

EDUCATION CODE

TITLE 2. PUBLIC EDUCATION

SUBTITLE B. STATE AND REGIONAL ORGANIZATION AND GOVERNANCE

CHAPTER 8. REGIONAL EDUCATION SERVICE CENTERS

SUBCHAPTER A. GENERAL PROVISIONS

Sec. 8.001. ESTABLISHMENT. (a) The commissioner shall provide for the establishment and operation of not more than 20 regional education service centers.

(b) Regional education service centers shall be located throughout the state so that each school district has the opportunity to be served by and to participate, on a voluntary basis, in a center that meets the accountability standards established by the commissioner.

(c) The commissioner may decide any matter concerning the operation or administration of the regional education service centers, including:

- (1) the number and location of centers;
- (2) the regional boundaries of centers; and
- (3) the allocation among centers of state and federal funds administered by the agency.

(d) This chapter does not:

- (1) limit a school district's freedom to purchase services from any regional education service center; or
- (2) require a school district to purchase services from a regional education service center.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 260, Sec. 1, eff. May 30, 1995.

Amended by Acts 1997, 75th Leg., ch. 268, Sec. 1, eff. May 26, 1997.

Sec. 8.002. PURPOSE. Regional education service centers shall:

- (1) assist school districts in improving student performance in each region of the system;
- (2) enable school districts to operate more efficiently and economically; and
- (3) implement initiatives assigned by the legislature

or the commissioner.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 260, Sec. 1, eff. May 30, 1995.

Amended by Acts 1997, 75th Leg., ch. 268, Sec. 1, eff. May 26, 1997.

Sec. 8.003. GOVERNANCE. (a) Each regional education service center is governed by a board of directors composed of seven members.

(b) The commissioner shall adopt rules to provide for the local selection, appointment, and continuity of membership of regional education service center boards of directors.

(c) A vacancy on a regional education service center board of directors shall be filled by appointment by the remaining members of the board for the unexpired term.

(d) A member of the board is not entitled to compensation from the regional education service center but is entitled to reimbursement with center funds for necessary expenses incurred in performing duties as a board member.

(e) Each regional education service center board of directors shall develop policies to ensure the sound management and operation of the center consistent with Section 8.002. Subject to approval of the board of directors, regional education service centers shall offer programs and activities to school districts and campuses under Sections 8.051, 8.052, and 8.053.

(f) Each regional education service center board of directors shall adopt an annual budget for the following year after conducting a public hearing on the center's performance during the preceding year on standards established by the commissioner under Section 8.101.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 260, Sec. 1, eff. May 30, 1995.

Amended by Acts 1997, 75th Leg., ch. 268, Sec. 1, eff. May 26, 1997.

Sec. 8.004. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR. The regional education service center board of directors shall employ an executive director. The selection and dismissal of the executive director is subject to the approval of the commissioner. The executive director is the chief executive officer of the regional education service center and may employ personnel as necessary to carry out

the functions of the center.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 260, Sec. 1, eff. May 30, 1995.

Amended by Acts 1997, 75th Leg., ch. 268, Sec. 1, eff. May 26, 1997.

Sec. 8.005. EXEMPTION FROM TAXATION. A regional education service center and its employees are subject to or exempt from taxation in the same manner as a school district and school district employees.

Added by Acts 1997, 75th Leg., ch. 268, Sec. 1, eff. May 26, 1997.

Sec. 8.006. IMMUNITY FROM LIABILITY. An employee or volunteer of a regional education service center is immune from liability to the same extent as an employee or volunteer of a school district.

Added by Acts 1997, 75th Leg., ch. 268, Sec. 1, eff. May 26, 1997.

Sec. 8.007. TRANSFERABILITY OF LEAVE. (a) A regional education service center shall accept personal leave accrued by a center employee as sick leave under state law by an employee who was formerly employed by the state.

(b) A school district or the state shall accept the sick leave accrued by an employee who was formerly employed by a regional education service center not to exceed five days per year for each year of employment.

Added by Acts 1997, 75th Leg., ch. 268, Sec. 1, eff. May 26, 1997.

Sec. 8.008. APPLICABILITY OF CERTAIN LAWS RELATING TO POLITICAL ACTIVITIES. A regional education service center and each center employee is subject to Chapter 556, Government Code, and for purposes of that chapter:

(1) the center is considered to be a state agency; and

(2) each center employee is considered to be a state employee.

Added by Acts 2003, 78th Leg., ch. 350, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 2003.

Sec. 8.009. APPLICABILITY OF CERTAIN LAWS RELATING TO CONFLICT OF INTEREST. (a) A member of the board of directors and

the executive director of a regional education service center are each considered to be a local public official for purposes of Chapter 171, Local Government Code. For purposes of that chapter a member of the board of directors and the executive director of a regional education service center are each considered to have a substantial interest in a business entity if a person related to the member or the executive director in the third degree by consanguinity or affinity, as determined under Chapter 573, Government Code, has a substantial interest in the business entity under Section 171.002, Local Government Code.

(b) A regional education service center is considered to be a political subdivision for purposes of Section 131.903, Local Government Code.

(c) To the extent consistent with this section, if a law described by this section applies to a school district or the board of trustees of a school district, the law applies to a regional education service center and the board of directors and executive director of a regional education service center.

Added by Acts 2003, 78th Leg., ch. 350, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 2003.

Sec. 8.010. SUNSET PROVISION. Regional education service centers are subject to Chapter 325, Government Code (Texas Sunset Act). Unless continued in existence as provided by that chapter, the centers are abolished and this chapter expires September 1, 2019.

Added by Acts 2011, 82nd Leg., R.S., Ch. 1232 (S.B. 652), Sec. 2.01, eff. June 17, 2011.

Amended by:

Acts 2013, 83rd Leg., R.S., Ch. 1279 (H.B. 1675), Sec. 3.01, eff. June 14, 2013.

Sec. 8.011. NEPOTISM PROHIBITION. For purposes of all employees of each regional education service center, the executive director and each member of the board of directors are public officials subject to Chapter 573, Government Code.

Added by Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1244 (H.B. 2563), Sec. 7, eff. September 1, 2007.

SUBCHAPTER B. POWERS AND DUTIES

Sec. 8.051. CORE SERVICES AND SERVICES TO IMPROVE PERFORMANCE. (a) Each regional education service center shall use funds distributed to the center under Section 8.121 to develop, maintain, and deliver services identified under this section to improve student and school district performance.

(b) Each regional education service center shall annually develop and submit to the commissioner for approval a plan for improvement. Each plan must include the purposes and description of the services the center will provide to:

- (1) campuses assigned an unacceptable performance rating under Section 39.054;
- (2) the lowest-performing campuses in the region; and
- (3) other campuses.

(c) Each regional education service center shall provide services that enable school districts to operate more efficiently and economically.

(d) Each regional education service center shall maintain core services for purchase by school districts and campuses. The core services are:

- (1) training and assistance in:
  - (A) teaching each subject area assessed under Section 39.023; and
  - (B) providing instruction in personal financial literacy as required under Section 28.0021;
- (2) training and assistance in providing each program that qualifies for a funding allotment under Section 42.151, 42.152, 42.153, or 42.156;
- (3) assistance specifically designed for a school district or campus assigned an unacceptable performance rating under Section 39.054;
- (4) training and assistance to teachers, administrators, members of district boards of trustees, and members of site-based decision-making committees;
- (5) assistance specifically designed for a school

district that is considered out of compliance with state or federal special education requirements, based on the agency's most recent compliance review of the district's special education programs; and

(6) assistance in complying with state laws and rules.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 260, Sec. 1, eff. May 30, 1995.

Amended by Acts 1997, 75th Leg., ch. 268, Sec. 1, eff. May 26, 1997;

Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 1202, Sec. 1, eff. June 18, 1999.

Amended by:

Acts 2006, 79th Leg., 3rd C.S., Ch. 5 (H.B. 1), Sec. 3.02, eff. May 31, 2006.

Acts 2009, 81st Leg., R.S., Ch. 895 (H.B. 3), Sec. 4, eff. June 19, 2009.

Acts 2009, 81st Leg., R.S., Ch. 1328 (H.B. 3646), Sec. 3, eff. September 1, 2009.

Sec. 8.052. STATE INITIATIVES. As directed by the commissioner, each regional education service center shall, as necessary, use funds distributed under Section 8.123 to implement initiatives identified by the legislature.

Amended by Acts 1997, 75th Leg., ch. 268, Sec. 1, eff. May 26, 1997.

Sec. 8.053. ADDITIONAL SERVICES. In addition to the services provided under Section 8.051 and the initiatives implemented under Section 8.052, a regional education service center may:

(1) offer any service requested and purchased by any school district or campus in the state; and

(2) contract with a public or private entity for services under this subchapter, including the provision of continuing education courses and programs for educators.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 260, Sec. 1, eff. May 30, 1995.

Renumbered from Education Code Sec. 8.052 and amended by Acts 1997, 75th Leg., ch. 268, Sec. 1, eff. May 26, 1997; Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 598, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1999.

Sec. 8.0531. INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS DEVELOPED BY A COLLABORATION OF REGIONAL EDUCATION SERVICE

CENTERS. Notwithstanding any other provision of this subchapter or Section 8.001(c), instructional lessons developed as part of a curriculum management system by a regional education service center, acting alone or in collaboration with one or more other regional education service centers, shall be subject to the same review and adoption process as outlined in Section 31.022.

Added by Acts 2013, 83rd Leg., R.S., Ch. 617 (S.B. 1406), Sec. 1, eff. June 14, 2013.

Sec. 8.054. PROHIBITION ON REGULATORY FUNCTION. A regional education service center may not perform a regulatory function regarding a school district. This section does not prohibit a regional education service center from offering training or other assistance to a school district in complying with a state or federal law, rule, or regulation.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 260, Sec. 1, eff. May 30, 1995.

Amended by Acts 1997, 75th Leg., ch. 268, Sec. 1, eff. May 26, 1997.

Sec. 8.055. REGIONAL EDUCATION SERVICE CENTER PROPERTY.

(a) Each regional education service center may purchase or lease property or acquire property through lease-purchase and may incur debts for that purpose. Any transaction under this subsection is subject to the approval of the board of directors.

(b) Any transaction under this subsection involving real property is subject to the approval of the board of directors and the commissioner.

(c) Each regional education service center may dispose of property in the manner and on the terms that the board of directors determines.

Added by Acts 1997, 75th Leg., ch. 268, Sec. 1, eff. May 26, 1997.

Sec. 8.056. LIMITATION ON COMPENSATION FOR CERTAIN SERVICES. A regional education service center that acts as a fiscal agent or broker in connection with an agreement between two school districts under Subchapter E, Chapter 41, may not, unless authorized in writing by the district receiving transferred funds in accordance with the agreement:

(1) be compensated by the districts in an amount that exceeds the administrative cost of providing the service; or

(2) otherwise retain for use by the center any amount other than the compensation permitted under Subdivision (1) from the funds transferred between the districts in accordance with the agreement.

Added by Acts 2003, 78th Leg., ch. 350, Sec. 2, eff. Sept. 1, 2003.

Sec. 8.057. ASSISTANCE WITH CRIMINAL HISTORY RECORD INFORMATION. The agency may require a regional education service center to assist in collecting information needed for a criminal history record information review under Subchapter C, Chapter 22.

Added by Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1372 (S.B. 9), Sec. 1, eff. June 15, 2007.

Sec. 8.058. CHILD DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATE TRAINING. A regional education service center may offer to teachers employed by school districts the training required to be awarded a Child Development Associate (CDA) credential.

Added by Acts 2015, 84th Leg., R.S., Ch. 142 (H.B. 4), Sec. 1, eff. May 28, 2015.

#### SUBCHAPTER C. EVALUATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Sec. 8.101. PERFORMANCE STANDARDS AND INDICATORS. The commissioner shall establish performance standards and indicators for regional education service centers that measure the achievement of the objectives in Section 8.002. Performance standards and indicators must include the following:

- (1) student performance in districts served;
- (2) district effectiveness and efficiency in districts served resulting from technical assistance and program support;
- (3) direct services provided or regionally shared services arranged by the service center which produce more economical and efficient school operations;
- (4) direct services provided or regionally shared



services arranged by the service center which provide for assistance in core services; and

(5) grants received for implementation of state initiatives and the results achieved by the service center under the terms of the grant contract.

Amended by Acts 1997, 75th Leg., ch. 268, Sec. 1, eff. May 26, 1997.

Sec. 8.102. DATA REPORTING. Each regional education service center shall report audited or budgeted financial information and any other information requested by the commissioner for use in assessing the performance of the center. The commissioner shall develop a uniform system for regional education service centers to report audited financial data, to report information on the indicators adopted under Section 8.101, and to provide information on client satisfaction with services provided under Subchapter B.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 260, Sec. 1, eff. May 30, 1995.

Renumbered from Education Code Sec. 8.101 and amended by Acts 1997, 75th Leg., ch. 268, Sec. 1, eff. May 26, 1997.

Sec. 8.103. ANNUAL EVALUATION. The commissioner shall conduct an annual evaluation of each executive director and regional education service center. Each evaluation must include:

(1) an audit of the center's finances;

(2) a review of the center's performance on the indicators adopted under Section 8.101;

(3) a review of client satisfaction with services provided under Subchapter B; and

(4) a review of any other factor the commissioner determines to be appropriate.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 260, Sec. 1, eff. May 30, 1995.

Renumbered from Education Code Sec. 8.102 and amended by Acts 1997, 75th Leg., ch. 268, Sec. 1, eff. May 26, 1997.

Sec. 8.104. SANCTIONS. The commissioner shall develop a system of corrective actions to require of a regional education service center that the commissioner determines to be deficient in

an accountability measure under Section 8.103. The actions must include, in increasing order of severity:

- (1) conducting an on-site investigation of the center;
- (2) requiring the center to send notice of each deficiency to each school district and campus in the center's region or served by the center the previous year;
- (3) requiring the center to prepare for the commissioner's approval a plan to address each area of deficiency;
- (4) appointing a master to oversee the operations of the center;
- (5) replacing the executive director or board of directors; and
- (6) in the case of deficient performance in two consecutive years, closing the center.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 260, Sec. 1, eff. May 30, 1995. Renumbered from Education Code Sec. 8.103 and amended by Acts 1997, 75th Leg., ch. 268, Sec. 1, eff. May 26, 1997.

#### SUBCHAPTER D. FUNDING

Sec. 8.121. FUNDING FOR CORE SERVICES AND SERVICES TO IMPROVE PERFORMANCE. (a) Regional education service centers receive state financial support for services provided under Section 8.051 from money appropriated for the Foundation School Program. The commissioner shall distribute money to each regional education service center for basic costs of providing those services according to an annual allotment set by the commissioner based on:

- (1) the minimum amount of money necessary for the operation of a center;
- (2) an additional amount of money that reflects the size and number of campuses served by the center under Section 8.051; and
- (3) an additional amount of money that reflects the impact of the geographic size of a center's service area on the cost of providing services under Section 8.051.

(b) Repealed by Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 396, Sec. 3.01(a), eff. Sept. 1, 1999.

(c) Each regional education service center shall use money distributed to it under this section for the provision of core services required under Section 8.051 or for payment of necessary administrative and operational expenses of the center related to the provision of those services.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 260, Sec. 1, eff. May 30, 1995.

Amended by Acts 1997, 75th Leg., ch. 268, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1997; Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 396, Sec. 3.01(a), eff. Sept. 1, 1999.

Sec. 8.122. INCENTIVE FUNDING FOR DISTRICT EFFICIENCIES.

(a) The legislature may appropriate money from the foundation school fund to establish an incentive fund to encourage efficiency in the provision of services by the system of regional education service centers.

(b) The commissioner may submit to each regular session of the legislature an incentive funding report and plan that:

(1) demonstrates that regional education service centers are providing the services required or permitted by law;

(2) defines efficiencies of scale in measurable terms;

(3) proposes the size of and payment schedule for the incentive fund; and

(4) establishes a method for documenting and computing efficiencies.

(c) The commissioner shall determine the method by which money appropriated under this section is distributed to regional education service centers.

(d) The board of trustees of a school district may delegate purchasing or other administrative functions to a regional education service center to the extent necessary to achieve efficiencies under this section.

Amended by Acts 1997, 75th Leg., ch. 268, Sec. 1, eff. May 26, 1997.

Sec. 8.123. FUNDING FOR STATE INITIATIVES. (a) The legislature may appropriate money from the foundation school fund or other sources to implement initiatives identified by the legislature.

(b) The commissioner may adopt rules governing:

(1) the strategies, programs, projects, and regions eligible for funding under this section; and

(2) the amount of funds that may be distributed to a regional education service center for a specific initiative.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 260, Sec. 1, eff. May 30, 1995.

Renumbered from Sec. 8.122 and amended by Acts 1997, 75th Leg., ch. 268, Sec. 1, eff. May 26, 1997.

Sec. 8.124. INNOVATIVE AND EMERGENCY GRANTS. (a) The legislature may appropriate money from the foundation school fund or other sources for grants to regional education service centers. Money appropriated under this section shall be distributed to regional education service centers as:

(1) competitive grants for developing and implementing innovative regional strategies or programs; or

(2) emergency grants for providing adequate services under Section 8.051 to small and isolated school districts or, in extreme circumstances, other school districts.

(b) The commissioner may adopt rules governing:

(1) the strategies, programs, and regions eligible for funding under this section; and

(2) the amount of money that may be distributed to a regional education service center for a specific purpose.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 260, Sec. 1, eff. May 30, 1995.

Renumbered from Education Code Sec. 8.123 and amended by Acts 1997, 75th Leg., ch. 268, Sec. 1, eff. May 26, 1997.

Sec. 8.125. CONTRACTS FOR GRANTS. Each regional education service center board of directors, under rules adopted by the commissioner, may enter into a contract for a grant from a public or private organization and may spend grant funds in accordance with the terms of the contract.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 260, Sec. 1, eff. May 30, 1995.

Renumbered from Education Code Sec. 8.124 and amended by Acts 1997, 75th Leg., ch. 268, Sec. 1, eff. May 26, 1997.