative networks among school districts, mitigating isolation, particularly for smaller districts, and providing opportunities to showcase existing structures that can be expanded.
- c. **Barriers.** Districts identified several barriers to pursuing this innovation, including funding and the need for clerical support. Logistical challenges, such as determining the location of the centers and managing learning facilities, are also concerns. Additional barriers include tracking impact, securing funding for instructors, ensuring equitable contributions based on student population size, and geographic challenges, particularly on the East End.
- d. **Recommendations.** Districts recommend exploring a model similar to the United Federation of Teachers (UFT) Model, where support is provided by UFT or a community-based organization (CBO). Collaboration with Teacher Centers is also suggested. Legislative and regulatory recommendations include fast-tracking teacher certifications, reviewing and modernizing certification requirements, and partnering with City/State University of New York (CUNY/SUNY) and New York State United Teachers (NYSUT) on certifications or microcredentials focused on innovative teaching. Partnering with the Center for Integrated Training and Education (CITE) is also a possibility.

Item 2.2 – Institutionalize Regional Inter-Visitations as a Professional Learning

- a. **Idea.** Institutionalize Regional Inter-Visitations as a Professional Learning Opportunity. This involves securing funding and policy support to formalize inter-visitations as a recognized professional development model, including travel stipends, coverage for teacher release time, and published observation protocols.
- b. **Benefits.** This innovation would allow educators to observe effective practices in action. It would enable the creation of vetted lists of districts, teachers, and areas of expertise, developed in collaboration with district and school administrative teams, possibly including instructional coaches. Anticipated outcomes include strengthening pedagogical practices, fostering a culture of using feedback for improvement, and promoting cross-district collaboration, thereby strengthening equity across the region.
- c. **Barriers.** Barriers include limited release time, insufficient classroom coverage, reluctance to have visitors in classrooms, potential union pushback, and the challenge of cultivating self-reflective attitudes. Additional concerns involve willingness to share practices, confidentiality, and data privacy regarding professional conduct. Professional development in self-reflective protocols is identified as a necessary support.
- d. **Recommendations.** Districts recommend including inter-district visitation in the new New York State Standards-based Educator Evaluation and Professional Support (NYS-STEPS) plan and encouraging the New York State Education Department (NYSED) to incorporate it into their guidance. They suggest state funding

for teacher and leader visitations, developing a protocol or guide for conducting inter-visitations, and partnering with institutions of higher education (IHEs) such as Stony Brook University and the Center for Integrated Training and Education (CITE).

Item 2.3 – Build a Shared Regional Data & Innovation Platform

- a. **Idea.** Build a Shared Regional Data & Innovation Platform. This initiative involves developing a centralized, equity-centered data and storytelling platform to capture qualitative and quantitative evidence from across districts, enabling informed decision-making and the sharing of innovations.
- b. **Benefits.** Anticipated benefits include creating a repository of practices and resources, reducing educator burnout, increasing retention, and ensuring consistency in grading protocols. It would promote professional growth through research-based best practices and provide a forum for teachers to share and seek support.
- c. **Barriers.** Challenges include generating content, possibly using artificial intelligence (AI) with appropriate prompting, determining responsibility for content creation, identifying featured resources, and moderating an online forum. Other needs include training teachers in effective AI use, funding system development, and integrating messaging, community, and AI chat features.
- d. **Recommendations.** Districts recommend securing funding to implement the model statewide, with both statewide and local channels tailored to teachers' needs.

Item 2.4 – Legislative Funding for Instructional Rounds as a Regional Resource

- a. **Idea.** Legislative Funding for Instructional Rounds as a Regional Resource. This proposal seeks state-level recognition and funding for Instructional Rounds as a formal school improvement tool, ensuring all districts can participate regardless of size or fiscal capacity.
- b. **Benefits.** Expected outcomes include greater openness to feedback, more productive (non-evaluative) teacher evaluations, and a shared language for instructional improvement. Statewide adoption would support a common understanding of research-based practices among administrators and teachers.
- c. **Barriers.** A major barrier is teacher resistance to feedback and continuous improvement post-tenure. The challenge lies in reframing continuous improvement from an accountability measure to an asset-based mindset.
- d. **Recommendations.** Districts suggest modeling continuous improvement cycles after the medical profession's "grand rounds" approach, which promotes reflection through team-based, multi-perspective observations. The Stony Brook Cares Partnership is cited as a model. Incorporating updated tools such as artificial intelligence (AI) is also recommended.

Item 2.5 – Adopt an Equity Accreditation Model for School Programs

- a. **Idea.** Adopt an Equity Accreditation Model for School Programs. This would explore a regional equity accreditation model inspired by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC), enabling districts to demonstrate inclusive design, monitor impact, and respond to demographic changes.
- b. **Benefits.** No specific benefits were provided in the source excerpts.
- c. **Barriers.** No specific barriers or supports were provided in the source excerpts.
- d. **Recommendations.** No specific recommendations were provided in the source excerpts.

Item 2.6 – Sustained Regional Enrichment Infrastructure and Funding Models

- a. **Idea.** Develop Sustained Regional Enrichment Infrastructure and Funding Models. This concept involves creating a regionally funded enrichment framework, supported through Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) aid or legislative appropriations, to ensure long-term sustainability of academic competitions and enrichment events, including transportation subsidies and staffing solutions for equitable participation.
- b. **Benefits.** Expected outcomes include increased superintendent collaboration, earlier exposure to STEAM opportunities for students (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Mathematics), strengthened core instruction, programming aligned to student needs, district specialization and resource sharing, expanded programming, and an increase in CO-SERS (cooperative services; an approved cooperative agreement to establish a shared service for one year between a BOCES and two or more districts).
- c. **Barriers.** Barriers include transportation challenges, insufficient funding, and lack of subsidies.
- d. **Recommendations.** Suggested actions include staff training, ongoing professional learning, and exploring virtual opportunities for qualifying competitions.

Item 2.7 – Regional Club and Activity Consortium

- a. **Idea.** Create a Regional Club and Activity Consortium. This proposal advocates for state-level policy allowing inter-district clubs, activities, and competitions, with shared staffing models, supervision protocols, and funding mechanisms to ensure equitable access.
- b. **Benefits.** Anticipated outcomes include increased student belonging, teacher collaboration, shared lessons learned, and consistent language across schools, benefiting student progression.
- c. **Barriers.** Challenges include bargaining agreements, alignment with community culture, and staffing.
- d. **Recommendations.** Districts recommend establishing a professional organization or structure to support club networks (e.g., NYSSMA, the New York State School Music Association), securing funding for materials, supplies, competitions, transportation, and supervision, and reviewing Board policies for alignment.

Item 2.8 – Develop and implement a regional scheduling and facility-sharing system

- a. **Idea.** Implement a Regional Scheduling and Facility-Sharing System. This system would coordinate enrichment events, with standardized agreements for rotating space, transportation logistics, and equitable access across districts.
- b. **Benefits.** Expected benefits include supporting biliteracy, enhancing student civic readiness, facilitating events that respect district culture, increasing Seals of Biliteracy for low-incidence languages, identifying and resolving recognition gaps, improving efficiencies, and highlighting regional districts.
- c. **Barriers.** Challenges include varying calendars, the need for regionally consistent language, a technology platform, and non-certificated staff bargaining agreements.
- d. **Recommendations.** Regulations should align with instructional calendars while providing structure and flexibility.

Item 2.9 – Accredited Regional Virtual Learning Network

- a. **Idea.** Establish an Accredited Regional Virtual Learning Network. This would create a state-sanctioned virtual course network allowing credit reciprocity across districts, enabling all students—particularly in smaller or under-resourced districts—to access advanced coursework.
- b. **Benefits.** Expected benefits include broader course offerings, programming flexibility, showcasing innovative teaching, building world readiness skills (e.g., time management), increasing access to college credits, providing options for students in special circumstances, and improving engagement among homeschooled students.
- c. **Barriers.** Barriers include limited internet access, insufficient devices, staff unfamiliarity with virtual learning, and bargaining agreements.
- d. **Recommendations.** Districts recommend New York State Education Department (NYSED) support for credit accrual, seat time, and graduation requirements; professional learning for virtual instruction; equitable access for students with disabilities; adherence to privacy laws; funding for curriculum and training; and reviewing successful national models (e.g., Florida Virtual School).

Item 2.10 – Regional Career Pathway Continuum

- a. **Idea.** Develop a Regional Career Pathway Continuum. This would establish a region-wide career awareness and readiness system from elementary through high school, modeled on Brentwood’s early exposure programs, supported by Career and Technical Education (CTE) centers, cross-district internships, and digital career portfolios.
- b. **Benefits.** Anticipated outcomes include earlier career awareness, real-world experiences, better alignment of middle-level programming with the portrait of a graduate, and expanded work-based learning opportunities.

- c. **Barriers.** Challenges include the need for strong industry partnerships, balancing community perspectives on Career and Technical Education (CTE), and integrating local and regional initiatives.
- d. **Recommendations.** Actions include advocating for robust New York State Education Department (NYSED) Career and Technical Education (CTE) frameworks, adopting a K–20 approach, creating community-facing resources, providing professional learning, supporting student data legislation for industry certification, and hosting legislative awareness events.

Item 2.11 – Regional Universal Prekindergarten (UPK)

- a. **Idea.** Develop a Regional Universal Prekindergarten (UPK) Program. This would involve shared funding to expand access for early learners.
- b. **Benefits.** No specific benefits were provided in the source excerpts.
- c. **Barriers.** No specific barriers or supports were provided in the source excerpts.
- d. **Recommendations.** No specific recommendations were provided in the source excerpts.

Item 2.12 – Formalize a Regional Leadership Academy

- a. **Idea.** Formalize a Regional Leadership Academy. This would be a funded, accredited academy supported by higher education and Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES), offering micro-credentials for aspiring and current administrators, with targeted outreach to diverse candidates.
- b. **Benefits.** Expected benefits include increased retention, better-prepared leaders, a larger candidate pool, and a stronger sense of belonging.
- c. **Barriers.** Barriers include funding, staffing, contracts with partners, and securing suitable space.
- d. **Recommendations.** Recommended supports include dedicated funding, adequate staffing, clear contracts, appropriate space, and resources for materials and curriculum.

Item 2.13 – Expand the Future Educators Pipeline with Regional Funding

- a. **Idea.** Expand the Future Educators Pipeline with Regional Funding. This would scale Future Teacher Academies and paid education internships across Suffolk County, including transportation and stipends to support low-income students.
- b. **Benefits.** Anticipated benefits include increased representation, student work experience, and reduced vacancies.
- c. **Barriers.** Challenges include scheduling conflicts, transportation, funding, and collective bargaining agreements.

- d. **Recommendations.** Suggested supports include dedicated funding, Memoranda of Agreement (MOAs), leadership and staff capacity, transportation contracts, curriculum resources, and after-school programs.

Item 2.14 – Launch a Suffolk-wide Educational Career Awareness Campaign

- a. **Idea.** Launch a Suffolk-Wide Educational Career Awareness Campaign. This would be a sustained, countywide public awareness initiative, led by a regional task force, to highlight educational careers, including Civil Service, paraeducator, and technical roles.
- b. **Benefits.** Anticipated outcomes include a larger, more diverse candidate pool, increased student exposure to opportunities, improved retention, and career advancement pathways.
- c. **Barriers.** Challenges include securing guidance counselor buy-in, navigating Civil Service rules, addressing geographic spread, and shifting public perception.
- d. **Recommendations.** Suggestions include developing a public service announcement, securing funding, forming a committee, offering free test prep, advocating legislative changes for free Civil Service tests for high school students, modernizing Civil Service rules, and hosting a Civil Service Test Day.

Item 2.15 – Create a Regional Mentorship and Credentialing Platform

- a. **Idea.** Create a Regional Mentorship and Credentialing Platform. This online platform would connect aspiring leaders with mentors, offer asynchronous coursework, and track credentialing, supported by Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES).
- b. **Benefits.** Anticipated benefits include a more diverse candidate pool, improved retention and success, and preservation of institutional knowledge.
- c. **Barriers.** Barriers include funding, securing higher education partnerships, and required time commitments.
- d. **Recommendations.** Recommended supports include strong leadership, higher education partnerships, grant funding, available mentors, flexible certification pathways, clear mentoring protocols, and a defined screening process.

Item 2.16 – Develop a Regional Educator Workforce Equity Index

- a. **Idea.** Develop a Regional Educator Workforce Equity Index. This public-facing dashboard would display metrics on educator diversity, career progression, and equity outcomes to guide continuous improvement and inform investments.
- b. **Benefits.** The index would guide recruitment, prompt policy changes, improve retention among underrepresented staff, and foster a more affirming work environment.
- c. **Barriers.** Barriers include funding, defining dashboard design and data needs, ensuring participation, conducting pre- and post-surveys, and securing leadership buy-in.

- d. **Recommendations.** Recommendations include creating an evaluation rubric, partnering with the Office of Teaching Initiatives, engaging a consultant, and securing district leadership support, including partnerships with Educational Support Services (ESS) and the Regional Information Center (RIC).

Resources

[Regionalization Plans in NYS Overview](#)

[Statewide Plan for Higher Education](#)

[Regionalization Interim Progress Report for District Superintendents](#)

[NYSED Regional Plan & Recommendations Template](#)

[NYSED Regionalization Materials & Guidance](#)

[Google NotebookLM](#)

District Certification

By signing below, the superintendent or designee certifies that this regional plan accurately identifies and represents the extent of participation for their district to which they, in consultation with their board of education, have agreed. The district cannot be required to participate in any items except those to which they have agreed, as certified below.

Each district must provide certification consisting of their superintendent or designee's signature, the date, and a complete list of the item numbers to which their district has agreed.

Name of District: _____

List of Agreed Items: _____

I hereby certify that this district has agreed to participate in the items listed.

Signature

Date

[Include sign-off from each participating district.]