

# Design of the Washington ESD Network

*Creating a Statewide Education  
Service Delivery System*



Adopted by the ESD Superintendents Association and  
Received for First Reading by the AESD Executive Board  
July 1, 2008

Final AESD Executive Board Adoption Scheduled for  
October, 20, 2008

# Table of Contents

<b>Table of Contents .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Background .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Key Components .....</b>	<b>4</b>
Set of Interacting Forces and Challenges .....	4
Values and Beliefs .....	5
Design Specifications.....	5
Structural Work Model.....	7
<i>Network Administration.....</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>Shared Services.....</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>Manage Resources and Partner Relationships.....</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>Delivering Products and Services.....</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>Developing Products and Services.....</i>	<i>14</i>
<i>Communicating with Policymakers, Markets, and Clients.....</i>	<i>15</i>
<b>Key Processes .....</b>	<b>16</b>
Funding.....	17
Access to the Statewide Network.....	18
Measurement and Improvement.....	18
Promotion.....	18
Innovation and Planning.....	19
AEESD Governance.....	19
<b>Implementation Plans .....</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Conclusion and Commencement.....</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>APPENDICES .....</b>	<b>25</b>
Appendix A: A Personal Note.....	25
Appendix B: Forces and Challenges .....	26

## Background

Following direction from the AESD Executive Board, intense political scrutiny, and a performance audit during 2007, superintendents of the nine Washington State Educational Service Districts (ESDs) initiated a planning process to re-think how the ESDs work together and to propose changes. How could they collectively be a stronger contributor in the state's education system? How could they bring their individual ESD strengths to bear on education problems in the state? What might both they and the state's school system stand to gain by having a more tightly coupled network of ESDs capable of assuring a unified delivery system for educational products, services, and initiatives? This paper documents the work to date.

The superintendents selected a unique approach to planning for the network that represents the next generation of ESDs. The approach is based on Interactive Design<sup>1</sup>, a rigorous method with potential for producing a plan that is far-sighted, exciting, and full of challenging goals that can take the service districts to even higher levels of performance than those they have today. Interactive Design is a planning process based on the assumption that past successes create new opportunities that can promote organizational change. In contrast, traditional approaches to planning and change have sometimes wrongly implied that failure is the only motivator. In response to mounting public school challenges and the recognition that ESDs have advantages and capabilities unique among other education service providers, this planning initiative is aimed at designing the kind of network and delivery system stakeholders would have if they could have what they want. Planning is starting, for all intents and purposes, with a clean sheet of paper in order to avoid pre-conceived solutions. The resulting design--a clear and detailed vision of how ESDs can work together more effectively--is the first step to becoming the unified delivery system Washington's school districts need more than ever before.

---

<sup>1</sup> A method developed by Dr. Russell Ackoff and Mr. Jamshid Gharajedaghi of Philadelphia, PA; and formerly of the School of Social Systems Sciences at Wharton School of Business. See their publications for a complete description, especially Gharajedaghi's book *Systems Thinking: Managing Chaos and Complexity*, second edition published in 2005 by Butterworth-Heinemann.

## Key Components

The ESD Superintendents met in October, 2007; and monthly between January and June of 2008 to develop the design. Between meetings, updates were provided to individual ESD boards and the AESD Executive Board. Feedback was gathered and incorporated into the design as the work progressed. Working sessions have generated the following key components:

1. the **set of interacting forces and challenges** currently facing the ESD network in Washington;
2. **values and beliefs** shared among the ESD superintendents and relevant to new ways of working as a purposeful and effective system;
3. a set of **specifications** to guide the design of the network and its statewide service delivery system;
4. a **structural work model** that identifies several kinds of work to be done through the network and describes how that work might be organized and allocated among the member organizations; and
5. a **definition of services** to be delivered through the statewide delivery system. This component also includes implications and a set of decision criteria or parameters to filter decisions about which initiatives to deliver through the new network.

### *Set of Interacting Forces and Challenges*

The set of interacting forces and challenges is characterized by increasing expectations, greater ESD visibility, and ESDs' desire for a larger role and greater influence in statewide service delivery at the same time that institutional success has come historically from regional service delivery. Regional success may actually constrain potential for statewide success since two very different skill sets and orientations are involved at the two levels. The ability to operate effectively as a nine-entity network statewide is also hampered by an historical tendency to approach conflict in a competitive way and the absence of processes and measures to guide and evaluate state-level cooperative work among the ESDs. (A diagram of the forces and challenges, along with a more detailed interpretation, appears in the Appendix.)

## Values and Beliefs

Six important values and beliefs emerged:

- *Equity* – ESDs are committed to high quality service for the education community and the achievement of every child.
- *Accountability* – ESD services reliably produce outcomes important to clients.
- *Leadership* – ESDs organize local resources and serve our clients by being creative, agile, efficient and attuned to their unique needs. ESDs lead with their competence.
- *Autonomy* – ESDs value the independence of each member and the entrepreneurial spirit that makes for excellent regional service delivery.
- *Relationships* – ESDs develop and honor strong relationships with clients, partners and among themselves. Our relationships are marked by trust, mutual respect, honesty, and integrity.
- *Synergy* – ESDs know that their unique strengths as individual organizations complement and multiply each other in a robust statewide delivery system.

## Design Specifications

The specifications below describe the proposed new Washington ESD Network and its statewide system of ESD service delivery. Specifications not only set out new desired functions, but also guide decisions about structure and processes. Finally, the specifications suggest performance measures that will be used to evaluate the ESD Network and its delivery system.

The ESD Network will

1. Develop strength and autonomy at the local service level while creating a consistent delivery system at the state level.
  - a. Develop and demonstrate competent delivery of a set of assured education services to every Washington State school district through the ESD Network. Assured services will be revised over time in response to changing needs.
  - b. Innovate locally and leverage statewide. Have processes for matching the special capabilities of each of the nine ESDs with needs of Washington's education system.
  - c. Cultivate enduring relationships among each other and with educators, policymakers, partners, and funders. Be mutually accountable in all agreements.
  - d. Reward individual ESDs both for local excellence and for strengthening the Network's capacity, processes and services.

2. Be the statewide system of choice for development and delivery of state, federal and private education initiatives.
  - a. Be known for responsiveness, innovative solutions, efficiency, and cost-effectiveness.
  - b. Provide a single point of contact for channeling statewide opportunities in and delivery out.
  - c. Apply explicit decision criteria for selecting and planning statewide initiatives.
  - d. Build measurement and continuous improvement into every statewide initiative.
3. Positively influence state education policy. Work toward mutual benefit with policymakers on policy development and initiative deployment.
4. Develop and stabilize well-defined processes and structures to support the Network and statewide service delivery system.
  - a. Share best current practices and critical knowledge among the members of the Network.
  - b. Provide executive staff assistance to the ESD superintendent chairperson and to help realize the AESD vision.
  - c. Develop and implement an objective, verifiable measurement system for the performance of the Network and statewide service delivery system.

## Structural Work Model

The diagram below may look strange. Rather than being a hierarchical organization chart that shows who reports to whom, it is a summary of the kinds of work that will need to be done by the ESD Network and, where possible, how that work can be allocated to groups such as the Superintendents or ESDs. An exciting and innovative new structure, the *ESD Network Development Institute*, is included to provide leadership development, carry out important tasks for the Network, and build next-generation commitment to the Network and its service delivery system. The diagram illustrates that even though it could be thought of as a *virtual* organization, the ESD Network and its service delivery system will, nonetheless, require leadership and resources. Decisions about exactly how the ESDs will divide their responsibilities to get the work done will be made as the Network develops. Connections among the elements in the diagram are as important (if not more so) as the elements, themselves. Consequently, the section explaining each of the elements of the structural work model will be illustrated to show some of the most important dynamics among them.

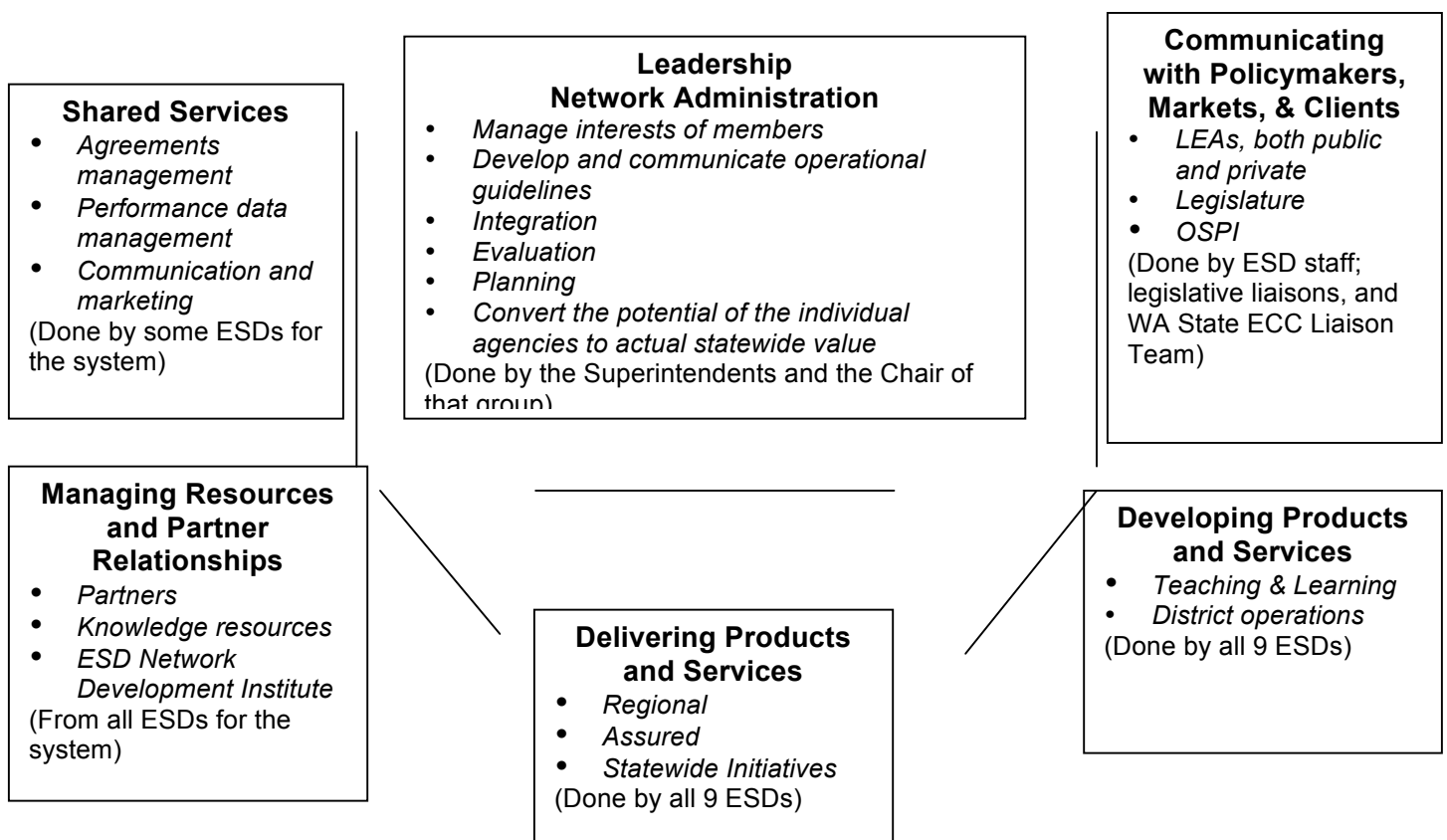


Figure 1: Structural Work Model for the ESD Network and Statewide Service Delivery System

## Network Administration

Network Administration is provided by the ESD Superintendents and is primarily concerned with the following functions:

- *Managing the interests of the members.* In order to maintain the win-win relationships desired by the member organizations, Network administrators will assure that decisions and practices are fair and that Network capacity is increased in the bargain.
- *Developing and communicating operational guidelines.* Decision criteria—explicitly defined, communicated, and followed—will be the foundation on which trust is built among the members. The extent to which the individual ESDs are able to act on behalf of the entire Network depends on the quality of decision criteria and willingness to use them to increase the consistency and transparency of decision-making.
- *Integration.* The way in which the various and unique parts of the Network interact and complement each other is the very essence of the system approach that grounds this Network design. Integration requires energy and will rarely happen without purposeful action.
- *Evaluation.* Continually evaluating the overall value of the Network will increase the likelihood that organization learning will occur (being able to say with evidence what works and what doesn't). Network evaluation explicitly includes developing and using a common measurement framework for assured services and statewide initiatives. It may also imply a common measurement framework for local services.
- *Planning.* Changes in the context, along with changes resulting from effective programs, products, and services, will necessitate Network planning to assure that activities are productive, current, and valuable. The planning function includes responsibility for enacting the Network design through successive approximations.
- *Converting the potential of the individual ESDs to actual statewide value.* The potential value of the ESDs is multiplicative, not additive. It is through the proper combination of the resources and capacities of the members that value will be created.

Figure 2 illustrates how Network Administration relates to all the work elements of the Network and statewide service delivery system.

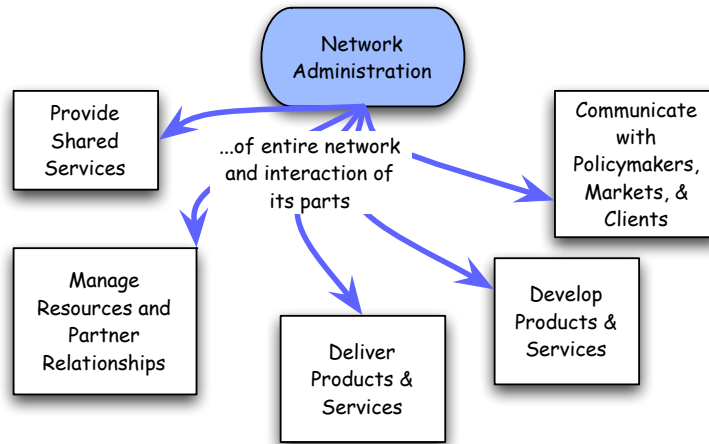


Figure 1: Role of Network Administration

## Shared Services

Shared Services are those support services needed by the entire system. They can be thought of as infrastructure that allows all the other work elements to accomplish both their separate roles and their collective role. Depending on interest or capacity, individual or groups of ESDs may perform Shared Services on behalf of the Network. Network Administration will establish compensation or other operational guidelines.

Three primary functions are the responsibility of Shared Services:

- *Agreements management.* The Network will enter into a variety of agreements, including but not limited to contracts for service with the OSPI and others. Shared Services will assure that the terms of such agreements are met.
- *Performance data management.* Competent support of the Network's data system (hardware, software, database management, production of management reports, etc.) will be critical to the ability of Network Administration to guide and integrate the work of the Network, the ability of the Network to communicate with policymakers and others, and so on for each work element.
- *Communication and marketing.* Producing high-quality promotional materials will support the branding of the Network and contribute to its becoming the education service delivery system of choice in Washington State.

Figure 3 illustrates how Shared Services supports the activities of all the other work elements.

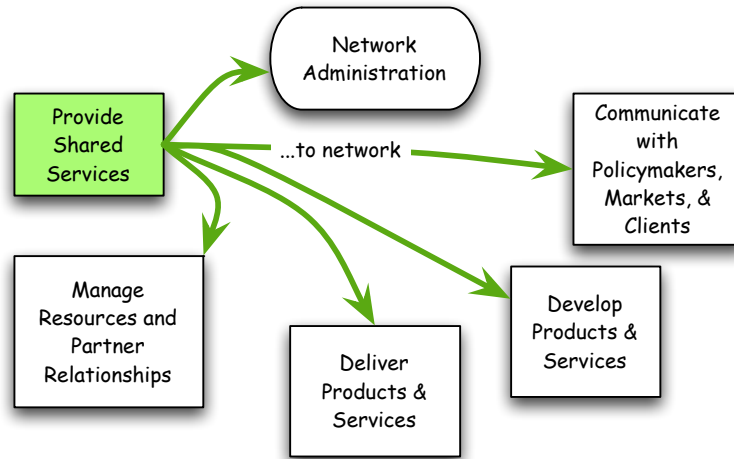


Figure 2: Role of Shared Services

### Manage Resources and Partner Relationships

One of the most critical ideas behind the creation of the Network and its statewide service delivery system is the potential value that lies in the creative combination of the resources and capacities of the member ESDs. The potential extends beyond the ESDs to partnering organizations that can contribute knowledge or other resources to projects delivered through the ESD network. Moving from potential value to actual value, however, requires the following functions:

- *Managing Relationships with Partner Organizations.* The ESD Network will establish strategic relationships with organizations that can further its goals or capabilities. By assigning responsibility for selecting, maintaining, and evaluating partnerships the Network increases the likelihood that partnerships will contribute mutual benefits to both parties and that the desired outcomes will materialize.
- *Developing Knowledge Resources.* The collective knowledge and skills resident in the ESD Network (including that in strategic partners) is the raw material for all the products and services that the Network will offer to Washington's educators, schools, and school districts. As the challenges facing the education system change, so will the knowledge required to address the challenges in an efficient and effective way. With responsibility assigned for the dynamic cultivation of the most critical knowledge of the day, the Network increases the likelihood that it will be prepared to deliver competent solutions to the most complex education problems.
- *Operate the ESD Network Development Institute.* Each member ESD will appoint a maximum of two high-performing staff to the Institute for two-year terms to coincide with the term of the chairperson of the superintendents. ESD superintendents, in their role as Network administrators, will prioritize and select the development projects to be completed by each cohort. The Institute will meet for a total of ten days per year, and during the first year will work under the guidance of a consultant

who will teach the principles and methodology of system design. Participants will apply their learning to the design and development of Network systems such as measurement, marketing, branding, and others of strategic import. There are several benefits to the Institute: through it, the ESD Network gains...

- the dedicated time of capable professionals to complete discrete projects (creating a virtual “staff” for the Network);
- the commitment of the next generation of leaders in the Washington ESD network;
- a mechanism for leadership development; and
- the creation of system design capacity, a new competency that can be converted to valuable product and service applications.

The Institute will begin in fiscal year 2008-09.

Figure 4 illustrates how the work of Managing Resources and Partner Relationships relates to other work components.

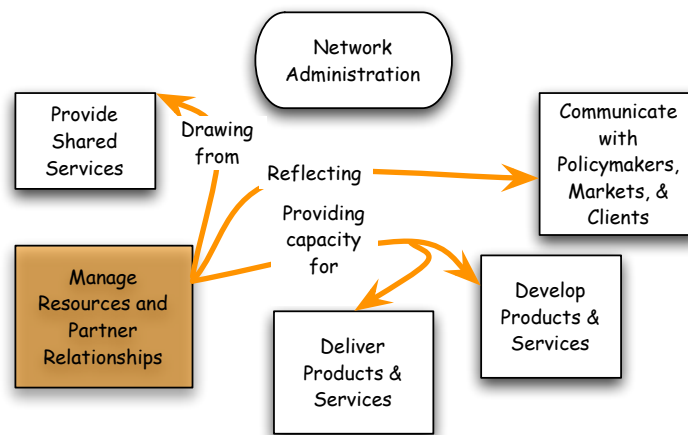


Figure 3: Role of Managing Resources and Partner Relationships

### Delivering Products and Services

The integrated statewide education service delivery system voluntarily comprised of the nine member ESDs actually “lives” in the members where products and services are delivered to the educators, schools, and districts of the State. A significant component of the design of the Network is agreement on three service types: *regional*, *assured*, and *statewide initiatives*.

Throughout the design process, it has been important to the planners to maintain and enhance the excellent regional service and relationships that have been the cornerstone of ESD success while adding the new statewide service dimension that is

the focus of the planning initiative. In order to clarify terms and assumptions, three kinds of services are defined and a typical mix that one might find at any given ESD is described.

A primary assumption is that all ESDs will provide a combination of three kinds of services:

- **Regional services.** These are the direct services that are unique to the service area and the local school districts that comprise it. Regional services are both the primary function for any one ESD and the source of innovation for the Network that includes all nine ESDs. (Note that several design specifications relate to this issue.) Regional services may vary considerably from one ESD to another in response to need and context in the service area.
- **Assured services.** These are services specific to the new statewide network. The “assurance” in this case comes from the Network, itself. An assured service is one made available to any and all school districts either directly by a given ESD or contracted through Network member ESDs. Assured services establish a service foundation available to any school district, and they are the default answer to the question, “What do ESDs provide?” The two broad categories of assured services are Teaching and Learning and District Operations. Teaching and Learning assured services will include professional development, Special Education, and certification. District Operations assured services will include the Washington School Information Procession Cooperative (WSIPC), finance, facilities, personnel, transportation, and safety. Mutually agreed-upon service standards will establish detailed definitions of assured services. Specifically, an assured service is one that:
  1. Is of value to all or almost all of the school districts in the state.
  2. Has sustainable funding.
  3. Has long-term duration.
  4. Is fundamental to the efficient, effective, and equitable functioning of school districts.
  5. Has an agreed-upon set of desired outcomes and a common assessment model.
  6. Is accessible to all school districts in the state through local ESDs.

7. May be, but is not required to be, defined in statute with core funding assigned to it.

Assured services carry important implications:

1. They are consistently evaluated for effectiveness, efficiency, excellence, and equity. Evaluation data can be aggregated from all ESDs for statewide system-level management analysis and continuous improvement. Assured services are the key to ESDs' being viewed as an essential part of the education infrastructure.
  2. They are subject to common operational guidelines agreed upon by the members of the ESD Network.
  3. Different ESDs can fulfill different parts of the value chain: service development, pilot testing, training, distribution, and so on. Variable compensation based on who does what in the value chain is a way to reward both local excellence and statewide capacity building.
  4. All ESDs either *have* or *have access to* comparable capacity to ensure equitable, high-quality delivery.
  5. The ESD Network is responsible for developing and managing capacity.
  6. Assured services are funded from a combination of sources, possibly including fee for service.
- **Statewide initiatives.** These are statewide products or services that emerge from a variety of sources—ESD staff, the legislature, OSPI, grantors, and school districts (with common needs). Statewide initiatives have to do with making a new product or service available to all school districts, and like assured services (where every school district can access a defined set of services through its local ESD), whole-state availability of statewide initiatives may also happen by inter-local agreement or other partnership arrangement among the nine member ESDs. Such initiatives require a conscious choice or filtering in order to be adopted into the statewide ESD service delivery system. Decision criteria include the following:
    1. Does it (the proposed service) make business sense?
    2. Does the Network have the capacity or expertise to deliver it with top-notch quality?
    3. Does it represent an innovation with potential value for school districts?
    4. Is it good for students?
    5. Is it needed statewide?

Defining three types of service consumed a substantial block of time in planning sessions. Conversations returned repeatedly to how critical the capacity of individual ESDs is to the success of the Network and the statewide service delivery system. The paragraph below reflects the ESD superintendents' understanding, developed through those conversations, regarding the relationship between assured services and each ESD's mission to serve the unique needs of its regional clients.

*The ability to provide jointly high quality assured services throughout the state depends upon each ESD's capacity. Capacity is a function of resource and expertise. The Network recognizes the importance of equitable capacity in each region and supports strategies to equalize regional capacity in order to provide high quality assured services. Assured services will be provided regionally through each ESD. They impact the majority of school districts in Washington, and they meet the test of cost/benefit analysis. The assured services are regularly assessed. At the same time ESDs are working more closely and effectively together to meet statewide service delivery needs, each ESD will continue its entrepreneurial efforts to provide unique services that meet the vision and goals of the strategic plan of AESD. New ventures of each ESD will be routinely shared in order to determine whether such a service may need to be delivered throughout the state.*

Figure 5 illustrates the interaction of the Delivering Products and Services work component with other work components of the ESD statewide network.

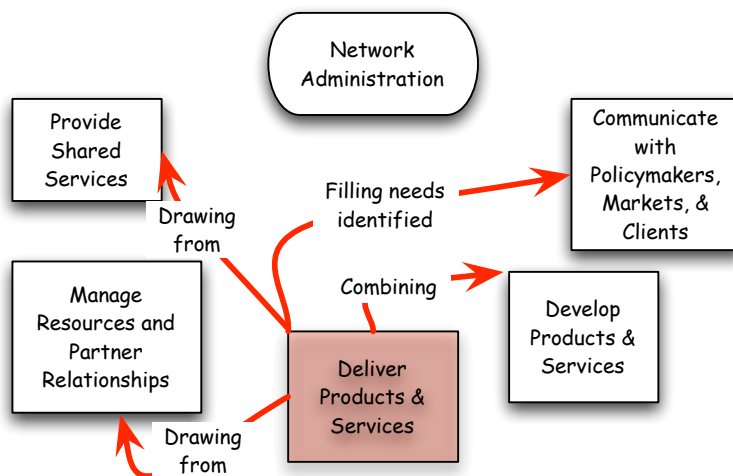


Figure 4: Role of Delivering Products and Services

### Developing Products and Services

Assured products and services, as noted in the previous section, fall into two broad categories, *Teaching and Learning* and *District Operations*. When a need for

joint product or service development arises, or when an innovative product or service that emerges from an individual ESD to become an assured service or statewide offering through the statewide delivery system, the Network will be able to manage it through the Developing Products and Services work element. As in all aspects of system operation, Network Administration (the Superintendents as a group) is responsible for establishing the decision criteria governing this work. Issues such as product ownership, joint funding, promotion, and testing will be explicitly defined project-by-project until standardized approaches can be articulated.

Figure 6 illustrates the critical connections between this work element and others.

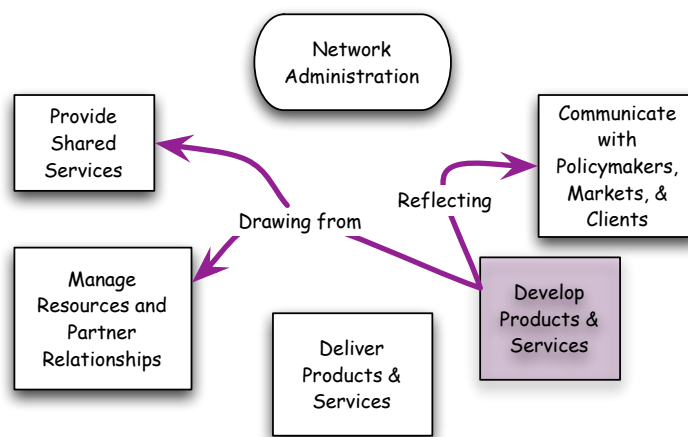


Figure 5: Role of Product and Service Development

### Communicating with Policymakers, Markets, and Clients

The ESD Network will be strengthened by its relationships with key influence groups: LEAs, both public and private, the State Legislature, the Office of the Governor, and OSPI, to name a few. The effectiveness with which the nine ESDs are able to establish a unified and coherent presence in these relationships is critical to the recognition of the Network as a legitimate and valid member of the State’s education system.

Activities managed through this work component will include aggregating market research with LEAs in the nine ESD regions to identify issues that demand the attention of policymakers. These issues will include both challenges confronting the schools and districts as well as the practical implications of implementing new and existing policies and rules. As an information conduit between school districts and the Legislature,

Governor’s Office, and OSPI, the ESD Network is unmatched because of the strength of relationships between the member organizations and the school districts in their regions. Information gained through interaction at the regional level and aggregated to the state level benefits all three parties: policymakers setting direction for the State’s education system, LEAs carrying out policy, and ESDs providing support. Through this work element the ESD Network will influence policy and practice in a positive way.

ESD staff, legislative liaisons, and the newly developed Washington State Education Coordinating Counsel (WSECC) will carry out the work of this element. Superintendents, in their role as Network Administration, will establish the structures and processes by which communication will occur.

Figure 7 illustrates the interactions between this work element and others.

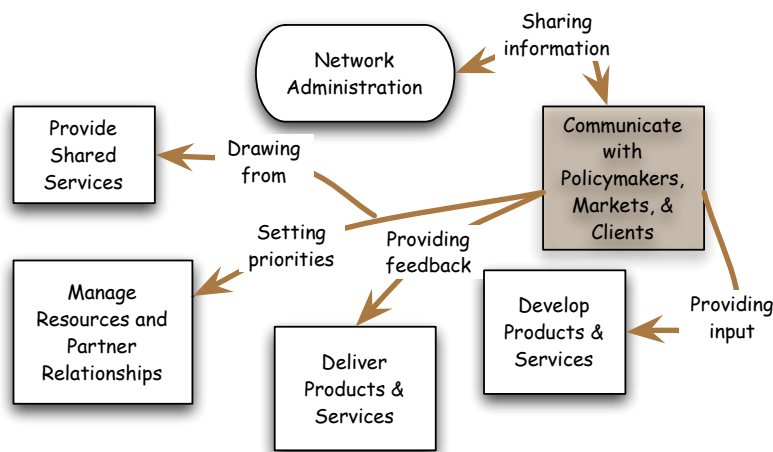


Figure 6: Role of Communication with Policymakers, Markets, and Clients

## Key Processes

A design progresses iteratively...with successive cycles of increasing detail as the planners gain clearer visions of what they want to create and propose. Several key processes are still under development and will be refined with more clarity as the design is implemented and the Network is faced with real situations that demand interpretation and resolution within the collective frame of reference. Even if process details cannot be defined at the moment, it is important to record the current state of thinking about them. It is likely that some of these processes will be assigned to the *ESD Network Development Institute* for definition.

## Funding

- A business plan for any statewide initiative will specify how revenue and costs are to be shared among the nine member ESDs. The plan will address unique ESD member circumstances, as needed.
- A balance between state allocation and fee-for-service is preferred to establish sustainable funding for statewide services.
- A portion of revenue for statewide services may be set aside to support the development and management of the statewide network.
- A designated ESD may be identified to serve as fiscal agent for a Network project.

Figure 8 shows how funds are expected to flow through the Network to schools and districts in the typical case.

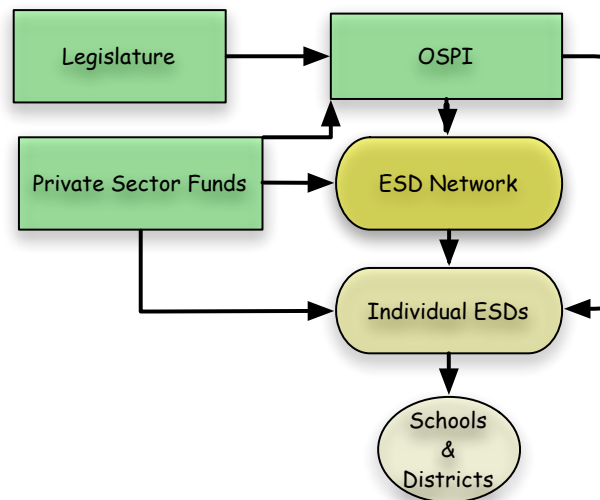


Figure 7: Typical Flow of Various Funding Streams Through the Network

Not all Network initiatives will be instigated from external sources, however. As new products and services are developed from within the member ESDs, a second scenario can be envisioned. See Figure 9, below, which illustrates only one way that products and services developed at the regional level might migrate to become either assured services or statewide initiatives. The diagram reinforces that the cornerstone of the Network is anchored in the regional services offered by the member ESDs, that assured services are essential building blocks mortared by the collective strength of the Network, and that statewide initiatives (likely few in number at any given time, and replaced as statewide priorities change) provide needed flexibility to the service structure as a whole.

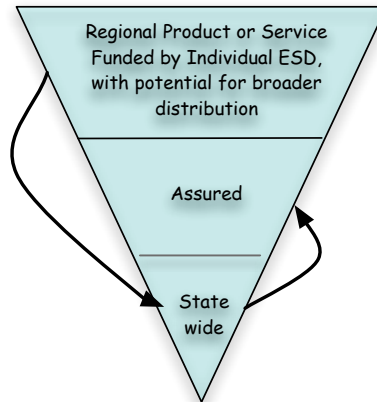


Figure 8: One Regionally Developed Service Evolution Scenario

### **Access to the Statewide Network**

- Primary access will come first through the Chair of the ESD Superintendents (or the assistant), who will screen requests based on strategic priorities and degree of match to the mission of ESDs and the ESD Network.
- The Superintendents will apply mutually developed decision criteria to select successful proposals.

### **Accountability, Measurement, and Improvement**

- The Network will have a set of mutually agreed-upon performance criteria, such as efficiency, effectiveness, excellence, and equity. These criteria will be the foundation of a common measurement system.
- Specific performance measures within the criteria will be defined.
- Common measures will be developed for assured services and statewide initiatives.
- The Superintendents will periodically review performance measures and agree on improvements to products and services delivered statewide.
- Desired outcomes will be identified early in the product or service planning process in order to create a results-based evaluation.
- Formalized approaches to program/initiative evaluation will complement continuous feedback from users.

### **Promotion**

- Effective branding and marketing will make it clear who is delivering the results, innovating new products and services, and making a difference. This is a shared service to be provided by the ESD Network.
- The Network will influence organizations that can generate statewide initiatives by co-development.
- The ESDs will strengthen their value contribution and image by developing and promoting high quality programs and services in both Teaching and Learning and

District Operations. First-generation ESD Network strength lay in supporting District Operations, but second-generation strength will also lie in supporting Teaching and Learning.

### ***Innovation and Planning***

- All ESD Network members can innovate, contribute, and provide value to the wider statewide system. A project that excites and energizes the ESD that is providing the service is an important consideration.
- The ESD Network members will leverage their close relationship with districts to stay “ahead of the curve” in terms of identifying needs and developing innovative solutions that ultimately shape state policy and position the originating ESD to be the statewide provider.
- The ESD Network will conduct periodic planning sessions (at least annually) to identify needs of districts statewide.
- The ESD Network will capitalize on the regional innovation occurring in individual ESDs.

### ***AESD Governance***

A clarification of the governance structure is an important element of this AESD Systems review. The AESD Network is a voluntary affiliation of the nine ESDs with the purpose of creating a more effective statewide system within specified areas of service. The following diagram provides a visual representation of the governance relationships within that network between the nine ESD Boards, the nine ESD Superintendents, the ESD Superintendents Association, and the AESD Executive Board. In this diagram the green arrows represent lines of coordination, information sharing, and advocacy which are central to the purpose of AESD. The purple lines represent lines of authority and directing of work. These arrows demonstrate a unique relationship between the ESD Superintendents and the AESD Executive Board. Since the Executive Board has no authority to direct the work of the superintendents, the work of the Association is conducted by the superintendents at the direction of their local ESD Board acting upon the recommendation of the AESD Executive Board.

# The AESD Network

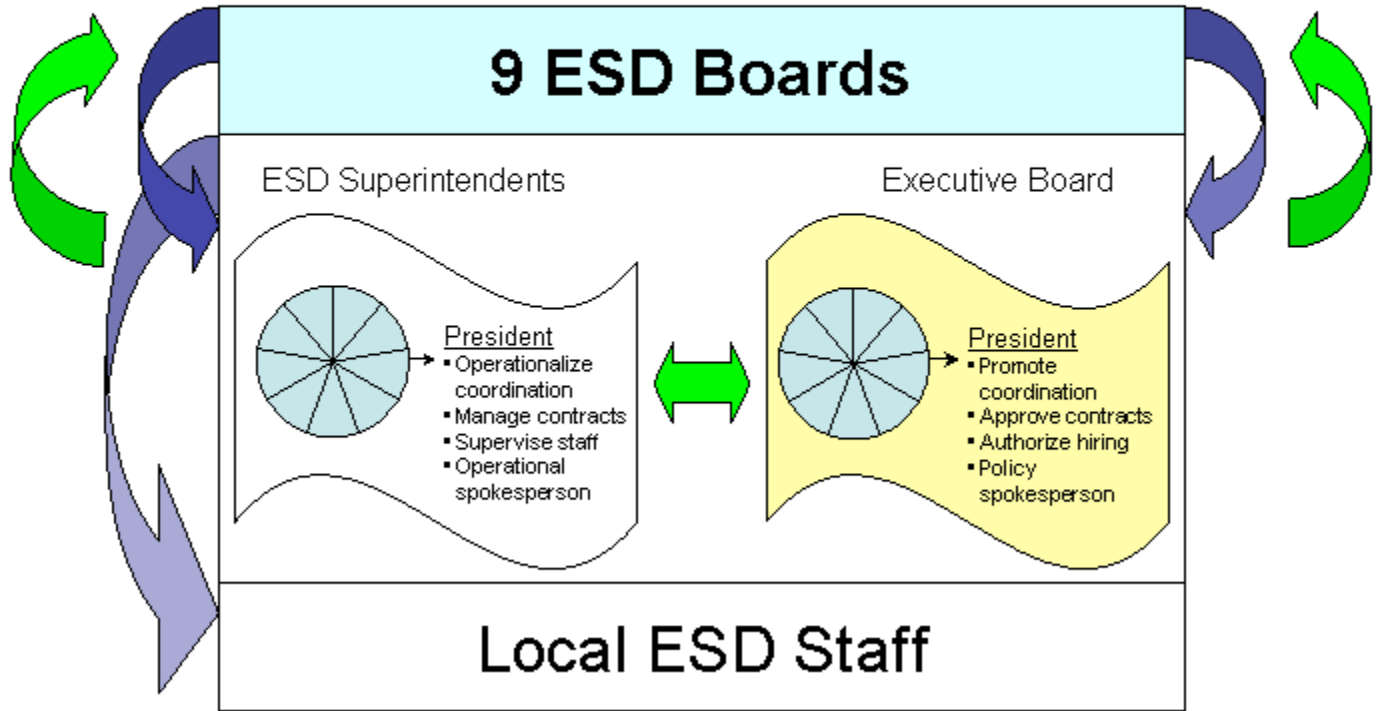


Figure 9: AESD Network Governance Relationship Diagram

This diagram is consistent with the purpose of the AESD as expressed in its Mission Statement:

*The purpose of the Association of Educational Service Districts shall be to provide communication and coordination among ESD Boards for educational advocacy; for fostering leadership and partnerships; and for collaboration within the educational community.*

The following table provides more detailed information about the current roles and responsibilities of the Executive Board and the ESD Superintendents' Association in conducting the work of the AESD. It is based on the duties outlined in the AESD Constitution as well as current practice. Subsequent revisions to either the AESD or ESD Superintendents' Association constitutions could alter the roles and relationships defined in the table.

<b>AESD Executive Board With Leadership from its President</b>	<b>Superintendents Association With Leadership from its President</b>
AESD Executive Board Duties and Powers are assigned in Section 3 of its <i>Constitution</i> .	Related operational responsibilities are assigned to the ESD Superintendents.
B. Shall meet at the call of the President or on its own motion or upon the request of any three of its members.	Shall work with the Executive Board President and the Secretary to prepare agendas and related materials for all meetings called by the President.
C. Prepare the Association's annual budget for membership approval and to control expenditures.	Develop budget documents in consultation Exec. Bd. President and AESD Treasurer.
E. Approve contract for an executive secretary, a treasurer and such additional personnel as it deems necessary.	Administer and direct the day to day work of staff contracted by the AESD.
F. Authorize official publications of the Association.	Oversee the production of any publications authorized by the Association.
G. Enter into contracts.	Identify contractual needs and bring recommendations to the AESD Exec. Board. Administer the satisfactory completion of work in accordance with the terms of the contract.
H. Submitting reports to the State Superintendent of Public Instruction and/or the State Board of Education, as may be required.	Compile information and create any reports required by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction and/or the State Board of Education.
I. Provide for the payment of travel and subsistence expenses incurred by members, officers and appointees of the Association while engaged in the performance of duties in accordance with the law.	Work with the treasurer to process payments approved by the AESD Executive Board.
J. Study all legislative proposals and all initiatives and referendums affecting education as they relate to the common schools, shall report their recommendations to the membership at the annual meeting and, when instructed by the Association, shall initiate legislation.	Work with staff to develop and present legislative proposals. Develop and implement strategies to work with partner agencies, legislators, and policymakers in support of the Association's legislative priorities.
K. Work with committees of other organizations.	Serve as the ongoing liaison with other organizations and committees as appropriate.
L. Send a written report of the Executive Board's legislative recommendations to the general membership at least twenty days prior to the meeting scheduled during the WSSDA annual meeting.	Develop the annual written report in consultation with the AESD Executive Board President and arrange for distribution to the AESD membership prior to the WSSDA annual meeting.
<b>Additional AESD Executive Board roles and responsibilities.</b>	<b>Superintendents' role with additional Executive Board roles and responsibilities.</b>
1. Identify priorities for the AESD Strategic Plan. Review and approve the action plan submitted by the superintendents.	Work with the AESD Executive Board in identifying AESD Strategic Plan priorities and then create action plan for Executive Board review and approval.
2. Monitor the progress of the AESD Strategic Plan.	Provide periodic updates to the AESD Executive Board on the implementation of the AESD Strategic Plan.
3. Provide Strategic Plan reports to the AESD membership.	Work with the AESD Executive Board President to prepare Strategic Plan reports for the AESD membership.

Table 1: AESD Executive Board and Superintendents Roles and Responsibilities

## Implementation Plans

The nature of implementation planning is, like the design process, iterative. The scope of the design reaches beyond the ability of the designers to implement it in its entirety at once. Instead, the implementation will occur through successive approximations, beginning in the fall of 2008. In their May, 2008, meeting the ESD Superintendents began to draw their design work to a close by identifying a set of eleven key elements that represented to them the most significant aspects of the design of Washington’s statewide education service delivery system. They will use those elements as the basis of implementation planning to assure that the good ideas in the design become reality.

The first step in developing the implementation plan was to make explicit the collective idealized vision of the Superintendents as they considered the key elements of the design. That vision appears in the table below.

<b><i>Target Element of the Statewide System</i></b>	<b><i>Idealized State (“To have...”)</i></b>
1. Organization Structure	A clearly defined Network of 9 ESDs, including hired executive support services and sufficient ESD staff dedicated to support and develop the statewide educational delivery system of choice
2. Governance	A governance structure that retains the authority of ESD boards to (1) each hire superintendent to meet or make progress toward defined goals, (2) monitor statewide system performance, and (3) task AESD board members with advocacy and information
3. Point of Contact	Paid staff assisting the president of the Superintendents to serve as the single point of contact
4. Delivery System of Choice	Function as a collaborative, effective group with the capacity and expertise to be the educational delivery system of choice.
5. Network Capacity Funding	Consistent and reliable funding to develop ESD members’ capacity to provide the assured services in every ESD <sup>2</sup>
6. Measurement System	An implemented system that measures the effect of statewide initiatives, programs, products, and services
7. “System” in Mind	All ESD leaders embrace responsibility for the health of the statewide system as well as their own ESDs
8. Statewide Delivery	Disciplined and predictable structures and processes are implemented for delivering statewide initiatives
9. “Value-Added” Story	An evidence-based performance record is created in all ESDs which documents the value of both District Operations and Teaching & Learning

<sup>2</sup> The decision criteria for allocating funding (to end users and reinvested into the network for capacity building) will be developed by the Superintendents in their Network Administration role.

<b>Target Element of the Statewide System</b>	<b>Idealized State (“To have...”)</b>
10. Network Development	Appointed staff with dedicated time committed to serve and develop the ESD Network (including, but not limited to the <i>ESD Network Development Institute</i> )
11. Regional Knowledge	A system is implemented for identifying regional needs and leveraging regionally-developed programs and services into statewide initiatives

Table 2: Idealized State of Key Design Elements

After agreeing on what would constitute “full implementation” of the key design elements, the Superintendents turned their attention to the implementation goals for the upcoming year. They conceptualized their intentions as a set of interconnected goals represented in Figure 11 below. Specific outcomes are associated with the following priorities:

- In *governance*, the goal is to have clarification of the relationship between ESD Superintendents and AESD.
- In *Network development*, the goal is to create the *ESD Network Development Institute* (ENDI).
- In *measurement*, the goal is to have a measurement framework that encompasses the Math initiative and the data from escWorks.
- In *organization structure*, the goal is to have a Network business plan, job description for executive assistance, and funding for Network development. Include creation of a single point of contact for the Network and its statewide education service delivery system.
- In *Network capacity funding*, the goal is to have guidelines for allocating funds in the Network in such a way that the capacity of the Network is increased.
- In “*value-added story*,” the goal is to capture two stories—one for the value added by the Math initiative (especially helpful in communicating with the legislature) and one for regional innovation leveraged statewide.

It is worth noting the high degree of interaction among the elements of the design. In a system, action on one element can produce an effect on a second element even though no direct action was taken on the second. For instance, establishing the ESD Network Development Institute should also produce indirect positive effects on “System” in Mind and Organization Structure. Viewing all the design elements in one diagram reinforces their inter-relatedness and increases the likelihood that Network leaders will consider leverage and ripple effects as they enact the design.

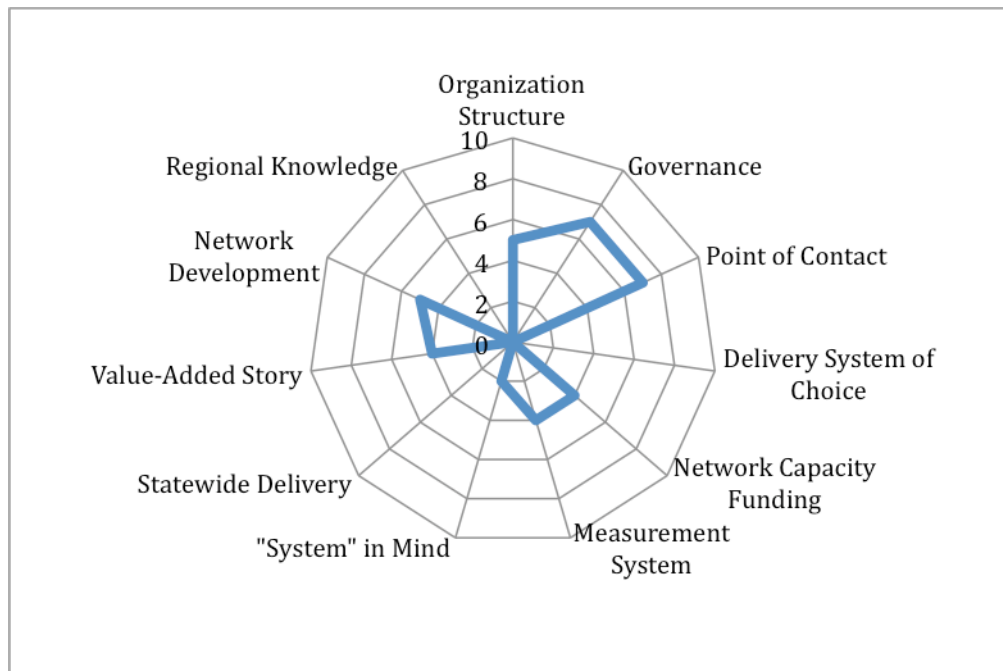


Figure 10: Diagram of Focus for First Approximation of the Network Design

## Conclusion and Commencement

By July 1, 2008, the first phase of the planning initiative that has produced the ESD Network and service delivery system design will be complete and the final consultants' report will be received. As soon as August, 2008, the ESD Superintendents will create the *ESD Network Development Institute* and finalize the work plan for the first approximation of their Network design. These are encouraging signs that the design has—as was intended—sparked the excitement and commitment of the ESDs. Although no one is deluded to think that the hard work is behind and the easy ahead, the Superintendents now have the advantage of more clearly seeing the desired ESD future. In the same year that Washington's ESDs will celebrate their 40<sup>th</sup> birthday, their leaders have borne a vision of the next ESD generation. It is a vision of competence, of individual and collective action, of volition, and of commitment to the greater good of service to Washington State's education system. When ESDs celebrate their 80<sup>th</sup> birthday, 2008 will be marked on the timeline as a turning point, a time when forward-thinking ESD leaders raised the bar and redefined the direction of education service for decades to come.

# APPENDICES

## Appendix A: A Personal Note

The consultants working with the ESD Superintendents on this important planning initiative want to express our thanks in so many ways...

- for the tenacity with which the you stuck with the sometimes laborious details of the design until every voice was heard and every viewpoint was understood;
- for the generosity of the AESD Executive Board in its financial and philosophical support of the project;
- for the leadership talents and skills in the members of the group that helped to move through difficult points and produce creative solutions;
- for the gracious and capable support of staff at the various ESDs where we met;
- for the kindness extended to us each and every time we visited your state; and
- for the gift of new friendships and of old friendships renewed through new work.

We would also like to recognize the ESD leadership whose vision and hard work was instrumental in the successful completion of this project.

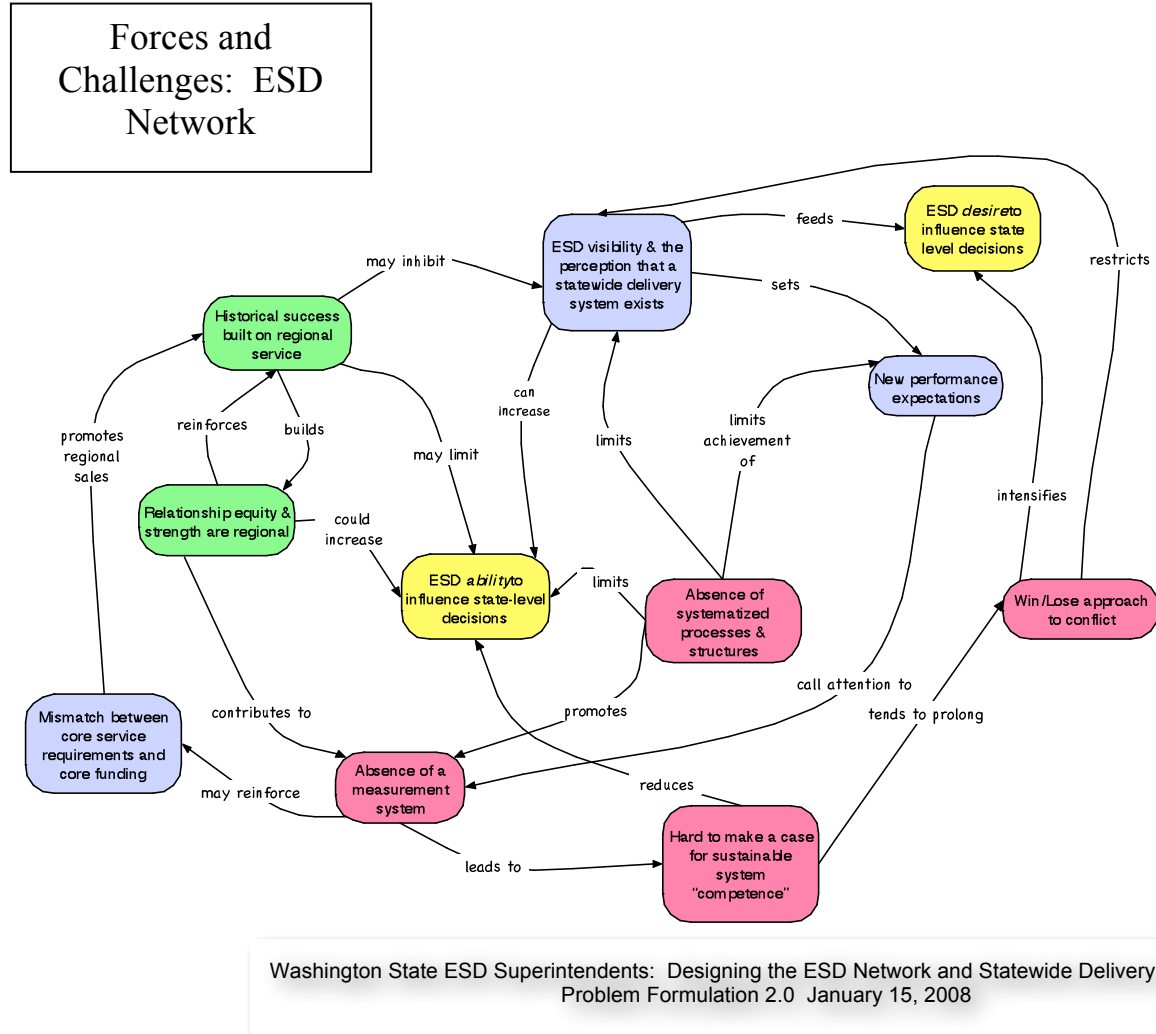
### ESD Leadership for the Design Project

ESD	AESD Exec. Bd. Representative	ESD Superintendent
101	Robert Bauer	Terry Munther & Mike Dunn
105	Maggie Perez	Jane Gutting
112	Bill Baumann	Twyla Barnes
113	Howard Coble	Bill Keim
114	Jean Wasson & Katie Proteau	Walt Bigby
121	Ken Seng & Charlie Staadecker	Monte Bridges
123	Brad Gingerich	Bruce Hawkins
171	Randy Johnson & Larry MacGuffie	Rich McBride
189	Gordon Griggs & Merle Kirkley	Jerry Jenkins

We hope to have contributed in a positive way to the next generation of ESDs, and we thank you for the opportunity to serve.

Dr. Susan Leddick  
Ms. Doreen Marvin  
Dr. Trace Pickering  
June 27, 2008

## Appendix B: Forces and Challenges



The figure above represents the set of interconnected forces and challenges facing the Washington ESDs as they design a unified system for statewide service delivery. The diagram can be read from any starting point by following the arrows and noting the nature of the relationships among the elements. Color-coding draws attention to certain groupings:

- Red – behaviors of the current system that make it more difficult to create the statewide system.
- Green – positive in the regional context, but potentially negative in the statewide context.
- Yellow – the present difference between desire and ability.
- Blue – elements in the regulatory and political environment.

To distill the diagram to its essence, we could say that the situation is characterized by increasing expectations, visibility, and desire for a larger role and greater influence in statewide service delivery at the same time that institutional success has come historically from regional service delivery. Success in one arena may actually limit success in the other. The ability to play the statewide game effectively is also hampered by a tendency to approach conflict as win-lose and the absence of processes and measures to guide and evaluate state-level cooperative work among the ESDs.