The AEA uses an ongoing process to determine the needs of schools and school districts. Services are developed based upon the needs of schools and school districts. The AEA has evidenced support for the AEA Standards and the criteria.

Written Documentation:

- Evidence from the agency’s electronic database:
  1. District technology reviews are conducted by request (e.g., Harlan Tech Review 2003); agency generated technology audit reports used to make technology decisions in districts.
  2. The Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale (ECERS) is used to assess early childhood programs in seven environmental criteria. The results are used to design program improvement goals.
  3. School Improvement consultants and curriculum consultants are in constant communication with teachers and administrators. For example, agency professionals are in buildings on a weekly basis and consultants work in the classrooms to model and assist teachers.
  4. The agency assists districts in the development of standards and benchmarks (e.g., Woodbine).
  5. Agency SIPD consultants assist schools in developing action plans (e.g., Harlan Action Plan).
  6. Agency provides for collaborative scoring for the SCASS assessment.

- Evidence from the agency Annual Progress Report (APR):
  1. “Targeting School and Student Needs” section (Appendix O)
  2. The agency employs eight School Improvement/Professional Development (SIPD) consultants for 33 districts.
  3. Baseline and trend line data are being used to respond to specific learning needs in local school improvement plans.
  4. Staff development programs are established based on needs identified in school improvement plans of each district and through formal needs assessments.
  5. Ninety-five percent of respondents to the agency survey indicated that professional development provided through the agency supported their building and district goals in reading. Ninety-six percent of respondents indicated the same support in math and 100% in science.

- Agency website includes links to scientifically based materials.

- According to the Agency Self-Study, the agency’s gifted education web page was developed to provide professional and student resources for gifted teachers/students/parents.
• The media center provides access to a variety of resources/materials by phone, online, and van delivery, including:
  1. Parent Professional Resources
  2. Every Child Reads Collection
  3. Guided Reading Kits
  4. A large and diverse collection of student literature
  5. Statewide subscriptions (e.g., Iowa AEA On-Line)

• A variety of resources (instructional and professional) are provided for teachers and students to support reading goal group initiatives. These include:
  1. Reading consultants
  2. Second Chance Reading
  3. Reading Recovery
  4. Reading Institute

• E2T2 Project

Internal Interviews:
• The agency is very service-oriented. Needs are identified through Services Agreements and through the SIPD consultants. Assistance can be for an individual teacher or more organized for a group.

• Agency staff assists LEAs with development of CSIPs, preparing for site visits, working with School Improvement Advisory Committees (SIACs), and conducting community conversations.

• “Everything we do revolves around data.” Sidney, for example, has been a pilot site. Their concern has been low ITBS scores. In response, the agency provides the district with continual, weekly professional development for problem solving and use the theory, demonstration, and practice model. This helps the teachers “talk the same talk” and share a common understanding.

• Agency Goal 4 is based on Iowa Youth Survey (IYS) information and dropout data. Agency staff members are using the “constructs” from the IYS to disaggregate the data by district. The agency is “working very diligently” at using tools like the IYS to guide districts in determining interventions and is trying to match school needs with research-based interventions.

• Item analysis of ITBS/ITED achievement scores helps determine what is offered in Math and Reading Institutes. Analysis is ongoing throughout the process—always driving what happens next.

• Analysis of achievement scores helps determine what is offered through E2T2; it is a data driven process. Participating teachers are asked what support they need and this information is used in planning the next training sessions.

• Examples of programs provided by the agency in response to school/district needs include the following:
  1. RESPECT training
  2. Every Student Counts
  3. Bridges
  4. FAMILY (a program funded via Empowerment that helps families of birth to 5 year-olds access resources)
• The agency employs a systems approach to the use of data, which includes several layers of needs assessment:
  1. Annual Joint Service Agreements. The agency is piloting a new extensive process this year that places the focus on the district data and helps to align services to the district needs.
  2. Each district is assigned a SIPD (School Improvement Professional Development) consultant to assist the district with examination and analysis of district data. The SIPD consultants meet with their assigned districts at least bi-weekly.
  3. Content area consultants are assigned to specific schools to provide services for the next year based on needs identified in the spring
  4. Regularly scheduled meetings for superintendents, media specialists, technology coordinators, and Superintendents’ Advisory group
  5. Associate directors meet with superintendents on a regular basis
  6. Assessment Solutions is used by the agency. This tool uses Excel to analyze data in a user-friendly format and is used by 26 of 31 districts. Assessment Solutions makes review/analysis of data easier and more consistent throughout the LEAs served by the agency.
  7. The agency continually uses surveys to assess district needs. Examples include the use of data from the State AEA Customer Survey, the Iowa Youth Survey, and Quick Topic—a discussion board that teachers can respond to through an online survey.

• The systems approach for use of data allows the agency to be more responsive to the districts' needs. Examples include:
  1. The identified need for DVD purchases (data show that 82% of the schools have used DVDs from the agency)
  2. PWIM posters
  3. DIBELS assessment in a district helped determine what will be done with needs of the 2nd grade kids
  4. ELL needs have been met through media purchases of native language materials
  5. Non-fiction books for reading efforts

• Services to meet the district needs are increasingly developed and delivered in partnership with LEAs and the agency.

• The agency supports three professional development consortia. Each consortium includes four to five districts and has a leadership team made up of representatives across the participating school districts. These leadership teams analyze implementation data to inform professional development.

• The science team discussed the support of SCASS and the associated collaborative scoring opportunity on three days in June, with all participating districts invited.

External Interviews:
• The SEEDS consortium staff development process has helped with LEA CSIPs. Interviewees noted that although they may be in a consortium, the agency makes sure that individual district needs are being met. “The support is given to the teachers and has been absolutely wonderful.”

• The agency crisis team has been “extremely helpful.” “All it takes is a phone call and they’re right there.”
Math consultants help teachers fulfill math needs for their classes (e.g., helped set up a math camp and also taught at the camp).

LEAs have service agreements with the agency. Agency staff help LEAs look at their data using a systematic approach to determine needs and plan professional development.

The agency initiated conversations with district leadership teams to plan professional development for the following year. The agency provided a way to focus on the data for each building, review LEA needs, and improve professional development.

LEAs work with the agency to review data and determine and meet needs. Examples included: introduction and updating of the Kurzweil system; hired Randy Sprick to provide training in Safe and Civil Schools; located funding for an LEA to implement the Reconnecting Youth curriculum; provided support for expanding a bullying program.

The agency has assisted LEAs to address the needs of at-risk students. Examples of supports provided by interviewees include:
1. Providing grant funding to one LEA for a liaison who acts as a substance abuse counselor in the school and its alternative high school program
2. Providing drug and alcohol programs in conjunction with the juvenile court system
3. Providing a “high-risk program” in conjunction with an area hospital
4. Assisting a community to start a mentoring program that pairs high school students who are at risk with adults and younger children who are at risk with high school students
5. Social work services for schools through the School-based Interventionist program

Agency staff has helped interpret data received from the Iowa Youth Survey.

The agency consultants work directly with LEA teachers. For example, the agency provided a class and worked with high school faculty on Ruby Payne’s Framework for Understanding Poverty.

“We are blessed at our district because of all of the services the agency has provided.” The agency conducts needs assessments, is quick in responding with the results, and provides staff to support the schools. The special education consultants support the SPED teaching staff and are available for staffings. The content specific consultants help LEAs stay current in content areas. The agency facilitates the Cooperative Curriculum Project and assists with cyclical revision of standards and benchmarks. ICAM and other assessments are provided through the agency.

“The media library is wonderful.” The agency does a good job of keeping us aware of what’s available.

The end-of-year LEA reports provided by the agency at help LEAs show their boards what services the agency has provided throughout the year.

The agency’s special education staff organizes re-evaluations and schedules staffings.

The agency helps school districts connect with other districts in the area and state in ways that other states can’t. Agency staff members are good at saying “you should talk to this district who’s doing whatever,” so LEAs can learn things that are showing success in other districts.
• The agency “spends a lot of money bringing in training and information.” LEAs have a trustful relationship with the agency and know they can depend on the things that are provided.

• Agency reading consultants have assisted districts in gathering and analyzing data related to reading to determine professional development needs for the coming year.

• For districts participating in the Science Writing Heuristic project, the science and a reading consultant strive to be in each building twice a month, observing and providing daylong workshops. Student data are collected from pre- and post-tests and sent to collaborating colleges.

• Districts appreciate having a voice in decisions related to agency services provided. “They already know what we need, but they let us think it is our own decision.”

• After needs have been determined, the agency realigns staff to meet these needs. Interviewees stated the agency tries to find additional staff to accommodate needs.

• In order to meet the needs of new teachers, the agency provides mentoring professional development for LEAs.

• Evaluations after professional development opportunities include attitudinal and/or content questions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criterion 2: AEA services are data-based. 281-IAC 72.9(1) (b) &amp; (e)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• The AEA develops services that are based upon the findings from agency-wide data sources needs assessment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Services respond to legislative mandate.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The AEA has evidenced support for the AEA Standards and the criteria.

Written Documentation:

• The agency reviews LEA data sources such as:
  1. Comprehensive School Improvement Plans (CSIPs)
  2. APRs
  3. Comprehensive School Improvement Site Visit Reports
  4. Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) data

• The AEA is currently revising and piloting its revised Joint Service Agreement process, which includes:
  1. Review of local data and identification of needs by AEA and LEA leadership
  2. Design of a plan
  3. Detailing the commitment of time and resources to meet identified needs
  4. Progress review and plan revision

• Evidence from the agency’s Self-Study:
  1. The agency uses information from schools regarding professional development needs and coordinates assignment of agency staff to professional development activities. A document (i.e., PD Narrative Summary) is developed that describes professional development activities in each LEA.
  2. The agency formally surveys districts on a variety of topics.
  3. Scientifically research based materials are available as links from agency web pages such as the E2T2 site and the Mathematics site.
4. The agency has created a database (Electronic Document Management System) of agency services and their various interrelationships to goal and standard areas. Agency professionals enter information related to their work activities. This database can be used to access descriptions of agency services associated with any combination of goals and standards. The administrative staff reviews the database annually.

5. Agency assessment consultants systematically review area-wide student achievement data and provide data summaries and analysis to both the agency and LEAs. The entire administrative group also reviews agency-wide student achievement data, both globally and by specific subgroups. These data are summarized longitudinally and inferences about progress are made. These results assist the agency in both revising action plans in goal and standard areas and also inform decisions about resource allocation within the agency.

- Agency wide goals were developed in the fall 2001. Data used to formulate these goals included: a) local school comprehensive plans; b) local school annual progress reports; c) joint service agreements between local schools and the AEA that prioritize school improvement services; and d) state student achievement indicator data.

- An analysis of district career development plans and the specific teacher, school, and school district needs addressed by the agencies are provided in the APR.

- Evidence from the agency's electronic database:
  1. Iowa AEA Online provides access to high quality licensed databases from which current, authoritative information and research may be obtained. Analysis has been done to determine usage statistics.
  2. The agency provides a technology audit team to conduct District Technology Reviews when requested by a district. LEA administrators, teachers, staff, and students are interviewed and a summary report completed. The report is used to inform decisions regarding technology needs related to professional development, curriculum, network equipment, and students. Suggestions for districts are based upon best practices and research.
  3. The agency has collaborated to develop a system for LEAs to use to analyze district/school wide assessment data. LEAs can access multiple templates for in-depth data analysis along with training sessions and customization.
  4. Early Childhood Educational Readiness Survey (ECERS) is an assessment instrument available to all schools. Agency personnel administer the instrument and assist teachers and administrators in designing program improvement goals.

Internal Interviews:
- The agency assessment consultant analyzes LEA Adequate Yearly Progress data to help districts move beyond "met or not met." Information from this process is used to generate discussions between SIPD consultants and LEAs.

- Assessment Solutions system allows analysis of ITBS/ITED data in a variety of ways. All SIPD consultants and one contact person from each LEA that purchases the system have been trained in its use. The agency has access to data from all LEAs.

- A survey of media specialists is completed; media purchases are based on identified needs (e.g., additional English Language Learner [ELL] and non-fiction materials).

- An online survey system is used for a variety of purposes. For example, those who have signed to participate in a professional development offering complete a survey regarding
their job responsibilities, etc. These data are used to inform professional development delivery.

- Consultative services are provided regarding Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 issues as requested (e.g., facilities audit to identify accessibility issues). The agency makes use of Iowa Communications Network (ICN) sessions to facilitate understanding of new Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requirements.

- The agency contracts with AEA 11 to provide access to online trainings (e.g., Child Abuse) and provides Level 1 Investigator training and a Paraprofessional Certification program.

- Data based services are addressed through the Joint Service Agreements with the districts. The building reps are in the buildings regularly and help identify areas of need. Internal cross-divisional teams gather information and help with the feedback loop. The agency is also in the process of designing a community stakeholder group for input into the agency’s work.

- Building rep work is based on the needs of the building. The role of each rep is different; some serve a building while some serve a whole district. The building rep works directly with the district leadership teams; communication is constant. This communication is used to inform agency cross-divisional teams (e.g., mathematics) and SIPD consultants.

- The agency does technology reviews, which give the agency a good picture of district needs. The reviews help consultants plan for what needs to happen within a district.

- Every school has an assigned SIPD who is involved in many ways with the district. This person takes back information to the agency and planning occurs based on identified needs. Other agency consultants understand the importance of keeping the SIPD for a district informed of what they identify as needs in a district and reported frequent communication.

- The agency responds to the requirements of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) through participation in state initiatives such as:
  1. Reading First
  2. Every Child Reads
  3. Summer Teacher Academies
  4. Every Learner Inquires
  5. Every Student Counts

- English Language Learner (ELL) consultants work with districts in development of plans for identification, programming, staffing, and exit criteria.

- The agency recently conducted a survey of teachers of science regarding resources, assessments, instructional strategies, and other materials used in classrooms. These data will be used to determine actions for the summer curriculum project and Every Learner Inquires initiative.

- The agency tracks Early ACCESS data regarding referral sources, placements, meeting timelines, and getting information back to referring parties.

- The agency has been sharing the 4th, 8th, and 11th grade proficiency data for students with IEPs internally and discussing why the agency’s overall proficiency levels are 7-8% lower than other Area Education Agencies. The agency has started to also take the data
to the LEAs. This data will be included in the revised joint service agreements for every district.

- The skill sets agency staff members need in order to best serve districts is determined by data from district discussions. The agency has also revamped interview questions to ask whether interviewees have the skill sets needed by the district that will be served.

- The agency has looked at its percentage on the three components of the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) SPP indicator and is concerned about the steps it will need to take in order to meet the 6 year target for that indicator. There is pressure to switch some students to less restrictive environments and discussions on how to help staff work with this. This change will require extensive professional development including but not limited to: Consultative Teaching Training; production of a Consultative Teaching Model CD (modeled after an AEA 11 CD) that will be used to train individuals in LEAs. Joint Service Agreement discussions will include how LRE can be improved in the district.

**External Interviews:**

- Formative assessments are conducted after each professional development offering so the agency can identify the needs for the next professional development session. A professional development survey is completed at the end of each year to help the agency plan for the next year.

- LEAs review data with their SIPD consultant. The SIPD consultant help LEAs understand and present the data to local teams in a way that is understandable. The agency is not waiting until an LEA is on the watch list – they are proactive by suggesting ways to improve student achievement.

- Agency consultants visit classrooms to help teachers improve instruction.

- The “Rauhauser” method has been used as a systematic way to look at data. This was before the “big data push”. It provided LEAs a means to document and measure many things, including school climate, and have a systematic way to monitor those things. Agency staff helped identify problems, find research, and choose strategies.

- The Iowa Youth survey results are given to each district. Agency staff members study this information with LEA staffs.

- Each school district has an assigned agency consultant who attends local SIAC and leadership team meetings. The consultant helps LEAs develop goals through the school improvement process, brings information from the state, and helps the LEAs work through increasing demands (e.g., increased emphasis on assessment).

- Agency staff members help guide LEAs through the CSIP process and stay focused on data.

- The agency provides a community needs assessment for LEA use.

- Agency staff members provide data showing how our school compares to others and to the state.

- The agency supports LEA special education needs. Agency and LEA staffs write a joint service agreement. Interviewees stated, “They’re very accommodating.”
• The agency supports the use of Assessment Solutions software that allows easy access to a district’s individual student achievement data. This software allows for the tracking of cohort groups and gives gap information for sub-group populations.

• Professional development is designed and provided through the collaborative work between agency consultants and district leadership teams.

**Criterion 3: AEA services are research-driven. 281-IAC 72.9(1)(b)**
- The AEA develops services that are supported by data from internal or external research that meets rigorous research standards.
- There is evidence of alignment between the research and the actual services delivered.

The AEA has evidenced support for the AEA Standards and the criteria.

**Written Documentation:**
- The agency’s database includes numerous professional development agendas that contained reference to training of research driven strategies while building capacity through implementation of the Iowa Professional Development Model. Examples included Polya’s Problem Solving system, Science Writing Heuristic, and Science Inquiry. These professional development sessions were held at various districts throughout the area.

- The agency website includes links to sites with scientifically research-based materials, including E2T2, mathematics, and reading.

- Several examples of research-based programs provided through the agency were included in the Self-Study. These included the following:
  1. Statewide Reading Team and support for Reading First Schools
  2. Statewide Math Team for Every Student Counts
  3. Peer Assisted Learning Strategies
  4. Science Writing Heuristic project
  5. Inquiry based science kits
  6. Data-Driven Leadership
  7. Iowa Professional Development Model

- Evidence from the agency’s electronic database:
  1. The Reading Team engages in the study of research-based instructional strategies and the fidelity of the implementation.
  2. Eight Pottawattamie County school districts are using the High Scope curriculum for Early Childhood Education, a research driven curriculum. The agency has provided monthly professional development for the districts using the High Scope curriculum since 2003.
  3. In assisting early childhood teachers with their daily routines, agency consultants, specialists, and lead teachers share exemplar Early Childhood Education schedules. These samples serve as models for teachers as they create the best possible schedules for their programs and are based on research.
4. Reading consultants serve on the Schools In Need of Improvement (SINI) teams. As part of the findings of the diagnosis phase, professional development support is provided to support teachers and administrators in studying the research of reading instruction for purposes of being able to consider its’ findings in comparison of what is currently taking place in the school setting.

5. In order to assist schools and school districts in identifying content for implementation through the District Career Development Plan, the agency’s Media Center compiled binders of scientifically based research studies, evaluated on the Iowa Content Network, for reading, math, and science, thus reducing the need for schools to acquire all of these studies on their own.

6. The agency Media Center is responsive to emerging trends based on circulation data for the collection. For example, based on the data, a decision was made to add additional DVDs, PWIM posters, and multimedia plush kits. The Media Center also selectively weeds resources from the collection. This helps ensure that the agency’s collection is current, of high quality, and reflective of multicultural, gender fair (MCGF) guidelines. (DB)

Internal Interviews:
- The agency participates in research-based initiatives such as:
  1. Every Child Reads (ECR)
  2. Reading First, Statewide Reading Team (SWRT)
  3. Concept Oriented Reading Initiative (CORI)
  4. Every Student Counts (ESC)
  5. Olweus
  6. Reconnecting Youth
  7. Project Success
  8. Steps to Respect

- The agency provides research through a variety of formats including:
  1. EBSCO Host
  2. Iowa Content Network Binders
  3. Cooperative Curriculum Project (C2P)
  4. National Science Education Standards
  5. Research studies referenced in Classroom Instruction That Works

- Every Child Reads and Every Student Counts processes were replicated in the agency-developed reading and mathematics institutes.

- The Pathwise Mentoring and Induction Model is available to LEAs.

- All content area professional development delivered for college credit must cite the research base. Information about the research base is included on the course application and syllabus.

- The agency Gifted and Talented consultant discussed the report “A Nation Deceived,” which reflects 50 years of research related to acceleration and how to serve a variety of students.

- Opportunities are available to agency staff to keep up with the current research. In turn, the agency provides modeling in the district classroom for teachers.

- The Pottawattamie County Preschool Project was based on the High Scope Curriculum.

- The Math Institute incorporates strategies for ELL and students of poverty.
LEA leadership teams are involved in finding research with assistance from the agency’s SIPD and building reps when developing CSIPs.

Agency staff interviewees shared a belief that nothing is done that isn’t research-driven.

The agency participates in several action research projects:
1. Use of video conferencing
2. Iowa Oral Narrative Project
3. Use of laptops with 1st and 2nd grade students
4. Why Try
5. Kurzweil Project
6. United Streaming Iowa Project
7. Science Writing Heuristic project

While addressing concerns regarding the suspension/expulsion of students, agency staff has helped districts revamp student handbooks. More attention has been paid to the prevention of suspensions and expulsion. The agency is looking at students with special education needs who are on their 4th or 5th day of suspension rather than waiting until the 8th or 9th day of suspension. Some districts have implemented alternative practices to suspension.

External Interviews:

Agency consultants help LEAs review local data and locate research related to needs. For example, problem-solving in math was identified as a need by an LEA. In response the agency located research articles and other resources.

The agency has a booklet from the International Bureau of Education containing a summary of common finding in research.

Agency consultants are proactive about having LEAs look at things they haven’t thought of yet. Interviewees said that they don’t always agree with the agency staff initially, but find that they usually turn out to be correct.

Interviewees trust that if agency consultants tell them something is research-based, it is.

The agency has provided leadership in literacy (SWRT) and math (ESC).

The agency includes explanations of research models on its website for easy access by district personnel.

Consultants are able to bring solid research-based practices to the LEAs, due to agency involvement with state initiatives.

A professional development activity is seldom conducted without research being cited.
Criterion 4: AEA services demonstrate proactive leadership. 281-IAC 72.4 & 72.9(1)(b)(1)

- The AEA uses knowledge of local, state, and national educational trends and demographic changes to provide services in areas not yet identified by LEAs.
- The AEA communicates information about local, state, and national educational trends and demographic changes to internal and external stakeholders.

The AEA has evidenced support for the AEA Standards and the criteria.

Written Documentation:

- Evidence from the agency Self-Study:
  1. Participation in state initiatives
  2. Reading Institute
  3. Attendance at the National Academy of Curriculum Leadership (NACL) with Harlan CSD
  4. PowerPoint presentation on school climate

- Evidence from the agency APR:
  1. Specific courses developed/offered based on student needs identified in LEA CSIPs
  2. Description of staff development programs provided for three consortia
  3. Action Plans

- Evidence from the agency’s electronic database:
  1. Meeting agenda and schedule reflecting agency participation in the National Coalition and Academy training session regarding working with coalitions.
  2. Reading Institute
  3. Test Data Analysis
  4. AEA Media Link
  5. Differentiated Instruction Binders
  6. Media Collection Every Child Reads Materials
  7. Technology prerequisite course for Career Academies
  8. Providing services through Iowa AEA Online
  9. Our Kids Institute
  10. Professional Development narrative, including professional development initiatives in various districts and agency personnel responsible
  11. Spreadsheet overview of technology work done in districts, including regularly scheduled media and technology meetings (e.g., sample agendas and participants) and Technology Audits
  12. Sample e-mail messages to LEAs from media and technology personnel “marketing” services and providing reminders
  13. English Language Learner (ELL) Intervention form
  14. Media purchases and weeding process
  15. PowerPoint on Interactive Guided Reading tweaked for ELL
  16. Iowa Culture and Language Conference Cohorts

- Cooperative Curriculum Project Reading/LA Curriculum Guide
- Joint Service Agreements

Internal Interviews:

- The agency assessment consultant reviews LEA Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) data to identify the impact of “safe harbor” and “confidence interval.” This helps identify future areas of need.
The agency held meetings for superintendents and high school principals regarding high school needs the spring prior to the DE’s High School Reform efforts.

PDK Walk-Through training is provided to help administrators’ understanding of their role in the professional development process (i.e., monitoring of implementation). This includes ongoing follow-up/support.

Interviewees cited Career Academies as an example of proactive leadership.

Instructional Practices Inventory (part of the agency’s E2T2 and SINI audit/diagnosis process) is used to track student engagement.

Agency staff found that LEAs had more ELL students than the LEAs realized. In response, additional help is provided to develop ELL plans for each district (e.g., addressing existing needs and/or planning for potential changes in student populations). The ELL consultants share information from the Office of Civil Rights and No Child Left Behind with districts to assure they are informed and meeting requirements.

Programs at superintendent meetings address a variety of topics (e.g., how to have community conversations, Iowa On-line, and school consolidation/sharing). In addition, an annual book study is completed (e.g., for 2005-06, the superintendents have studied *The World is Flat*).

A leadership team from each district is asked to participate in agency activities as opposed to a single building administrator. It is hoped that this will build internal capacity for districts that struggle with frequent turnover of administration. The agency also insists that LEAs analyze and use local data.

Data are reviewed at the agency level. The agency tries to align programs offered to schools/districts with what the data show as areas of need.

The agency collaborates with the Department of Human Services (DHS) in a wrap-around grant in two communities. Collaboration also occurs with Juvenile Court Services.

The building reps serve in a leadership role within the district leadership teams. They can also provide individual help for specific students.

The agency has taken a lead with community partnerships (e.g., Chamber of Commerces and human service entities) and is proud of how it can make the connections with schools and communities. In the area of climate, the agency supports a broad system level approach.

The Math Institute is an example of proactive leadership. Staff reviewed assessment data and looked first at meeting the needs in struggling LEAs.

The extended math team is an example of proactive leadership. The core team includes the agency math consultants; the extended team is cross-discipline. The members of the extended team participate in Every Child Counts training along with the math consultants.

The agency reviewed kindergarten trend data in the areas of language, literacy, and mathematics. A grant for preschool was written based on these data.
• Media services ensure that materials are purchased and on hand to support current agency initiatives. Media and technology groups have been working with media specialists and tech people to develop leadership capacity. Media division analyzed projection data for English Language Learners then purchased Rosetta Stone software and trained teachers to use the software.

• The reading initiative is helping schools develop leadership capacity in the teaching staff and breaking the mold of “top down”. The agency is working with principals on instructional leadership through the reading initiative.

• The agency uses the Internet Protocol (IP) teleconferencing to provide training and disseminate information.

• The SIPDs have offered the SINA audit and diagnosis phase to schools on the watch list.

• Diverse representation exists on agency teams and agency staff members receive training on the various initiatives so everyone understands their responsibilities.

• The agency has provided personalized data to superintendents concerning the indicators contained in the 6 Year State Performance Plan.

• Second Chance Reading meetings take place in order to help districts look at student needs and develop plans.

• Agency staff members are having discussions regarding how the agency will handle the need to prioritize resources/services provided to districts (e.g., What will happen when we have several SINA schools?).

• The science consultant attends state meetings in Nebraska in order to have a broader view.

• Consultants are helping teachers integrate the Iowa Teaching Standards in their daily practice by explicitly identifying evidence of which standard(s) professional development opportunities meet.

• Participation in Problem Solving Approach (PSA) and Individual Education Program (IEP) training is required of all new agency staff and offered throughout the area for new LEA special education staff. This is a four day summer training to help participants develop a foundation of understanding of the PSA and IEPs. The agency is considering other delivery options, such as virtual, web or online training, to make this training more accessible. Building reps address IEP issues during the IEP meetings. IEP teams engage in discussions of how best to meet the student’s needs.

• In order to assure that the needs of children transitioning from Part C to Part B over the summer are met, the agency holds IEP staffings in the summer. These IEPs are written to reflect the continuation of IFSP services until the IEP services come into play at the start of the school year.

• The agency has developed collaboration with Omaha hospitals to refer Iowa children back to the agency for services.

• Information regarding the successful teaching of diverse learners has been integrated into the agency professional development offerings.
Career Academies that will be in place for the fall of 2006 will provide practical content for students and are well supported by district superintendents. The agency is willing to look at the unique needs of students to help make these Career Academies successful. An example would be to have academy students take the classes they need, such as American History, at the nearest district to shorten travel time.

The agency has reviewed State Performance Plan (SPP) data with internal staff and has started to share the data with districts. Districts reps have been working with district staff as they look at their data to help them better understand it and discuss ways to improve data results.

External Interviews:

- Consultants forward research articles to LEA staff.
- The agency brought in Bill Rauhauser as a resource before data use was a hot topic.
- Agency consultants make recommendations in curriculum areas for LEAs to consider. “They don’t make us (LEAs) do it; they suggest things and provide all of the help we need to implement the changes.”
- The High School Career Academy is in response to a national trend. The agency is working with LEAs on rigor and relevance, which helps LEAs stay current.
- In one district agency staff anticipated a need for information on grief and provided that information without being requested to do so. The information was helpful to the district a year later when a student died.
- The agency staff continually puts forth strategies that build upon previous strategies used by LEAs.
- When a new administrator comes to a district an agency consultant explains how the agency works and the services it provides.
- Starting two years ago, the agency facilitated a study of high school reform with superintendents and principals from eleven districts. Because of this study, these districts feel they are ahead of other districts in the state.
- The agency is facilitating grant writing for and management of the Career Vision Academy project. This project focuses on the middle 50% of students and will include academies for Engineering, Health Services, and Information Technology. This is a collaborative effort between the agency, area colleges, and high schools.
- In response to needs regarding access to print, the agency purchased student materials in the areas of high interest/low vocabulary and non-fiction. Consultants took these materials to districts to make teachers aware of what is available. “This responsiveness impressed people who are never impressed by anything.”
- Para-educator certification training is delivered regionally to the LEAs instead of having the training at the agency.
- The agency has been willing to tape professional development sessions for administrators who are unable to attend. This practice allows the administrator to stay up-to-date.
Written Documentation:

- According to the Self-Study, data from LEAs regarding professional development needs are used to coordinate assignment of staff to professional development activities.

- The Self-Study noted that the agency’s administrative structure was revised to ensure that leadership exists within each of the three regions and across regions to assure that teach standard and goal area receive active attention and resources.

- Cooperative Curriculum Project (C³P) relates to all content areas on a cyclical basis.

- Agency line item budgets (3 years) and agency personnel lists.

- The agency’s electronic database included evidence that the agency’s Media Center provides access to Iowa AEA Online services.

- Evidence from the agency APR:
  1. Eight School Improvement/Professional Development (SIPD) consultants are employed to serve 33 districts.
  2. Every district has been assigned the services of a Reading Consultant.
  3. Joint Service agreements have been developed with all LEAs to address identified needs. Reports are generated annually regarding alignment of services to needs.
  4. Three additional Mathematics Consultants were added to address the growing requests for more services and support for local schools.

- The Learning Supports: Resource Mapping Data document outlines activities and services provided by agency personnel, including community partnerships, family supports and involvement.

Internal Interviews:

- The agency has increased use of expanded teams using the “building rep” model.

- The agency has increased FTEs in reading, mathematics, and ELL. Additional administrative support in these areas has also been added. In addition to hard data, LEAs were surveyed regarding their expectations of agency staff in relation to agency goals.

- The agency uses internal training to build the skill sets of agency staff.

- Using the joint service agreements, the agency staff meets in a “War Room” to prioritize and assign service delivery. The agency has developed a “triage system,” which begins with federal mandates that dictate the kind of services and when they are delivered. The second level is establishment of initiatives and consortiums (e.g., E2T2). The third level is response to requests received from the LEAs via the SIPDs.
The agency has set regions in which consultants work. Consultants have responsibility for their assigned regions. However, they have the flexibility to work in other regions as needed. The agency monitors staff workloads. The structure of the agency changes to meet the needs. “You may be asked to do things previously not done.” Consultants are becoming more cross-discipline, which helps them grow and learn new things.

Agency staff are given time to support their own learning.

Interviewees stated, “We have the best media center—when we find something that is needed, a request is made and the resource is purchased and available for schools.” The media division has expanded media resources for each agency goal, consultant request, LEA needs, and state initiatives.

All SIPD consultants have been trained in the SINI audit process so they are “ready to go” as more schools are identified.

The agency employs six full-time reading consultants and five additional supporting staff members. The consultants are assigned based on alignment of their expertise areas with the needs of the schools.

The agency employs three instructional technology consultants who are assigned to specific LEAs.

Consultants encourage schools to become involved with the state teacher academies in order to build LEA capacity.

The agency employs two full-time ELL consultants that are members of the various agency-wide teams.

The agency fiscally supports the teachers involved in the SWH project by paying expenses for training at ISU and international conference attendance.

The agency supports districts and schools through a cross-divisional team approach that brings multiple perspectives to their work. Interviewees shared an understanding that they are responsible as a primary contact for helping broker services for an LEA.

External Interviews:

- N/A

---

**Criterion 6: AEA services are equitably available. 281-IAC 72.1 and 72.9(1)(e)**

- The AEA has documented its communication to schools and school districts about the services they are eligible to receive.
- The AEA provides equitable access to services for schools and school districts, except where the law differentiates between them.

The AEA has evidenced support for the AEA Standards and the criteria.

**Written Documentation:**

- The APR references Joint Service agreements developed with LEAs to address identified needs; reports are generated annually regarding alignment of services to needs.
- According to the Self-Study, mathematics lesson plans incorporating National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) process standards are available to all teachers regardless of participation in E2T2.
• The Self-Study noted communication to customers regarding agency services is provided through multiple means: superintendent’s meetings, advisory meetings, website, listservs, electronic and hard copy correspondence and information materials.

• Evidence from the agency’s electronic database:
  1. Online catalog (http://media.aea13.org) and Media Center usage statistics.
  2. Registration materials for seminars/conferences are sent to all LEAs (e.g., “Our Kids” Summer Seminars regarding ELL achievement and program effectiveness and the Iowa Culture and Language Conference).
  3. Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale (ECERS) is available to all agency schools.
  4. Instructional Materials Policy

• Data from the Customer Satisfaction Survey regarding equitable services

• Media Distribution data and Schools Using Media data

Internal Interviews:
• Membership on agency committees includes representation of large and small districts.

• Professional development opportunities are open to everyone and mostly delivered on site in the LEAs. The exceptions are “core trainings” and the Reading and Math Institutes, which are delivered at the Halverson Center and Southwestern Community College in Atlantic. Each district that participates in either the Mathematics or Reading Institutes has on-site agency support.

• LEAs are informed of agency services in a variety of ways, including:
  1. Superintendents’ meetings
  2. Agency web site
  3. SIPD consultants
  4. Presentations to school boards
  5. personnel promoting each others’ services
  6. online newsletters, catalogs, directory
  7. Materials/notifications sent via van delivery
  8. Building reps
  9. Listservs

• Interviewees stated that, “Nonpublics are not excluded from anything.”

• The agency assures professional development opportunities are equitably available through its staff development catalog. When the agency does trainings, LEAs are asked to send a team (e.g., teachers, administrators, and parents). Regions are based on student population—the agency tries to keep staff allocation equitable based on student population.

• Small LEAs have the same access to services as large LEAs. The services provided by the agency are not the same in every LEA; they are determined by need.

• Early ACCESS services are now being offered at the Iowa School for the Deaf.

• The agency has addressed the provision of IFSP services to children who turn 3 years old during the summer by continuing those services on the child’s newly developed IEP until school starts in the fall.
External Interviews:
- There are constant e-mails from the agency; for example, they alert us to new media.
- The agency responds to schools regardless of size and interviewees stated that schools/districts on the outskirts of the agency never feel left out.
- The agency’s TAG consultant has responded to the unique needs of the LEAs, especially in the area of diversity.
- Agency staff members provide E2T2 updates via ICN once per month.
- The agency helps LEAs identify students who may be eligible for special education. Factors such as social, emotional, diversity and health concerns are considered prior to identification.
- The agency SIPD consultants are assigned to specific schools. The agency is trying to figure out where the services are needed and assign people to meet those needs.
- When requested the agency processes data for the districts.
- Many services are listed on the agency’s website.
- Agency staff members are visible in LEA buildings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criterion 7: AEA services align with agency-wide goals. 281-IAC 72.9(1)(e)(3)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Evidence exists that AEA services in action plans align with agency-wide goals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The agency shows evidence of addressing the descriptors supporting each standard in rule as the agency structures services and actions to support agency-wide goals.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The AEA has evidenced support for the AEA Standards and the criteria.

Written Documentation:
- Comprehensive Improvement Plan 2002-2007

Internal Interviews:
- Grants are written to support the Climate Goal. For example, the Lifeskills program is 100% funded by grants.
- Climate goal interviewees stated that agency thinking and direction in regard to the Climate Goal has evolved over time. High school reform, Empowerment, Parent Educator Connection (PEC), SINI and Early ACCESS have been incorporated into the Climate goal.
- Interviewees stated that the agency has worked with ELL teachers to ensure that the classroom is a comfortable place for students.
- The agency used data to develop an action plan five years ago to identify schools that need help. The implementation of this action plan aligns well with the state SINI process.
- There is an agency concern regarding the achievement of students of low Socioeconomic Status (SES) and students with Individual Education Programs (IEPs). Agency staff members implement efforts to assist these students.
• ELL, TAG, and Special Education personnel support goal areas by being part of cross discipline teams.

• Three one-day agency wide meetings are held to update staff on progress in the agency goal areas. They also get progress reports via the web site and emails.

• Three action plans have been developed under the reading goal:
  1. Professional development
  2. Grant development, implementation, and evaluation
  3. Building leadership capacity of administrators and teachers

• Content teams are responsible for a specific goal and report on the progress toward that goal.

• Expanded cross-divisional teams provide multiple perspectives.

• The agency has established new procedures for children ages 2 years 9 months up to 3 years who are referred to Early ACCESS. These children now go through a 3-5 year old referral and straight to IEP services.

**External Interviews:**
- N/A

**Criterion 8:** Action plans shall include evidence of meeting all standards for services. 281-IAC 72.9(1)(e)
  - The AEA meets each standard through the collective services and actions that support all agency-wide goals.

The AEA has evidenced support for the AEA Standards and the criteria.

**Written Documentation:**
- Comprehensive Improvement Plan 2002-2007

**Internal Interviews:**
- N/A

**External Interviews:**
- N/A
**Criterion 9:** AEA services include a process to monitor the implementation of the service. 281-IAC 72.9(1)(b)(1) & (e)(5)

- The AEA collects and analyzes data regarding the implementation of services.
- The AEA adjusts services when implementation data indicate the need.
- The AEA involves clients in determining the quality of the implementation of the service.

The AEA has evidenced support for the AEA Standards and the criteria.

**Written Documentation:**

- **Evidence from the agency Self-Study:**
  1. The agency maintains a team of assessment consultants who assist LEAs in reviewing ITBS and ITED results.
  2. The agency uses data obtained from an annual survey as a way to measure the effectiveness of services provided.
  3. Information concerning work activities is entered into a database and reviewed annually by the administrative staff.

- **Evidence from the agency APR:**
  1. Ninety-five percent of the AEA 13 respondents to the AEA Customer Survey indicated that professional development offerings supported their building and district goals in reading, 96% reported support in math, and 100% in science.
  2. Teacher self-report of impact on student achievement.
  3. Action plans and corresponding evidence for each agency goal.

- **Evidence from the agency's electronic database:**
  1. A software program is used to monitor the E2T2 Project.
  2. Agency-generated technology audit reports are used to inform technology decisions in LEAs.
  3. The agency supports continuous monitoring of the use of Text Reader and Kurzweil 3000 software to provide learning accommodations for students.
  4. AEA On-line (i.e., United Streaming, EBSCO, and Clipart) includes usage data.
  5. Teacher Technology Skills survey.
  6. Media Evaluation Cards sent out with each media loan-out, including findings.
  7. Regularly scheduled media and technology meetings, included sample agendas and participants.
  8. Media usage survey, including results used for planning.

- **Staff development programs are established based on needs identified in the Comprehensive School Improvement Plans (CSIPs) of each LEA as well as through formal needs assessments.**

- **A database is used to monitor implementation of agency services.**

- **The plan for monitoring agency goals is found in the action plans contained in the agency Comprehensive Improvement Plan (CIP).**

- **Each agency goal work team has an associate director assigned to provide oversight of implementation.**

- **Joint Service Agreements**

**Internal Interviews:**

- Follow-up surveys of professional development offerings are completed.
• Data on the Early Childhood Project in Pottawattamie County are collected.

• Early ACCESS collects data and uses it to inform actions.

• Participants in Math and Reading Institutes submit lesson plans and implementation logs. Agency consultants conduct observations of Institute participants.

• The agency reviews data including:
  1. Media circulation
  2. Special education referral numbers by district
  3. Caseloads for Speech-Language Pathologists
  4. IEP trends
  5. Least Restrictive Environment

• Agency staff use the qualitative and quantitative information gathered through surveys.

• Individual employees must annually report on what they have done during the year and how their actions have contributed to agency goals.

• Grants require an annual reporting of the activities that occurred as a result of the grant.

• The expectation of the Autism Resource Team is that there will be a follow-up on recommendations and implementation of actions.

• Agency services are monitored through the Joint Service Agreement. Every school has a leadership team that works with agency staff. There is an annual survey of administrators and teachers that addresses services provided by the agency.

• The Superintendents’ Advisory Committee meets monthly and provides feedback to the agency.

• A comment card for teacher input is sent out with all media resources.

• Conversations between SIPDs and district administration concerning professional development initiatives are held on a continuous basis.

• Agency staff members described themselves as being in partnership with LEAs and interact collaboratively in the problem solving process.

• In professional development efforts, formative assessments are used to inform the next session. Summative evaluations are used at the end of the year to monitor implementation.

• Agency staff members support implementation by assisting administrators with PDK Walk-throughs.

• Service review data presentations to local school boards are used in order to report agency-supported activities occurring in each district.

• The Science Team reported collection of assessment data from both teachers and students.

• Agency ELL consultants use data collected on the English language proficiency assessment in order to monitor implementation.
External Interviews:

- The agency consultant, along with the administration, looks at the regular feedback from the professional development evaluations and takes it to the school leadership team. The agency staff is willing to listen and may slow down or move ahead depending on the feedback.

- The agency has provided a system for monitoring video conferencing and United Streaming.

- With Every Child Reads and Every Student Counts, interviewees have become comfortable with completing implementation logs. The agency is constantly looking at data and adjusting according to what the data shows.

- The agency surveys LEA personnel each year. For example, a survey was recently sent to librarians.

- The School Based Intervention Program outcome measures are evaluated annually.

- The agency does a pre- and post-assessment on the Reconnecting Youth program to analyze the results.

- Agency staff members share student achievement data that is compared to other schools and with the state.

- The agency’s administration asks the superintendents for their input.

- Districts have experienced excellent agency follow-up from agency staff members that participate in IEP meetings.

- As a part of the evaluation of agency personnel, the agency sends evaluation forms to LEA staff members for input. The responses from these evaluation forms are analyzed and any issues are addressed. These evaluations become a part of the agency staff members’ folders.

Criterion 10: AEA services include a system for measuring the effectiveness of services provided. 281-IAC 72.9(1)(e)(6)

- The AEA identifies success indicators for services in the agency-wide action plan.
- The AEA collects baseline data for services.
- The AEA adjusts or discontinues services as determined by effectiveness data.

The AEA has evidenced support for the AEA Standards and the criteria.

Written Documentation:

- Evidence from the agency Self-Study:
  1. The agency has trained staff to conduct family meetings with the schools and in the community.
  2. A description of the actions of the agency to train staff as schools’ needs arise.
  3. The agency uses several means to determine the effectiveness of the agency:
     - Completion of an analysis of the results of the State AEA Customer Survey.
     - Review of area-wide student achievement data (data summaries and analysis are shared within the agency and with LEAs).
• Use of a Joint Service Agreement process that includes a review of district data and identification of needs by agency and LEA leadership, design of a plan detailing the commitment of time and resources to meet the identified needs, progress review, and plan revision.
• Review of the final report of the Substance Abuse project.

• Evidence from the agency Comprehensive Improvement Plan (CIP):
  1. Data is collected from Success Indicator Rating maps, which are intended to include information regarding effectiveness of the agency’s action plans.
  2. Action plans for agency goals include effectiveness and efficiency traits and all standards have efficiency and effectiveness indicators listed.
  3. The agency prioritizes services based on LEA and student needs. The following data are reviewed:
     • LEA APRs
     • Department of Education feedback
     • Student data, such as median percentiles/proficiency data
     • Various needs assessments

• The agency APR restated the agency’s CIP action plans and explained progress in the goal areas.

• Results of professional development survey are listed by categories (e.g. reading, math, science, diverse learners), given in three-year trends in regard to applying new learning, impact on student achievement, and changes in knowledge and skills.

**Internal Interviews:**

• There were numerous references to perceptual data. For example, the agency surveys LEAs regarding agency staff performance and uses data from staff calendars to monitor time in the field.

• Agency-wide assessment data are reviewed to identify effective and non-effective services.

• Building level personnel are asked to complete evaluations regarding the service that an agency staff member has provided. This district evaluation is part of the staff member’s evaluation.

• The agency has started goal area conversations at the management level regarding the agency definitions of effectiveness and efficiency. Effectiveness is defined as dealing with implementation and results. One result of these conversations is that the agency has recognized the difficulty in determining the effectiveness of prevention type programs (e.g. Drug Free Schools, Early ACCESS, and Juvenile Justice programs).

• Two levels of effectiveness are utilized for the climate goal. The first is at the program level (e.g., Is the service meeting the program goals?). The second is measured by reviewing Iowa Youth Survey (IYS) data to evaluate effectiveness on the students being served.

• There is a constant emphasis on “implementation” following professional development. Teachers have the expectation of implementing and are beginning to understand the importance of implementation and use of data. Agency staff members analyze teacher implementation logs and student data for all initiatives. Administrators of the schools are involved in the analysis of this data.

• Annual customer survey data is analyzed in order to measure effectiveness.
• End of session/course evaluations are completed on bubble sheets that allow data analysis to be completed easily.

• On-going observations of the teachers involved in the SWH project allow the science and reading consultants to determine effectiveness of services. The SWH project also supports Podcasting of student-designed summaries for students’ reference and review.

External Interviews:
• The agency uses on-line surveys.

• LEA and agency staff members look closely at student data to determine effectiveness.

• Information about school discipline referrals is documented by the LEAs and reviewed with agency consultants to identify “where we’re at and where we will go next.”

• The agency reviews the community mentoring program from three different angles: the mentor, a community member, and the program director.

• LEAs continually examine implementation data. These data are reviewed with the agency and changes are made as needed. One interviewee noted that they instituted a leadership team that oversees its professional development.

• The agency assisted the juvenile court system in analyzing the effectiveness of one of its programs.

• The agency building reps are in LEAs multiple times during the week, which allows for constant feedback and quick response to needs. For example, a morning hallway conversation between a non-public school principal and their building rep concerning a new special needs student resulted in action by the afternoon.

• Agency staff members are responsive to unforeseen needs and find creative ways of providing service.

• The agency sends questions for use by LEAs as they prepare for Joint Service Agreement discussions.

### Criterion 11: AEA services include a system for measuring the efficiency of services provided.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>281-IAC 72.9(1)(e)(6)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• The AEA collects data to help it assess the cost efficiency of services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The AEA collects data to help it assess the timeliness of services.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The AEA has evidenced support for the AEA Standards and the criteria.

**Written Documentation:**
• The agency self-study (clarified via discussion with agency staff) indicated a recent organizational structure change. Nine Associate Directors each serve in two capacities: as part of a topical team (e.g., Curriculum, Assessment and Instruction; Special Education; or Media/Instructional Technology) and as part of a regional team (e.g., Northern, Central, or Southern Region).

• The agency Comprehensive Improvement Plan (CIP) describes efficiency as collaboration of staff in working on projects, collaboration with schools in working on projects, and consortia of schools coming together to work/learn.
• The APR contained reference to use of collaborative groups and consortia of schools within actions steps.

• State AEA Customer Survey data, which address elements of efficiency through specific questions regarding cost efficient services and timeliness of service delivery, are reviewed by the agency.

• The agency’s Self-Study includes examples of efficiency in relation to the agency’s goals:
  1. Descriptions of agency actions to bring groups together to provide professional development and support.
  2. Agency websites used to share information, including lesson plans, professional development links, and links to gifted education strategies for parents, teachers and students.
  3. An item analysis tool for mathematics was created and provided for all schools.
  4. Providing a Reading Institute (expanded from five teams in 2004 to eight teams in 2005) and a Math Institute for schools wanting to participate in Every Student Counts.
  5. Descriptions of media support for the various initiatives, including Every Child Reads and Every Student Counts.
  6. Binders of scientifically based research in math, science, and reading available for teachers to check out.
  7. Development of cross-agency teams.
  8. SCASS science assessment scoring conducted as a consortium effort for participating schools.
  9. Partnership formed between the AEA, the LEAs, Iowa State University and University of Iowa for the study and implementation of the Science Writing Heuristic.
 10. Agency staff assists in creating and scoring surveys.
 11. Partnering with community agencies to lessen drug use in Pottawattamie County and to develop youth leadership in Council Bluffs.

• In the agency self-study, efficiency is described as “a measure of quality for a given cost.”

• Efficiency is monitored through an annual review of the allocation of staff and resources.

• Planning and budgeting process to meet goals of agency and needs of schools, including annual planning for resources and ongoing monitoring of expenditures.

• Completed cost-benefit analysis of “Reconnecting Youth” Program.

• Use of “Building Rep” model to serve schools.

• Consortiums mentioned as a form of efficiency. Examples of consortiums include QUAD, SEEDS, WISC, E2T2, SCASS Review, and TAG.

• The Cooperative Curriculum Project (C²P), organized and led by agency staff, brings group of schools together each summer to develop curriculum in a variety of areas (e.g., Literacy, Mathematics, and Gifted Education) (C²P binders).

• State Media Projects (e.g., AEA Online and United Streaming).

• Media circulation reports, use of United Streaming, and on-line ordering are used to inform purchasing decisions.
Online registration for the agency’s professional development offerings is available.

Internal Interviews:
- Agency management has started goal area conversations regarding the definitions of effectiveness and efficiency. Efficiency is defined as timeliness, responsiveness, and cost efficiency.
- The agency is beginning to keep track of video conferencing and other uses of technology. Response time can also be looked at as efficiency.
- When there is a staff vacancy, the agency determines if it needs to be filled in the same way, if the person would need a different set of skills, or if the position should be filled at all.
- Agency staff members go to LEAs rather than having LEA staff come to the agency.
- Media is centralized and distribution done through van mail. Media staff set up display booths at large trainings to publicize the services they provide.
- Restructuring of the agency was based on superintendent input. Every superintendent was asked what would make things better.
- The “Building Rep” model works well because agency staff members are in the LEAs more often (at least weekly). According to interviewees, this allows agency staff members to “have the pulse of the district and really know what a district needs.” Teachers feel comfortable asking for information. Working with a team helps agency staff members know the strengths of other team members. If the building rep doesn’t have expertise in the area requested, they know whom to contact in order to meet the need.
- The agency has a vision that its staff members are advocates for children. Staff members prioritize by asking what their role is in meeting needs of students; sometimes they have to say no if what they have been asked to do does not have a direct impact on kids.
- Regional offices contribute to efficiency by having staff and administrators closer to the districts they serve.
- The agency Board of Directors invites staff to present what they are doing and share their needs.
- Monthly meetings in content areas, agency-wide meetings three times a year, and out-of-state and in-state trainings provide agency staff opportunity to share and learn, think about the research, and use what is best practice.
- The agency has increased its reliance on electronic communication in order to increase efficiency. Examples include:
  1. IP Video Teleconferencing
  2. Online ordering
  3. Listservs
- Timely response is enhanced though the assignment of primary contacts (i.e., building reps and SIPD consultants) for each building.
- The agency has a structure in place for the assignment of staff based on LEA need(s).
• The districts involved in the three supported professional development consortia have identical calendars and are provided professional development in the same strategies.

• In response to superintendents’ concerns about distance to services, the agency has decentralized and re-organized into three regions (i.e., North, South, and Central). Each region serves approximately 10,000 students and allows for efficient response to needs.

• Agency staff members encourage LEA involvement in initiatives when data indicate need.

External Interviews:
• The agency uses on-line surveys. The agency analyzes online surveys for E2T2 and acts accordingly.

• The relationships LEAs have with the agency helps make it efficient. The agency is efficient through on-going communication; agency staff members have a pulse on the workings of the buildings.

• Interviewees stated that the agency is responsive to their calls. One stated, “I don’t know if someone is keeping track of how long it takes them to do that, but I don’t have to wait for a week.”

• The agency has an outstanding media center. The agency media center staff provides workshops for LEA staffs so they know what media resources the agency has to offer. The agency provides many ways in which LEAs can access media resources. Interviewees stated that the media center staff is “wonderful in providing videos or United Streaming” and if they don’t have the requested book they will get it. A focus group approach was used to create a more efficient set of services.

• Interviewees noted that the agency is good at anticipating LEA needs (e.g., High School Career Academy). Agency staff members are efficient at anticipating the needs prior to the teachers in schools saying they need it.

• The agency is teaching LEAs how to analyze data and use the information to make decisions.

• The agency is increasingly responding to professional development needs by bringing opportunities to the LEAs, not requiring LEA staff to travel to the central agency location.

• The agency scans textbook materials for districts using the Kurzweil Reader.