

High-Value Services

Throughout our 40-year history, Cooperative Educational Service Agency (CESA) #1 has been dedicated to providing innovative, high-quality services that help our member districts meet the diverse needs of their students. In these times of significant financial constraints, we've redoubled our efforts to provide the best value for our clients by capitalizing on grant opportunities, facilitating partnerships with businesses and foundations, and streamlining our processes.

Here are just a few examples of how our prices compare to other educational service providers in our area:

Service	CESA #1 member cost	Cost from other service providers
Alternative Licensure Program	\$10,920/year	\$12,000-\$28,000/year
Alternative Program for Severe EBD Students	\$28,270/seat	\$33,120-\$47,700/seat
Rtl Consultation	\$940/day	\$995-\$2,000/day
Workshops	typically \$125/day	\$189/day

Value through Efficiency

How do we do this? One strategy is efficiency. In our alternative Proficiency Based Licensure (PBL) program, we use technology to **quickly and effectively** manage information and work; while at the same time, we engage participants in meaningful professional relationships with coaches and assessors. This blended approach enables participants to progress at their own pace while keeping costs low. Our most recent program evaluation from the Department of Public Instruction indicated that “the PBL Program provides a quality, performance-based program that supports candidates in developing the knowledge and skills to become effective educators.”

Efficiency measures also keep costs low for services such as **speech/language pathology**. For example, local service providers charge an average of \$65 per hour for this service. When compared to CESA #1’s average rate of \$23.51 per 15-minute unit, it may appear that the other provider offers a lower price. However, their \$65/hour rate is assessed for all of the therapist’s time, including travel, completing paperwork, and attending meetings. CESA #1’s rate is assessed for face-to-face time with students and IEP-related activities, resulting in a lower overall cost. The difference becomes evident when evaluating annualized service costs. For one year of speech/language pathology services, CESA #1’s estimated charge is \$88,000, while the competitor will charge \$93,600—an additional six percent—for the same service.

Mission

CESA #1 provides high-quality, **cost-effective programs and services** that are responsive to the dynamic needs of our members, clients, and the students they serve. As a regional cooperative, we **leverage local, state, and national resources** to support schools in providing quality learning opportunities for *all* students.

“Contracting with CESA #1 has provided great value for our district, especially from a cost perspective.”

*Ann M. Goebel
Director of Pupil Services
Germantown School District*



Value through Shared Staffing

We also rely on **regional collaboration** to keep costs low. For instance, it can be very difficult to recruit a Physical Therapist, and it's even more difficult to find one who is willing to work part time. CESA #1 **does the legwork** to recruit and retain staff as well as to manage caseloads among therapists and districts. As a result, districts get great staff to support their students without investing resources to hire and manage staff.

Another regional cost-savings measure is consulting services. Some districts have been forced to reduce key positions or have added additional responsibilities to positions that are already over-burdened. CESA #1 helps by providing consulting services on an **as-needed basis**. Districts can purchase only the time they need without added hiring and management responsibilities, they can add additional time if it becomes necessary, and costs are shared among participating districts.

In all shared-staffing arrangements, CESA #1 assumes all employer-related responsibilities, which again saves districts money. For example, within days we can add or remove a student from a therapist's caseload, so the district doesn't need to hire additional staff or pay full-time compensation for someone without a full caseload. We also provide coaching and professional development, handle performance problems, and cover liability insurance and worker's compensation costs.

Value through Grant Funding

CESA #1 manages approximately 40 grants annually, providing our member districts with **access to more than \$2,000,000** in grant-funded activities, including expert consulting, networking opportunities, content-specific workshops, current research, legislative analysis, and access to additional grant funding. For example, as part of Regional Service Network, members receive, **free of charge**, regular updates regarding state-level initiatives, legal briefings, and best practices in special education strategies.

Value through Business and Foundation Partnerships

CESA #1 actively engages business partners and foundations for the benefit our member districts. For example, since 2009 we've led an effort to transform public education on a regional scale. As part of the Personalized Learning Initiative, we've supported the development of a white paper, hosted symposiums featuring national and international education experts, provided countless hours of facilitation and consulting services, and mobilized a regional action network to support districts in implementing personalized learning projects. These services were all provided **at no cost to our member districts**, and were possible through our partnerships with businesses and foundations.

The challenges ahead of us are greater than ever, and school districts have been asked to meet these challenges with very limited resources. CESA #1 is helping districts meet this dichotomy in multiple ways, always with the goal of providing them with substantial value in the services offered by our Agency.

"The special education population can change in a blink of an eye. If a student leaves the district and is served by a staff member who is under contract, we may be stuck with an employee who is being paid full time without a full caseload. In the same way, if a student enters the district, we could be scrambling to hire someone to meet individual student needs. Contracting for these services takes the pressure off of the district to manage these difficult and time-consuming situations."

*Jan Chapman
Director of Pupil Services and the Early Learning Center
Cedarburg School District*

