

Stricken language would be deleted from and underlined language would be added to the law as it existed prior to this session of the General Assembly.

1 State of Arkansas
2 84th General Assembly
3 Regular Session, 2003

A Bill

SENATE BILL 902

4
5 By: Senator Argue
6
7

For An Act To Be Entitled

8
9 AN ACT TO REPEAL PROVISIONS PERTAINING TO PUBLIC
10 SCHOOL EDUCATIONAL COOPERATIVES; TO CREATE
11 RESOURCE CENTERS FOR SCHOOL DISTRICTS; AND FOR
12 OTHER PURPOSES.
13

Subtitle

14
15 AN ACT TO REPEAL PROVISIONS PERTAINING
16 TO PUBLIC SCHOOL EDUCATIONAL
17 COOPERATIVES AND TO CREATE RESOURCE
18 CENTERS FOR SCHOOL DISTRICTS.
19
20

21 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:
22

23 SECTION 1. Arkansas Code Title 6, Chapter 13, Subchapter 9 is
24 repealed.

25 ~~6-13-901. Title.~~

26 ~~The title of this subchapter shall be "The Public School Educational~~
27 ~~Cooperative Act of 1981".~~

28
29 ~~6-13-902. Definitions.~~

30 ~~As used in this subchapter, unless the context otherwise requires:~~

31 ~~(1) "Educational cooperative" means a voluntary association of~~
32 ~~school districts to share resources, personnel, materials, and equipment and~~
33 ~~to provide and improve services and programs to students; and~~

34 ~~(2) "Public school district" means any public school district in~~
35 ~~the state serving students in a kindergarden through grade twelve (K-12)~~
36 ~~program or a grade one through grade twelve (1-12) program.~~



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~~6-13-903. Powers.~~

~~(a) Public school districts in the State of Arkansas are empowered to voluntarily agree to share programs, personnel, materials, and equipment for the purpose of enlarging curriculum or services or providing new services to students in their respective districts.~~

~~(b) The cooperatives are empowered to receive state, local, and federal funds that have been assigned to the cooperatives by the member school districts and are also empowered to spend those funds on behalf of the districts assigning those funds.~~

~~(c) The Department of Education shall not distribute state equalization aid directly to any educational cooperative.~~

~~6-13-904. Agents for districts.~~

~~(a) The cooperatives will act as an agency for all or some of the member districts in dealings with other governmental and private agencies.~~

~~(b) They will have the power to contract and handle funds for the member districts under conditions specified in the agreement between the member school districts and federal and state law and regulation.~~

~~6-13-905. Board of directors.~~

~~(a) Each cooperative will be governed by a board of directors consisting of one (1) representative appointed by the board of directors of each cooperating school district.~~

~~(b) The board shall be empowered to hire a director and other employees and to contract for services, supplies, and equipment.~~

~~(c) Policies for the operation of the cooperative will be developed by the board of directors and be filed with the Department of Education as required by law of school districts generally.~~

~~6-13-906. Rules, regulations, and reports.~~

- ~~(a) The cooperatives will:~~
 - ~~(1) Abide by all rules and regulations of the Department of Education which apply to school districts generally; and~~
 - ~~(2) Make all reports as required by law and regulation which apply to school districts generally to the department.~~

1 ~~(b)(1) Records of the expenditures and receipts of the cooperatives~~
 2 ~~shall be kept in such manner and on such forms as may be specified by the~~
 3 ~~department or the School Audit Section of the Division of Legislative Audit~~
 4 ~~of the Legislative Joint Auditing Committee.~~

5 ~~(2) Reports on expenditures and receipts shall be made for the~~
 6 ~~cooperative as a single agency or shall be made separately by the school~~
 7 ~~districts to reflect the status of each member district at such time and in~~
 8 ~~such manner as specified by the department.~~

9
 10 SECTION 2. Arkansas Code Title 6, Chapter 13, Subchapter 10 is
 11 repealed.

12 ~~6-13-1001. Title.~~

13 ~~The title of this subchapter shall be "The Education Service~~
 14 ~~Cooperative Act of 1985".~~

15
 16 ~~6-13-1002. Education service cooperatives established — Functions.~~

17 ~~(a) The State Board of Education is authorized to establish a~~
 18 ~~statewide system of not more than fifteen (15) multicounty education service~~
 19 ~~cooperatives of school districts. Such cooperatives shall be intermediate~~
 20 ~~service units in the state's elementary and secondary education system and as~~
 21 ~~such shall be eligible to receive and expend funds from state and federal~~
 22 ~~governments, school districts, and other public or private sources.~~

23 ~~(b) Education service cooperatives established by this subchapter will~~
 24 ~~provide to school districts which choose to use them assistance in:~~

25 ~~(1) Meeting or exceeding accreditation standards and equalizing~~
 26 ~~educational opportunities;~~

27 ~~(2) Using educational resources more effectively through~~
 28 ~~cooperation among school districts; and~~

29 ~~(3) Promoting coordination between school districts and the~~
 30 ~~Department of Education in order to provide services which are consistent~~
 31 ~~with the needs identified by school districts and the educational priorities~~
 32 ~~of the state as established by the General Assembly or the board.~~

33
 34 ~~6-13-1003. Boundaries — Adjustments.~~

35 ~~(a) The State Board of Education shall establish tentative boundaries~~
 36 ~~for the system of cooperatives authorized by this subchapter.~~

1 ~~(b) These education service cooperatives will be established so that:~~

2 ~~(1) They include at least three (3) but no more than nine (9)~~
3 ~~counties;~~

4 ~~(2) They include at least ten (10) but no more than thirty five~~
5 ~~(35) school districts;~~

6 ~~(3) They include at least twenty thousand (20,000) pupils in~~
7 ~~kindergarden through grade twelve (K-12) average daily membership;~~

8 ~~(4) They include at least one (1) postsecondary education~~
9 ~~institution; and~~

10 ~~(5) There is no more than fifty (50) miles distance or~~
11 ~~approximately one (1) hour driving time to the area's main offices for ninety~~
12 ~~percent (90%) of the school districts.~~

13 ~~(c) The board may make adjustments in the boundaries when criteria~~
14 ~~such as minimum average daily membership and maximum driving distances~~
15 ~~conflict. However, no more than four (4) of the areas formed may contain~~
16 ~~fewer than twenty thousand (20,000) students. In no case shall any~~
17 ~~cooperative be established with fewer than twelve thousand (12,000) pupils.~~

18
19 ~~6-13-1004. Requests for establishment of cooperative—Requirements.~~

20 ~~(a) Education service cooperatives shall be established when seventy-~~
21 ~~five percent (75%) of the school districts in a proposed cooperative area~~
22 ~~request such action by formal resolutions filed by the school district boards~~
23 ~~of directors with the Director of the Department of Education.~~

24 ~~(b) Each resolution shall, in addition to requesting establishment of~~
25 ~~an education service cooperative, indicate by name or position that~~
26 ~~district's representative on the board of directors of the proposed education~~
27 ~~service cooperative.~~

28 ~~(c) Requests must be filed by seventy five percent (75%) of the school~~
29 ~~district boards of directors by May 1 if an education service cooperative is~~
30 ~~to be established for the following school year.~~

31
32 ~~6-13-1005. Alteration of boundaries.~~

33 ~~(a) The State Board of Education, upon the request of one (1) or more~~
34 ~~school district boards of directors, and consistent with the provisions of §~~
35 ~~6-13-1003, may alter the boundaries of a proposed or operational education~~
36 ~~service cooperative when it determines such alteration to be in the best~~

1 ~~interest of the school districts in the cooperatives involved.~~

2 ~~(b) Consistent with provisions of § 6-13-1003, no member of an~~
 3 ~~existing pilot cooperative established under Acts 1983 (1st Ex. Sess.), No.~~
 4 ~~103 [repealed] nor any member of a cooperative formed after January 1, 1984,~~
 5 ~~under § 6-13-901 et seq., may be moved to another education service~~
 6 ~~cooperative without that member's consent.~~

7
 8 ~~6-13-1006. Board of directors.~~

9 ~~(a) Each education service cooperative shall be governed by a board of~~
 10 ~~directors consisting of one (1) representative appointed by each school~~
 11 ~~district board of directors within the boundary of the cooperative.~~

12 ~~(b) No school district may have official representation on more than~~
 13 ~~one (1) cooperative board of directors.~~

14 ~~(c) The board of directors of each established education service~~
 15 ~~cooperative shall function as a public corporate body, shall meet, except as~~
 16 ~~otherwise provided in § 6-13-1007, at least eight (8) times each year, and~~
 17 ~~shall exercise general fiduciary responsibilities for the education service~~
 18 ~~cooperative with regard to policies and practices which guard the integrity~~
 19 ~~of the agency and maintain public trust in its operation.~~

20 ~~(d) Such responsibilities, consistent with funds available, shall~~
 21 ~~include, but not be limited to:~~

22 ~~(1) Employment of a director of the education service~~
 23 ~~cooperative who shall serve as the nonvoting executive officer of the board~~
 24 ~~of directors;~~

25 ~~(2) Establishment of policies and procedures for the operation~~
 26 ~~and management of the education service cooperative which shall be in written~~
 27 ~~form and shall be filed with the State Board of Education;~~

28 ~~(3) Preparation of an annual budget estimating income and~~
 29 ~~expenditures for programs and services in accordance with procedures~~
 30 ~~established by the state board;~~

31 ~~(4) Receipt and expenditure of funds needed to provide programs~~
 32 ~~and services in the area;~~

33 ~~(5) Making such surveys or other inquiries which may be required~~
 34 ~~to determine the service needs of school districts in the education service~~
 35 ~~cooperative and developing plans to provide such needed services;~~

36 ~~(6) Employment, upon the recommendations of the director of the~~

~~education service cooperative, of such personnel as may be required to provide the services requested by the school districts in the area;~~

~~(7) Implementation of policies established by the state board for the operation of education service cooperatives;~~

~~(8) Cooperation with other education service cooperatives, school districts, and other agencies to provide programs and services for children and adults residing within their respective areas;~~

~~(9) Renting, leasing, or receiving by gift such facilities and buildings as may be required to provide authorized programs and services; and~~

~~(10) Carrying out such other duties as may be required for the efficient operation of the education service cooperative for which the board is responsible.~~

~~6-13-1007. Executive committee.~~

~~(a)(1) In a meeting, with a majority of its members present and voting, the board of directors of an education service cooperative may elect from its membership an executive committee of seven (7), nine (9), or eleven (11) members.~~

~~(2) Candidates for the executive committee, if one is formed, shall be chosen so that the school districts within the education service cooperative are equitably represented.~~

~~(3) All subsequent members of the executive committee shall be elected by a majority vote of the board of directors in attendance at the annual meeting.~~

~~(b) The function of the executive committee shall be to carry out those duties delegated to it by the governing board, the provisions of § 6-13-1006 notwithstanding.~~

~~(c) Terms of executive committee members shall be three (3) years except for the initial members which shall have terms assigned by lot so as to stagger terms to equalize as nearly as possible the number of members to be elected each year. Vacancies occurring after the annual meeting shall be filled by the executive committee until the next annual meeting.~~

~~(d) Should an executive committee be established in any education service cooperative, it shall meet at least nine (9) times per year, and the requirements for board of directors meetings shall be reduced to three (3) times annually. The president of the board of directors shall serve as~~

1 ~~chairman of the executive committee. No person, however, may serve in this~~
 2 ~~position for more than two (2) consecutive years.~~

3
 4 ~~6-13-1008. Teacher center—Teacher center committee.~~

5 ~~(a) Each education service cooperative shall establish a teacher~~
 6 ~~center which will provide, consistent with funds available, curriculum~~
 7 ~~development assistance, educational materials, and staff development services~~
 8 ~~to teachers within the school districts in the service area.~~

9 ~~(b) A teacher center committee, composed of at least one (1)~~
 10 ~~representative from the staff of each school district, shall advise the~~
 11 ~~director and the governing body on the staffing, programs, and operation of~~
 12 ~~the teacher center.~~

13 ~~(c) The governing body of each cooperative shall determine the initial~~
 14 ~~composition of the teacher center committee to achieve a balance of~~
 15 ~~elementary, middle school or junior high, and high school personnel and~~
 16 ~~assure that at least one half (1/2), but not more than two thirds (2/3), of~~
 17 ~~the members are classroom teachers.~~

18 ~~(d) All positions on the committee shall be assigned to school~~
 19 ~~districts by lot.~~

20 ~~(e) Each teacher must be elected by colleagues in his or her district,~~
 21 ~~and each administrator or support person shall be appointed by the~~
 22 ~~superintendent.~~

23 ~~(f) Initial terms shall be determined by lot for equal or nearly equal~~
 24 ~~periods of one (1), two (2), and three (3) years.~~

25 ~~(g) Thereafter, terms shall be for three (3) years.~~

26 ~~(h) The committee shall meet at least three (3) times per year.~~

27 ~~(i) In the last meeting each year, positions represented by expiring~~
 28 ~~terms shall be reassigned by lot.~~

29
 30 ~~6-13-1009. Cooperative committees generally.~~

31 ~~Each education service cooperative may establish other committees of local~~
 32 ~~school personnel needed to keep its programs responsive to the schools it~~
 33 ~~serves.~~

34
 35 ~~6-13-1010. Director.~~

36 ~~(a) Each education service cooperative shall be administered by a~~

1 ~~director who shall perform the following duties:~~

2 ~~(1) Administer the programs and services of the education~~
3 ~~service cooperative;~~

4 ~~(2) Recommend the employment of professional and nonprofessional~~
5 ~~personnel authorized by the education service cooperative's governing body;~~

6 ~~(3) Prepare the budget for adoption by the education service~~
7 ~~cooperative's governing body;~~

8 ~~(4) Direct expenditures of funds within the budget; and~~

9 ~~(5) Perform other duties as required by the education service~~
10 ~~cooperative's governing body and the policies, rules, and regulations of the~~
11 ~~State Board of Education.~~

12 ~~(b) The director of each education service cooperative shall:~~

13 ~~(1) Hold an administrator's certificate and meet all~~
14 ~~requirements to serve as a superintendent of schools in the State of~~
15 ~~Arkansas; or~~

16 ~~(2) Have an equivalent level of education and administrative~~
17 ~~experience and obtain the approval of the board.~~

18 ~~(c) The governing body of any education service cooperative may enter~~
19 ~~into a contract with a director for a period not to exceed three (3) years.~~

20
21 ~~6-13-1011. Personnel generally.~~

22 ~~(a) Personnel of education service cooperatives shall be employed in~~
23 ~~accordance with laws, rules, regulations, and procedures applicable to the~~
24 ~~school districts of this state.~~

25 ~~(b) Certificate requirements shall be the same as those expected of~~
26 ~~persons holding similar positions in local school districts.~~

27 ~~(c) Termination or contract nonrenewal of education service~~
28 ~~cooperative personnel shall be as provided by law for the school district~~
29 ~~personnel.~~

30
31 ~~6-13-1012. Agency personnel.~~

32 ~~With the approval of an education service cooperative's governing body, the~~
33 ~~directors in the Department of Education may assign state educational agency~~
34 ~~personnel to that education service cooperative.~~

35
36 ~~6-13-1013. Policies, rules, and regulations.~~

1 ~~(a) The State Board of Education shall develop such policies, rules,~~
 2 ~~and regulations as may be needed for the proper administration of this~~
 3 ~~subchapter consistent with the need to support and assist education service~~
 4 ~~cooperatives in the delivery of services to school districts and with prudent~~
 5 ~~use of available human and financial resources.~~

6 ~~(b) Such policies, rules, and regulations shall include, but not be~~
 7 ~~limited to, those concerns that keep the education service cooperatives~~
 8 ~~operating within appropriate state and federal laws and serve as guides for~~
 9 ~~settling possible disputes between school districts and in equity or~~
 10 ~~jurisdictional matters relating to shared assets and services.~~

11
 12 ~~6-13-1014. Sharing and coordination of activities—Liaison.~~

13 ~~(a) The Department of Education shall encourage sharing and~~
 14 ~~coordination of activities among the education service cooperatives.~~

15 ~~(b) The Director of the Department of Education shall name a person to~~
 16 ~~serve as liaison between the department and the education service~~
 17 ~~cooperatives.~~

18 ~~(c) This liaison shall provide information on resources and programs~~
 19 ~~and be the general contact person in the department for the cooperatives.~~

20
 21 ~~6-13-1015. Liaison with postsecondary institutions.~~

22 ~~(a) Each education service cooperative, in carrying out its programs~~
 23 ~~and services, shall cooperate with the various state-supported postsecondary~~
 24 ~~educational institutions located within its area.~~

25 ~~(b) Each such postsecondary institution, within the availability of~~
 26 ~~funds and personnel, shall establish liaison with the education service~~
 27 ~~cooperatives in its service area and assist them in all practical ways.~~

28
 29 ~~6-13-1016. Annual surveys and needs assessments.~~

30 ~~(a) Each education service cooperative shall conduct annual surveys~~
 31 ~~and needs assessments to assist the cooperative in its first priority of~~
 32 ~~helping school districts improve their educational programs and practices.~~

33 ~~(b) Such activities may include written surveys, visits to schools to~~
 34 ~~meet with local personnel, and other means to identify local needs throughout~~
 35 ~~the service area.~~

36 ~~(c) Each education service cooperative shall work with the Department~~

1 of Education to conduct statewide surveys which complement, rather than
 2 duplicate, the work of the department.

3 (d) ~~The objective shall be to obtain statewide, area, and local data~~
 4 ~~with as little duplication as possible.~~

5
 6 ~~6-13-1017. Programs and services.~~

7 (a) ~~The programs and services of each education service cooperative~~
 8 ~~shall be based upon the needs of the school districts included in its service~~
 9 ~~area and upon the educational priorities of the state.~~

10 (b) ~~Each education service cooperative shall provide a teacher center~~
 11 ~~as its basic curriculum and staff development capability.~~

12 (c) ~~Education service cooperatives may provide shared educational~~
 13 ~~programs and services such as needs assessment and school improvement~~
 14 ~~planning, staff development, curriculum development, itinerant teachers,~~
 15 ~~instructional materials, adult and vocational education, programs for gifted~~
 16 ~~and talented, education for children with disabilities, alternative~~
 17 ~~educational programs, secondary area vocational centers, community based~~
 18 ~~education programs and other services which the State Board of Education may~~
 19 ~~approve or which school districts may support with local funds.~~

20
 21 ~~6-13-1018. Participation of local school districts—Contracts.~~

22 (a) ~~Each school district within the service area of the education~~
 23 ~~service cooperative shall be entitled to participate in those programs and~~
 24 ~~services which are fully supported by state funds.~~

25 (b) ~~No school district shall be required to participate in any~~
 26 ~~service.~~

27 (c) ~~School districts may enter into contracts with the education~~
 28 ~~service cooperative for services supported partially or completely by local~~
 29 ~~school funds.~~

30 (d) ~~School districts within one (1) education service cooperative may~~
 31 ~~also contract for services with another education service cooperative.~~

32
 33 ~~6-13-1019. Funding of cooperatives.~~

34 (a) ~~The state shall provide funds to support the basic structure of~~
 35 ~~the education service cooperatives established under the provisions of this~~
 36 ~~subchapter.~~

1 ~~(b) This structure shall include:~~

2 ~~(1) Salaries and fringe benefits for a director, a teacher~~
 3 ~~center coordinator, and support staff;~~

4 ~~(2) Costs such as travel, utilities, rent, equipment, and~~
 5 ~~supplies;~~

6 ~~(3) Funds to support staff and curriculum development~~
 7 ~~activities; and~~

8 ~~(4) Funds in an annual amount not to exceed twenty five thousand~~
 9 ~~dollars (\$25,000) for the travel expenses of itinerant personnel employed by~~
 10 ~~the education service cooperative to serve the part time needs of local~~
 11 ~~districts.~~

12 ~~(c) School districts may contract with their education service~~
 13 ~~cooperative for services and part time personnel to be supported in whole or~~
 14 ~~in part by local funds, but no school district shall be assessed a membership~~
 15 ~~fee.~~

16 ~~(d) Categorical state or federal funds may also be assigned to any~~
 17 ~~education service cooperative upon approval of its governing body and under~~
 18 ~~conditions set by the State Board of Education.~~

19 ~~(e) As a public agency, each education service cooperative shall be~~
 20 ~~eligible to receive and expend public and private funds.~~

21
 22 ~~6-13-1020. Policies and procedures—Expenditures, reports, and~~
 23 ~~audits.~~

24 ~~(a)(1) The policies and procedures for each education service~~
 25 ~~cooperative shall be filed with and approved by the State Board of Education.~~
 26 ~~This report shall be filed on or before June 1 of each year and shall~~
 27 ~~contain, but is not limited to, a record of the cooperative's employment~~
 28 ~~policies and practices for the year. This annual employment record must~~
 29 ~~include the race and sex of each person employed or terminated during the~~
 30 ~~year by the cooperative and the race and sex of every person who sought~~
 31 ~~employment with the cooperative during the year. The employment report must~~
 32 ~~further disclose each person employed by the cooperative during the year who~~
 33 ~~is related by blood or marriage to another employee or board member of the~~
 34 ~~cooperative.~~

35 ~~(2) Reports of receipts and expenditures shall also be filed~~
 36 ~~with the board on forms provided and time schedules set by the Director of~~

1 ~~the Department of Education. These reports shall contain, but not be limited~~
 2 ~~to, an itemization of administrative and programmatic expenditures.~~
 3 ~~Expenditures shall be reported in accordance with uniform accounting~~
 4 ~~procedures adopted by the department.~~

5 ~~(3) Education service cooperatives shall be subject to annual~~
 6 ~~audits by the Legislative Joint Auditing Committee.~~

7 ~~(b) In an annual meeting of the board of directors which must be~~
 8 ~~convened between May 15 and July 15, the education service cooperatives shall~~
 9 ~~report to their constituent school districts on the year's operations. Such~~
 10 ~~reports shall be supplemented with written reports to each district and to~~
 11 ~~the Department of Education on a school by school, service by service~~
 12 ~~accounting basis. Any balances in particular service accounts must be~~
 13 ~~apportioned and returned to the schools involved or credited to their~~
 14 ~~accounts for the following year.~~

15
 16 ~~6-13-1021. Evaluations.~~

17 ~~(a) Within each five year period, on a schedule established by the~~
 18 ~~Director of the Department of Education, all active education service~~
 19 ~~cooperatives must be visited by an evaluation committee of not more than nine~~
 20 ~~(9) persons.~~

21 ~~(b) Each evaluation shall include, but not be limited to, an~~
 22 ~~investigation of user satisfaction, service adequacy, extent of local~~
 23 ~~financial support, staff qualifications, and performance and administration~~
 24 ~~effectiveness.~~

25 ~~(c)(1) The report of this committee shall be filed with the~~
 26 ~~cooperative visited, with its constituent school districts, and with the~~
 27 ~~State Board of Education.~~

28 ~~(2) The board shall acknowledge receipt of the report and~~
 29 ~~comment on any deficiencies identified in the report which should be~~
 30 ~~corrected for the cooperative to remain eligible for base funding.~~

31 ~~(d) The intent of this evaluation procedure is to provide a means for~~
 32 ~~school districts to express their concerns about the operation of their~~
 33 ~~cooperative and to ensure that each education service cooperative remains~~
 34 ~~alert and responsive to the needs of the local schools it serves.~~

35 ~~(e)(1) For each evaluation, the director shall appoint the committee~~
 36 ~~and designate its chairperson.~~

1 ~~(2) The committee shall include the following from outside the~~
 2 ~~boundary of the education service cooperative being evaluated;~~

- 3 ~~(A) A Department of Education staff member;~~
- 4 ~~(B) A teacher;~~
- 5 ~~(C) An administrator;~~
- 6 ~~(D) A college staff member; and~~
- 7 ~~(E) A present or former staff member of an area education~~
 8 ~~service agency.~~

9 ~~(3) In addition, the committee shall include from within the~~
 10 ~~cooperative's area;~~

- 11 ~~(A) A member of the school district board of directors;~~
- 12 ~~(B) A representative of business and industry; and~~
- 13 ~~(C) A school parent from each of two (2) school districts.~~

14 ~~(4) Each cooperative shall pay the reasonable costs of its~~
 15 ~~evaluation.~~

16
 17 ~~6-13-1022. Dissolution of cooperative.~~

18 ~~(a) After 1990, the State Board of Education shall be authorized to~~
 19 ~~dissolve any education service cooperative upon the request of a majority of~~
 20 ~~its school district boards of directors or upon the recommendation of the~~
 21 ~~evaluation committee provided for in § 6-13-1021.~~

22 ~~(b) A dissolved education service cooperative's area shall be assigned~~
 23 ~~to one (1) or more adjacent education service cooperatives, the provisions of~~
 24 ~~§ 6-13-1003 notwithstanding, with the dissolved cooperative's base funding~~
 25 ~~apportioned to all remaining education service cooperatives in the state.~~

26
 27 ~~6-13-1023. Technology training center—Technology coordinator.~~

28 ~~(a) Consistent with funds available and upon a majority vote of the~~
 29 ~~members present and voting, the board of directors of each education service~~
 30 ~~cooperative established under this subchapter is authorized to establish a~~
 31 ~~technology training center and employ a technology coordinator who has~~
 32 ~~demonstrated expertise in computer technology and staff development.~~

33 ~~(b) The duties of the technology coordinator at such technology~~
 34 ~~training center shall include, but not be limited to, the following:~~

- 35 ~~(1) To provide staff development for personnel of member~~
 36 ~~schools;~~

1 ~~(2) To assist member schools with determining technology needs~~
 2 ~~and types of computer hardware and software necessary to meet those needs;~~

3 ~~(3) To assist with technology system analysis and local network~~
 4 ~~design;~~

5 ~~(4) To provide member schools with information on technology~~
 6 ~~standards and specifications;~~

7 ~~(5) To develop and coordinate a technology training center~~
 8 ~~located at the education service cooperative;~~

9 ~~(6) To coordinate information with the Arkansas Public School~~
 10 ~~Computer Network, the Instructional Microcomputer Project for Arkansas~~
 11 ~~Classrooms, and the Governor's Technology Task Force so that member schools~~
 12 ~~will be informed on technological activity in the state; and~~

13 ~~(7) To assist with requests for proposal development and bid~~
 14 ~~analysis so that member schools will be better able to spend funds for~~
 15 ~~technology.~~

16
 17 ~~6-13-1025. Mathematics and science center—Mathematics and science~~
 18 ~~coordinator.~~

19 ~~(a) Consistent with funds available and upon a majority vote of the~~
 20 ~~members present and voting, the board of directors of each education service~~
 21 ~~cooperative established under this subchapter is authorized to establish a~~
 22 ~~mathematics and science center and to employ a mathematics and science~~
 23 ~~coordinator who has demonstrated expertise in mathematics and science~~
 24 ~~content, in pedagogy, and in staff development.~~

25 ~~(b) The duties of the mathematics and science coordinator at the~~
 26 ~~mathematics and science resource center shall include, but not be limited to,~~
 27 ~~the following:~~

28 ~~(1) Providing mathematics and science staff development for and~~
 29 ~~individual technical assistance to personnel of member schools;~~

30 ~~(2) Assisting member schools with determining mathematics and~~
 31 ~~science curricula, with instruction, and with assessment of needs and~~
 32 ~~resources necessary to meet those needs;~~

33 ~~(3) Enhancing curricula and instruction using technology;~~

34 ~~(4) Providing member schools with information for curriculum~~
 35 ~~alignment with mathematics and science standards and state frameworks;~~

36 ~~(5) Developing and coordinating a mathematics and science~~

1 ~~resource center located at the education service cooperative; and~~

2 ~~(6) Assisting with the development of requests for proposals for~~
3 ~~teacher enhancement in mathematics and science.~~

4
5 ~~6-13-1026. Cooperatives qualify as local education agencies.~~

6 ~~(a) The General Assembly designates that the education service~~
7 ~~cooperatives created by this subchapter meet the definition of "local~~
8 ~~education agencies" by virtue of the fact that each is a public authority,~~
9 ~~legally constituted within this state to perform a service function for a~~
10 ~~public elementary and secondary school in school districts and other~~
11 ~~political subdivisions of the state and to form a consortia of school~~
12 ~~districts which are recognized by the General Assembly as administrative~~
13 ~~agents for public elementary and secondary schools.~~

14 ~~(b) This section intends to recognize the function of the cooperatives~~
15 ~~and to provide eligibility to cooperatives to receive state and federal funds~~
16 ~~upon written requests from the school districts.~~

17
18 SECTION 3. Arkansas Code § 6-1-202(c)(3), concerning Arkansas
19 Leadership Institute for Teachers of the Delta, is amended to read as
20 follows:

21 (3)(A) A-Lift shall be located in Helena, Pine Bluff, or
22 Monticello at an existing site with space available to house the institute.

23 (B) An existing site may be a two-year institution, a
24 four-year institution, ~~an education service cooperative,~~ or other
25 institution.

26 (C) Preference for location shall be given to four-year
27 institutions ~~or education service cooperatives~~ in Helena, Pine Bluff, or
28 Monticello that have experience in professional development support
29 mentoring, teacher licensure, and teacher quality.

30 (D) The board shall have authority to issue the requests
31 for proposals site selection, and the selection shall be based upon a
32 response to a request for proposal issued through the board.

33
34 SECTION 4. Arkansas Code § 6-10-109(b)(1), concerning the Parents As
35 Teachers program, is amended to read as follows:

36 (b)(1) Only public school districts ~~or education service cooperatives~~

1 established under Act 103 of the Extraordinary Session of 1983 [repealed] or
 2 under § 6-13-1001 et seq. are eligible for grants to operate Parents As
 3 Teachers programs.

4
 5 SECTION 5. Arkansas Code § 6-11-118(b)(3), concerning the Office of
 6 Rural Services, is amended to read as follows:

7 (3) The duties of this office shall be to:

8 (A) Direct programs to improve the quality of the rural
 9 schools of the state by helping to deliver comprehensive technical assistance
 10 services such as curriculum development, teaching methods evaluations,
 11 program development, planning, needs assessments, etc.;

12 (B) Help develop teacher training programs that fit the
 13 needs of rural students;

14 (C) Develop and conduct in-service education programs for
 15 rural teachers, administrators, and county board of education members;

16 (D) Act as liaison between rural education and rural
 17 development activities;

18 ~~(E) Assist rural districts in developing rural resource~~
 19 ~~cooperatives in order that rural schools can share a pool of specialized~~
 20 ~~human, material, and technical resources;~~

21 ~~(F)~~(E) Assist rural schools in construction and renovation
 22 programs;

23 ~~(G)~~(F) Identify and create an awareness of promising
 24 practices of rural schools throughout the state and nation;

25 ~~(H)~~(G) Serve as liaison between the department and the
 26 small schools; and

27 ~~(I)~~(H) Coordinate all other activities especially for
 28 small schools and collect such data as are needed by the General Assembly in
 29 order that rural schools may be properly financed.

30
 31 SECTION 6. Arkansas Code § 6-15-504(b) through (d), concerning home-
 32 schooled students testing requirements, is amended to read as follows:

33 (b)(1)(A) The administration of the tests required of home-schooled
 34 students shall be ~~by the directors of the education service cooperatives~~
 35 ~~established under § 6-13-1001 et seq. or as otherwise~~ designated by the
 36 Department of Education.

1 (B) For the purposes of this section, the superintendents
 2 of the Little Rock, North Little Rock, and Pulaski County school districts
 3 shall act in lieu of an education service ~~cooperative~~ director.

4 (2) The ~~directors of the education service cooperatives~~ Director
 5 of the Department of Education shall establish a common set of procedures,
 6 ~~approved by the Director of the Department of Education,~~ for the proper
 7 administration of the tests required by this section.

8 (3) The administration shall include purchasing the test
 9 materials, giving the tests, scoring and interpreting the tests, and
 10 reporting test results.

11 (c) The cost of testing required by this section shall be the
 12 responsibility of the department when the tests are administered by the
 13 ~~directors of the education service cooperatives or other~~ department
 14 designees.

15 (d) Alternate testing procedures may be approved by the ~~director of an~~
 16 ~~education service cooperative~~ Director of the Department of Education after
 17 consultation with the parents of a home-schooled student; provided, however,
 18 that any costs associated with an alternate testing procedure shall be the
 19 responsibility of the parents.

20
 21 SECTION 7. Arkansas Code § 6-17-1113(a)(1) and (2), concerning a list
 22 of the entities covered by the School Worker Defense Program, are repealed.

- 23 ~~(1) Education service cooperatives;~~
 24 ~~(2) Education service cooperative board members;~~

25
 26 SECTION 8. Arkansas Code § 6-18-102(f), concerning school uniforms, is
 27 amended to read as follows:

28 (f) The Department of Education ~~and educational cooperatives~~ shall,
 29 when possible, assist public schools by providing information regarding
 30 uniform dress codes upon request from public school administrators.

31
 32 SECTION 9. Arkansas Code § 6-20-818 is repealed:
 33 ~~6-20-818. Loans to education service cooperatives.~~

34 ~~(a) Subject to the conditions and limitations of this section, any~~
 35 ~~education service cooperative established under § 6-13-1001 et seq. may~~
 36 ~~borrow, and the State Board of Education may lend, moneys in the Revolving~~

1 ~~Loan Fund.~~

2 ~~(b) The maximum amount of money an education service cooperative may~~
 3 ~~owe the Revolving Loan Fund at any one (1) time is that equal to a six-~~
 4 ~~month's basic grant for the fiscal year in which a loan is sought.~~

5 ~~(c) The board of directors of any education service cooperative~~
 6 ~~desiring to borrow money from the Revolving Loan Fund, acting through its~~
 7 ~~director, shall file a formal application with the board. The application~~
 8 ~~shall contain the following information:~~

9 ~~(1) The name and location of the cooperative;~~

10 ~~(2) The date and place of the meeting of the board at which~~
 11 ~~action was taken authorizing the director to make formal application for a~~
 12 ~~loan;~~

13 ~~(3) The estimated amount which it proposes to borrow, together~~
 14 ~~with supporting evidence upon which the estimate is based;~~

15 ~~(4) The purpose for which the proceeds of the loan would be~~
 16 ~~used;~~

17 ~~(5) The security for the loan and the method and schedule for~~
 18 ~~repayment; and~~

19 ~~(6) Such additional information as may be required by the board.~~

20 ~~(d) After considering the merits of each application, the board may,~~
 21 ~~in its discretion:~~

22 ~~(1) Approve the application for the full amount of the proposed~~
 23 ~~loan;~~

24 ~~(2) Approve the application for a loan of a lesser amount than~~
 25 ~~the amount requested; or~~

26 ~~(3) Disapprove the application.~~

27 ~~(e) Each such loan, which is to be paid in full as to both principal~~
 28 ~~and interest within or at the end of ten (10) years from the date of its~~
 29 ~~approval by the board, shall be evidenced by a certificate executed by the~~
 30 ~~Director of the Department of Education. Thereafter, each such certificate~~
 31 ~~shall be a negotiable instrument.~~

32
 33 SECTION 10. Arkansas Code § 6-21-109(b)(1), concerning rules and
 34 regulations governing public works projects, is amended to read as follows:

35 (b)(1) As used in this section, "public educational entities" means
 36 Arkansas public school districts, charter schools, ~~educational cooperatives,~~

1 or any publicly supported entity having supervision over public educational
 2 entities.

3
 4 SECTION 11. Arkansas Code § 6-47-201(e), concerning distance learning
 5 in elementary and secondary public schools, is amended to read as follows:

6 (e) The department shall work with the Arkansas School for Mathematics
 7 and Sciences, the Arkansas Educational Television Commission, ~~the education~~
 8 ~~service cooperatives~~, and other state agencies involved in distance learning
 9 in implementing distance learning.

10
 11 SECTION 12. Arkansas Code Title 6, Chapter 13, is amended to add an
 12 additional subchapter to read as follows:

13 6-13-1601. Resource center established - Functions.

14 (a)(1) The State Board of Education is authorized to establish
 15 resource centers for school districts.

16 (2) The resource centers shall be intermediate service units in
 17 the state's elementary and secondary education system, and as such shall be
 18 eligible to receive and expend funds from state and federal governments,
 19 school districts, and other public or private sources.

20 (b) Resource centers established by this subchapter may provide to
 21 school districts, that choose to use them, assistance in:

22 (1) Meeting or exceeding accreditation standards and equalizing
 23 educational opportunities;

24 (2) Using educational resources more effectively through
 25 cooperation among school districts; and

26 (3) Promoting coordination between school districts and the
 27 Department of Education in order to provide services that are consistent with
 28 the needs identified by school districts and the educational priorities of
 29 the state as established by the General Assembly or the board.

30
 31 6-13-1602. Policies, rules, and regulations.

32 (a) The State Board of Education shall develop such policies, rules,
 33 and regulations as may be needed for the proper administration of this
 34 subchapter consistent with the need to support and assist resource centers in
 35 the delivery of services to school districts and with prudent use of
 36 available human and financial resources.

1 (b) The policies, rules, and regulations shall include, but not be
2 limited to, those concerns that keep the resource centers operating within
3 appropriate state and federal laws and serve as guides for settling possible
4 disputes between school districts and in equity or jurisdictional matters
5 relating to shared assets and services.

6
7 6-13-1603. Resource centers qualify as local education agencies.

8 (a) The General Assembly designates that the resource centers created
9 by this subchapter meet the definition of “local education agencies” because
10 each is a public authority, legally constituted within this state to perform
11 a service function for a public elementary and secondary school in school
12 districts and other political subdivisions of the state, and to form a
13 consortia for school districts that are recognized by the General Assembly as
14 administrative agents for public elementary and secondary schools.

15 (b) This section intends to recognize the function of the resource
16 centers and to provide eligibility to resource centers to receive state and
17 federal funds.