

The SSOCC regularly convenes a safety advisory committee that includes school district superintendents, principals, insurance company representatives, local university representatives and ESD staff. Twenty of the ESD region's 25 districts are members of the SSOCC. Fees help pay for SSOCC services, set at two levels – \$2,000 and \$5,000 per school annually – with a reduced rate for schools with fewer than 300 students. For an extra fee, schools — including those outside the SSOCC and ESD 105 — can purchase access to ESD 105's exclusive safety software systems.

The SSOCC provides many services to help school districts close gaps in their safety preparations. These include creating an inventory of maintained safety assets, annually reviewing the school's safety portfolio and making sure schools log their drills. The SSOCC also offers many types of trainings, including de-escalation, threat assessment and crisis response. SSOCC staff use a tracking system that shows which services the ESD has provided to each district and schools' compliance with specific state school safety laws. An SSOCC staff member monitors schools' safety efforts on weekdays, and conducts monthly one-hour calls with schools to check on their progress. These services, plus SSOCC guidance and record-keeping tools, help school districts increase their level of accountability.

While ESD 105 is the only ESD with a fully operational regional safety center, about half of all ESDs reported offering some type of safety co-op service, although they are not as robust as the services provided through the SSOCC. The rest of the ESDs indicated they had not yet established a regional co-op but believe this is the best model moving forward.

Funding, however, remains an issue. For all of the ESD safety center co-ops including the SSOCC, only the school districts willing and able to pay have joined, and ESDs reported district buy-in can be a challenge. Those ESDs yet to establish regional safety co-ops said they would like to follow suit but only if they could receive adequate funding to do so.

### **A regional level oversight mechanism could produce more consistent safety preparations statewide while increasing coordination, accountability and cost-savings**

When ESDs enumerated the benefits of a regional safety model, they noted that such a model brings together resources from other school districts, establishes consistency, saves schools money on training, and acts as a support and accountability network. Many of the practices that help address gaps in school safety preparedness are only possible when school districts coordinate locally or with other districts.



The [Educational Service District regional safety model] would provide for better and more consistent coordination between and among OSPI, the 9 ESDs, our 295 [districts], Charter Schools and all K-12 schools. This would help ensure common language, preparation, response and planning efforts throughout the state.

School Safety Advisory Committee



"Collaborating lessens the work load for each school."

"Our interagency meetings provide accountability."

School districts

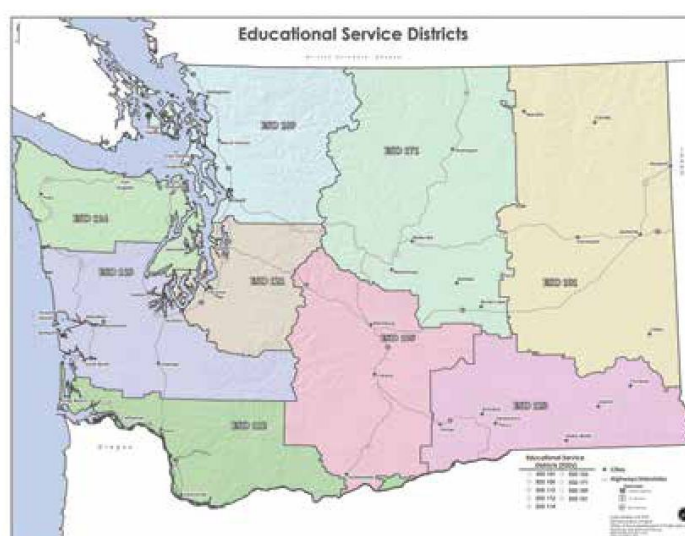


## Educational Service Districts (ESDs) can play a wide-ranging role in facilitating school safety coordination

The state's nine ESDs support school districts in their regions (shown in Exhibit 3)

through a variety of services, including mental and behavioral health assessments, threat assessments and training opportunities. ESDs provide planning resources and regionally consistent coordination. Although the individual safety support services each ESD offers depend on the availability of resources and staff expertise, at a minimum they can include trainings or threat assessments. ESD staff are often available to attend regional safety meetings; a few school districts have a memorandum of understanding with their ESD for added accountability and meet monthly if not more frequently. ESDs that have an established safety program or co-op may also assess safety plans, send reminders about drills, and help districts complete their drill requirements. Having a more regional view of school safety helps account for local needs and risks, and can provide accountability that a single state agency may struggle to offer. One ESD in particular serves as a model for regional safety coordination.

**Exhibit 3 – Washington's ESDs**



Source: OSPI.

## The School Safety Operations and Coordination Center offers a recognized model for safety preparedness coordination

ESD 105, which includes Yakima, established the School Safety Operations and Coordination Center (SSOCC) as a regional safety center, which school districts, stakeholders and the Legislature have recognized as a model worthy of imitation. In 2016, the Legislature noted that one particular ESD had developed a model for regional school safety, and permitted other ESDs to do the same.

“The legislature finds [...] there is a need to develop training for school personnel to intervene and provide assistance during these emergency incidents. The legislature recognizes an educational service district has developed a model for a regional school safety and security center, which can provide this type of training.”