



NORTHEAST
SERVICE COOPERATIVE

2027

Annual Plan

Serving Schools, Cities, and other Governmental Agencies in Northeastern Minnesota

NORTHEAST SERVICE COOPERATIVE

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Company Overview

*Northeast Service Cooperative is
committed to serving
our members.*

Established by the Legislature

Northeast Service Cooperative (NESC), located in Mountain Iron, Minnesota, was established by the legislature as a nonprofit public corporation. It is one of nine service cooperatives in the state. It operates under State Statute 123A.21.

Governance

NESC is governed by a nine-member Board of Directors of which the majority must be current members of school board elected at large from the NESC area. The remaining members may be representatives of other participating agencies, such as cities, counties, or other governmental agencies.

Serving members for more than four decades

NESC services schools, cities, counties, and other governmental agencies throughout northeastern Minnesota.

Programs and Services

NESC provides an array of niche services including Group Health and Dental Insurance, Medical Spending Accounts, Environmental Health & Safety, Education Services, Telecommunications & Technology, Cooperative Purchasing, Online Learning, Wellness Initiatives, Academic Programs, and Fiscal Hosting.

Contact

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Business Services

Risk Management

The Northeast Service Cooperative partners with various providers to form pools to address the needs of schools, cities, counties, governmental agencies, and their employees. The insurance pools provide expanded employee contracts and more effective fiscal control of premiums. All insurance programs are offered in partnership with qualified and reputable providers that are financially sound and capable of delivering the services required. Schools, cities, counties, governmental units and their employees may access these programs at any time:

- Dental
- Medical
- Medical Spending Accounts (HSA, FSA, VEBA)
- Life
- Employee Assistance Program
- Long-Term Disability
- Long-Term Care
- Vision

Other Administrative Services

- Fiscal Host Services
- Grant Management
- Financial Reporting

Contact

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Business Services

Environmental Health and Safety

The Northeast Service Cooperative (NESC) is a partner with the Institute for Environmental Assessment, Inc. (IEA). IEA is a small business founded in 1984. IEA is committed to provide practical, cost-effective environmental safety consulting compliance for private and public organizations. Clients include school districts, hospitals, government agencies, and businesses in a variety of industries throughout the country. IEA experts design and execute solutions that accomplish specific goals of your company. IEA maintains an office at NESC. The contact is Grant Chapa, Regional Manager for Virginia and Brainerd. He may be reached at 218-748-7631 or Grant.Chapa@ieasafety.com. Their website is www.ieasafety.com.



Institute for Environmental Assessment (IEA) Hosts the Following Divisions:

Environmental Project Design and Management

IEA employs a team of experienced and EPA-certified licensed asbestos inspectors, management planners, site supervisors, project designers, and lead risk assessors. IEA provides asbestos awareness training, demolition surveys, material inspection sampling and assessments, hazardous waste removal and clean-up management plans, AHERA inspections, lead sampling inspection, and project management. They are widely recognized for its knowledge in asbestos and lead project design and management, including AHERA and NESHAP compliance.

Indoor Air Quality (IAQ)

IEA has capabilities to provide comprehensive IAQ assessments and solutions to building owners and managers. Their team of certified industrial hygienists, environmental consultants, public health personnel, and engineers are available to assist in resolving IAQ concerns. IEA can provide investigative mold/moisture assessments, proactive IAQ management, remediation design and monitoring, HVAC performance evaluations, ventilation system commissioning or re-commissioning, and healthcare infection control consulting and design.

Environmental, Health and Safety Services

IEA specializes in custom solutions to environmental, health, and safety concerns, no matter how big or small. IEA experts will evaluate and provide the best consultation services for your organization.

IEA has trained and experienced personnel able to assist with OSHA, MSHA, DOT, and EPA compliance. Compliance assistance includes program reviews/audits, employee exposure assessments, developing health and safety management plans, and much more.

IEA's staff have access to existing written programs, plans, management systems and proven, time-tested implementation procedures to offer a health and safety compliance team that is poised to provide cost-effective, efficient, and professional compliance services.



Revitalization Building Solutions

NESC also partners with Ingensa who creates collaborative teams to guide our member groups through project planning, facility assessments, building design, and construction management services. To see what services they offer, visit their website at www.ingensainc.com.



Cooperative Purchasing



Our Cooperative Purchasing Program (CPC) offers members a wide range of high-quality products and services at discounted rates. By combining the purchasing power of all members, we can achieve volume pricing on quality products and services from reputable vendors. You, the member, can purchase a small quantity and get the large quantity discount.

Visit www.purchasingconnection.org for a listing of vendors.

For a convenient purchasing experience, visit www.cpcexpress.org.

The contracted vendors we have are established through formal bids. Members may access those contracts and satisfy Minnesota competitive bidding requirements - regardless of the amount of the purchase. The ability to do so is outlined in Minnesota Statutes [123A.2](#) and [471.345](#).

Utilizing our purchasing program gives you more buying power and choice in the contracts you can use to save time and money and bring value to your organization. Plus, all the contracts have been awarded through the required competitive process.

Contacts

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Cooperative Purchasing

Athletics

Gym Floor Renovation/New
Electronic Scoreboards
Synthetic Field Turf
Track Surfacing
Wall Mats for Gymnasiums
Telescopic Seating
Athletic Field Press Box
Outdoor Bleachers
Athletic Equipment
Sports Facility LED Lightning
Lockers & Storage Products

Office Equipment

Copy Machines
Printers Color/Black & White
3D Printers
Wide Format Printers
Scanners

Facilities & Grounds

Floor Cleaning Equipment
Electronic Recycling Services
LED Lighting Equipment
Playground Systems/Equipment
Precision Lawn Mowers
Custodial Supplies
Roofing Solutions
Carpet/Resilient Flooring
Resin Concrete Flooring
Air Filters, Plumbing Supplies
Recycling/Waste Containers

Furniture

Classroom Furniture
Libraries/Media Centers
General Office
Lobby/Bathroom
Ergonomic Furniture
Senior Living
Recreational
Cafeteria Tables

Instructional Resources

Online Reading Solutions
eBook Mgmt/Software
Educational Math Software
Professional Services

Classroom Supplies

Early Childhood
Elementary Classroom
Middle & High School
Art Supplies
Industrial Technology
Special Needs
STEM Supplies

Office Supplies

General Office Supplies
Breakroom and Kitchen
Copy Paper/Colored Paper
Printer Ink Cartridges

Technology

Computers
Technology Equipment
Educational Software
Amplification Solutions
Software
SMART Boards & zSpace
Access Control
Voice and Data Infrastructure
Fire Alarm
Intrusion Detection/Monitoring
IP Video Systems

Health & Wellness

Safety Equipment
Health & Safety Supplies
Portable Air Purifiers

Security

Metal Detectors
Finger/Palm Capture
Safety Management Tools
STOPit Software

Electronic Content Management

Food Service & Bread Program

Online Safety Management

Mobile Educational Broadband

Vehicle Auction Services

Commercial Vehicle Purchasing

Theatrical/Auditorium Products

Kitchen Smallwares/Lg Equip

Education Services

Education Services continues to develop its programming and services to best fit our region and make an impact for our educators and students. Although we continue to provide quality facilitation and training services, our workshops have developed to encompass the larger role technology plays in the way business is conducted.

Workshops, Trainings & Conferences

- Teacher/Administrator Development Series
- Facilitating Online Learning
- Creating Online Course Content
- Literacy and Math Cohorts
- Improvement Plan Development

Planning, Facilitation and Research Services

The Northeast Service Cooperative will continue to offer facilitation services to our members. These services are customizable to meet specific needs within an organization. A representative list includes:

- Strategic Planning
- Mediation Services
- Team Building / Leadership Skills / Program Evaluation
- Action Planning / Goal Setting / Data Analysis
- Research Services / Grant Writing
- Meeting Facilitation

NESC provides staff development planning, facilitation, grant research and writing, and program evaluation services for school districts and other NESC members in the region.

Grant Writing

One of the objectives of the Northeast Service Cooperative's mission is to seek out and help our members apply for funding opportunities to support their initiatives.

NESC provides services under the following grants:

- Minnesota Department of Education
- Minnesota Department of Health
- United States Department of Agriculture, Rural Utilities Service
- Department of Employment and Economic Development
- Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation Board
- Economic Development Administration
- Public Health Workforce supplemental funding from the Center of Disease Control and Prevention, administered by the Minnesota Department of Health
- Rural Career and Technical Educate (CTE)
- Minnesota Statewide Longitudinal Education Data System (SLEDS)



Education Services

MSC Online Learning Program Initiatives

The MSC Online Learning Program is proud to help meet the needs of school districts across the state by providing challenging online learning opportunities for students. Our program is a part-time non-diploma program so students remain enrolled in their home district while taking their online courses. We are approved by the Minnesota Department of Education to offer online courses for middle and high school students.

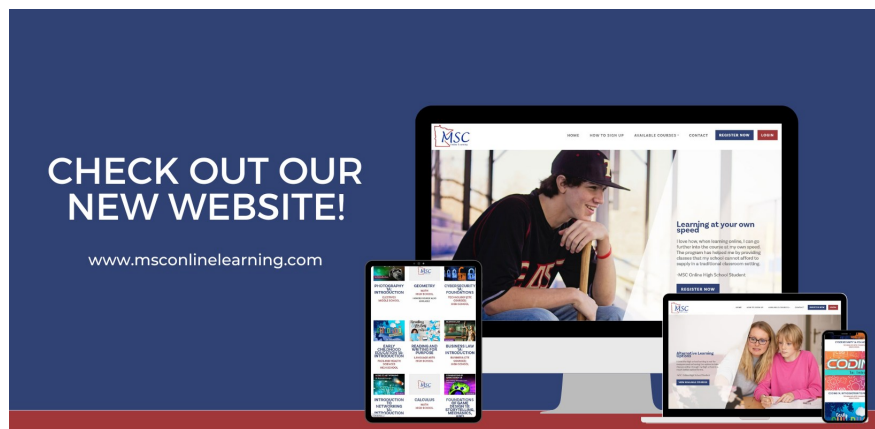


MSC Online continues to utilize Minnesota-approved curriculum providers. Our curriculum offers a wide range of rich multi-media courses that are aligned with national and state standards and several industry certifications under career and technical education. We continue to add new course offerings to help meet the needs of our students, parents, and the school districts we serve. A full list of courses offered by our program is available for your review at www.msconlinelearning.com

Our course LMS is Moodle. Moodle is an open-source learning platform designed to provide educators, administrators, and learners with a robust and secure learning environment. We continually upgrade to the newest long-term, stable support version of Moodle. Genius (SIS) is our current student information system. Students and teachers will continue to see numerous improvements and course enhancements within each system.

The Northeast Service Cooperative supports the MSC Online Program with designated staff for program direction, administrative support, technical support, and training. The MSC Advisory Council meets throughout the year to provide input and program guidance. We will continue our efforts to make MSC Online Learning the online program of choice for schools in Minnesota.

MSC Online continually explores ways to better market our services to students, parents, and schools across the state. We plan to participate in various professional conferences to share information about how MSC Online can assist students experiencing scheduling conflicts or who are in need of credit recovery, advanced, additional, or specialized courses.



Contacts

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Education Services

Academic Enrichment Programs

The Academic Enrichment Programs coordinated by the Northeast Service Cooperative continues to remain strong as a result of the stability and success of our regional academic teams and students. During the last school year, thousands of students in our region continue to participate in our academic enrichment programs in person.



Knowledge Bowl

Knowledge Bowl (KB) Interdisciplinary academic competitions for over 1,700 regional students in grades 5-12 from 33 schools are held at NESCC. Just under 300 teams of students compete in both written and oral contests that challenge students' recall, problem solving and critical thinking skills while reinforcing core curriculum. Our top six senior high teams advance to a state competition.



Spelling Bee

Regional spelling competition for students in grades 5-8 is held at NESCC. Our top region winner advances to the National Spelling Bee held in Washington, D.C.



Math Masters

When a minimum number of school district registrations are received, Math Master competitions for 4th, 5th, and 6th graders are offered at NESCC. Math Master challenges competitors to use critical thinking and problem-solving skills in mathematics. Students compete as individuals and on teams seven to eight rounds of competition. Their academic effort and achievement is recognized with plaques, medals, and ribbons. All competitors receive a free t-shirt; top statewide winners are invited to a Minnesota Twins baseball game to celebrate their achievement.

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Education Services

COMPASS—Aligned Regional System of Support

Overview

Education Services continues to evolve to better serve the diverse needs of our region. In 2026, our work is centered on intentional alignment within a statewide system of support, ensuring that services are no longer experienced as isolated efforts, but as part of a coordinated and coherent regional approach.

Rather than expanding disconnected offerings, the department is actively braiding programs, services, and expertise together to increase access, strengthen implementation, and improve outcomes for all learners. This approach reflects a commitment to equitable, efficient, and responsive service delivery across Northeast Minnesota.

A Statewide System, Implemented Regionally

COMPASS (Collaborative Minnesota Partnerships to Advance Student Success) provides the framework for this work. Developed through collaboration between the Minnesota Department of Education and Minnesota Service Cooperatives, COMPASS ensures that support is designed at the state level and delivered through regional systems.

Within this structure, the Northeast Service Cooperative serves as the regional coordinator and alignment lead, responsible for connecting statewide priorities to local district context.

- Coordinating regional implementation
- Aligning staff, services, and pathways
- Ensuring equitable access to support

A Connected System, Not Separate Efforts

A defining strength of this model is the connection between regional experience and statewide design. Regional staff from Northeast Minnesota actively participate in COMPASS teams where tools, resources, and supports are developed. This creates a continuous feedback loop—ensuring that what is built at the state level reflects real district needs, and that regional implementation is strengthened by coordinated support.

As a result, the Northeast region is not only receiving support—it is helping shape the system itself.

From Programs to Pathways

This work represents a shift in how services are designed and delivered. Rather than operating as separate initiatives, Education Services is intentionally braiding professional learning, coaching, facilitation, and grant-funded work into aligned pathways.

- Greater coherence across services
- Reduced duplication
- Sustained, connected support over time

Education Services also coordinates with other Northeast Service Cooperative departments to support a cohesive regional approach, ensuring districts experience aligned services across the organization.

Education Services

Driven by Regional Need

While COMPASS provides the framework, regional implementation is guided by data and partnership. Through ongoing collaboration with districts and educational organizations, the Northeast Service Cooperative identifies priorities and determines how support is delivered.

- Regional data review and needs assessment
- Strategic selection of pathways
- Delivery through in-person learning, coaching, and cohort models

This ensures services are relevant, targeted, and sustainable.

Professional Learning as Ongoing Support

Professional learning is no longer designed as one-time events. All offerings are aligned to COMPASS pathways—including literacy, math, climate and culture, MnMTSS, culturally responsive instruction, and continuous improvement—and are built to include ongoing support between sessions.

- Applied in practice
- Supported over time
- Connected to broader system goals

Grounded in MnMTSS

All work is grounded in Minnesota’s Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MnMTSS), providing a consistent framework across the region and maintaining a clear focus on equity and outcomes for all learners.

Supporting Systems & Programs

Education Services continues to provide key services that support district capacity and student opportunity.

- Strategic planning
- Continuous improvement and action planning
- Data analysis and root cause analysis
- Leadership development
- Program evaluation
- Meeting facilitation and stakeholder engagement

The MSC Online Learning Program continues to expand access to flexible, high-quality coursework for students across Minnesota. Academic enrichment programs—including Knowledge Bowl and Spelling Bee—continue to engage students and support academic excellence.

Clear Access to Support

To ensure districts can easily engage with this system, the Northeast Service Cooperative has developed a centralized access point through the NESC Learning Hub.

- Monthly calendars of opportunities
- Registration and session details
- Connections to staff and supports
- Resources following participation

Education Services also shares a regular educational newsletter, connected to the Learning Hub, to provide consistent updates and communication. Together, these tools ensure clear entry points, transparency, and ease of access.

Education Services

2026 Focus

- Strengthen regional coordination within the COMPASS system
- Deepen alignment across programs, staff, and funding streams
- Expand braided service delivery models
- Increase district engagement and clarity of access
- Reinforce NESC's role as a regional hub within a statewide system

Regional Coordination & Team Structure

Education Services coordinates a COMPASS-aligned regional team that provides pathway-based support across Northeast Minnesota.

Access the System

Scan to access the NESC Learning Hub and explore current offerings, connect with staff, and access resources.



Contact

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Education Services

Career & Technical Education (CTE)

VISION STATEMENT:

Equity - Opportunity - Flexibility

MISSION STATEMENT:

Connecting learners with careers while promoting equity, opportunities, and flexibility for students and schools.



The Northeast Service Cooperative's (NESCC) Career & Technical Education (CTE) program will continue to promote its vision of equity, opportunity, innovation, and flexibility for students and schools throughout the 2026–2027 school year. The program remains focused on providing diverse CTE courses, career-connected learning experiences, and regional opportunities that meet the evolving needs and interests of all students, regardless of background, geography, or ability.

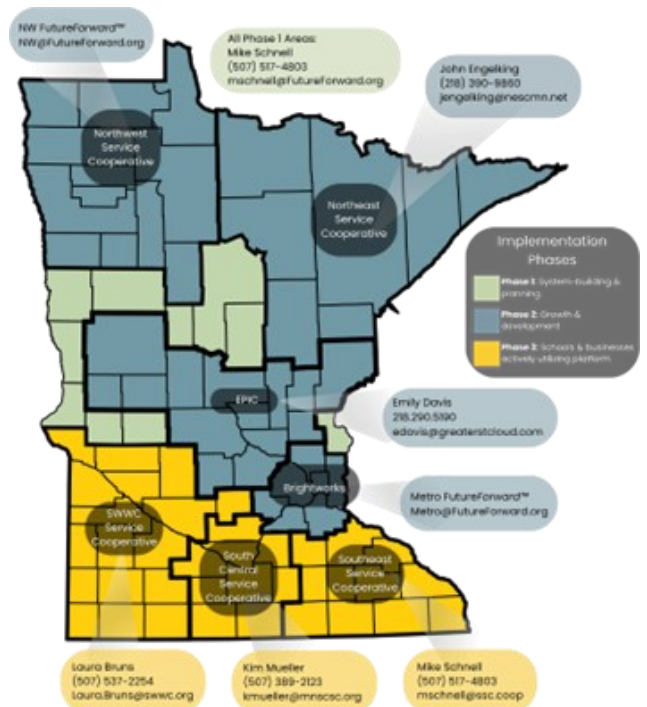


Through partnerships with local businesses, industry leaders, postsecondary institutions, and statewide organizations, NESCC continues to expand real-world learning experiences, internships, mentorships, career exploration opportunities, and workforce connections that prepare students for success in their chosen career pathways. The program also continues to emphasize flexibility through online, hybrid, and regional collaborative opportunities that broaden access to high-quality CTE programming across Northeast Minnesota.

NESCC's CTE program remains committed to educational equity by actively working to eliminate disparities in student access and achievement. By providing equitable access to resources, transportation support, technology, career exploration, and industry-aligned programming, the cooperative seeks to ensure that every student has opportunities to thrive in both their educational and future career endeavors.

In partnership with the Minnesota Service Cooperatives (MSC), NESCC continues to support regional students, educators, and schools through funding provided by the Minnesota Service Cooperative Rural CTE Grant. During 2026–2027, NESCC will continue to allocate grant resources to support CTE programming, career pathways, teacher externships, transportation access, industry-aligned equipment, and immersive student experiences designed to promote positive postsecondary outcomes related to enrollment, enlistment, or employment.

NESCC also continues to strengthen statewide collaboration efforts through partnerships with FutureForward™, Métier Middle School Career Exploration, LYFT (Launch Your Future Today), and the Minnesota Trucking Association. These partnerships provide additional opportunities for students to engage in career awareness, career exploration, workforce readiness, and industry-connected learning experiences beginning at the middle school level and extending through high school and postsecondary pathways.



Education Services

As FutureForward™ continues to serve as a key platform where education meets opportunity by connecting students, educators, parents, employers, and workforce partners. The platform promotes industry-specific events, career-connected learning experiences, job shadowing, internships, mentorships, and employment opportunities for students throughout the region. NESC is proud to collaborate with Southeast Service Cooperative, South Central Service Cooperative, and Resource Training & Solutions to expand access and statewide implementation of FutureForward™.

As part of its continued innovation efforts, NESC is also preparing to launch *Pathways North*, a new regional podcast initiative designed to highlight student success stories, educator innovation, workforce partnerships, and industry leadership throughout Northeast Minnesota. Supported through funding from the Iron Range Resources & Rehabilitation (IRRR) grant, the podcast initiative will provide a new platform for storytelling, collaboration, and regional engagement.

Additionally, NESC is expanding its use of drone technology and multimedia resources to enhance qualitative storytelling efforts across the region. Through images, video production, interviews, and digital media, NESC aims to better capture and communicate the impact of Career & Technical Education programs, student experiences, business partnerships, and workforce development initiatives throughout Northeast Minnesota.

CTE programming is also strengthening regional collaboration through alignment with NESC's newly awarded STEM Ecosystem Grant and the continued expansion of the Statewide Longitudinal Education Data System (SLEDS) Coaching Program. These initiatives create additional opportunities to connect data, workforce trends, STEM education, career pathways, and regional planning efforts while fostering deeper collaboration among schools, industry, and community partners throughout the region.

Together, these initiatives reflect NESC's continued commitment to innovation, collaboration, workforce development, and student success while strengthening connections between education, business, industry, and communities across Northeast Minnesota.



Contact

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Education Services

Career and Technical Education for All

The Minnesota Service Cooperatives Career and Technical Education Consortium and the Northeast Service Cooperative are committed to strengthening their relationships with each other and our education, economic development, and workforce agency partners.



The Minnesota Service Cooperative

Mission: Leveraging statewide and regional approaches to ensure robust CTE experiences for students with an eye on future success.

Vision: All students have access to innovative, career-connected learning through a vibrant CTE education network with solid industry connections, providing students with the knowledge and skills needed for the future.

We support and develop:

- Accessible, equitable, and inclusive career-connected learning that builds pathways to local/regional careers for all students.
- Highly trained and engaged educators who help students build CTE pathways through relevant coursework, collaborative partnerships, and advanced equipment.
- Advanced collaboration with business, industry, labor, workforce, and higher education fosters innovation, harnesses creativity, and accelerates quality CTE learning/pathways.
- Integrated and aligned efforts that enhance and sustain quality CTE.

Together we work towards a future where:

- All students have access to innovative, career-connected learning showcasing local careers.
- Minnesota has a vibrant CTE teacher network with strong industry connections.
- Business, labor, and industry are key to student career awareness and life/work skills.
- Education recognizes the benefit of CTE courses/experiences for all careers.
- Students make informed financial investments in post-secondary training and education.
- Public and private investments in CTE help address workforce challenges across Minnesota.

Education Services

Behavioral and Mental Health Services

VISION STATEMENT:

Promote and advance the health and well-being of every student, teacher, and staff member in our schools.

MISSION STATEMENT:

Meeting people where they are with grace and compassion, to create a culture of well-being, focused on mental health support, health education, and well-being events and programming.

Mental health is essential to overall physical health, well-being, and cognitive development. Our Behavioral and Mental Health Services continues to develop programming and services to best meet the needs of our region. We remain committed to mental health literacy, workforce development, crisis response, and collaboration.



Mental Health Literacy

Mental Health Literacy is the knowledge and beliefs people have about mental well-being and mental health disorders which play a large role in prevention, awareness, and management. The Northeast Service Cooperative focuses on:

- Education for how to obtain and maintain positive mental health,
- Education on mental health disorders and their treatments,
- Mental Health Campaigns designed to reduce stigma related to talking about mental health and mental health disorders, and
- Programming to increase knowledge of when and where to seek help.

Workforce Development

A Behavioral Health Workforce Pipeline is in development to increase access to critical behavioral health services across Northeast Minnesota while also focusing on the mental health and well-being of our current workforce. Services we provide include the following:

- Data Collection & Analysis
- Strategic Planning
- Implementation Support
- Program Evaluation
- Grant Writing
- Meeting Facilitation
- Customizable Trainings

Education Services

Regional School Crisis Response Team

Northeast Service Cooperative offers immediate assistance through a Regional School Crisis Response Team in the event that your school experiences a traumatic event or serious loss. During these unforeseen circumstances we can provide information, support, and assistance to help restore the emotional well-being of your school.

Collaboration

We are working with our regional, state, and national partners to make systemic changes including policy, institutional, and individual changes in how we view and prioritize mental health.

Contact

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Education Services

NESC-Northeast Minnesota Regional STEM Coordinator



As a regional partner within the Minnesota STEM Ecosystem, our role is to connect people, programs, and ideas to strengthen STEM education and workforce pathways across our region. We serve as a central point of contact for STEM efforts, aligning K–12, higher education, industry, workforce, and out-of-school partners around shared regional priorities that support learner success and meet evolving workforce needs. Through collaboration and coordination, we help expand access to high-quality STEM resources and guidance aligning with real-world career opportunities.

We support this work through strong governance, communication, and partnerships. Internally, advisory leadership and cross-program alignment with initiatives such as CTE, SLEDS, and COMPASS promote sustainability and long-term impact. Externally, we maintain an active STEM resource hub and scalable regional communications to share information and maximize reach. Ongoing partnerships with education, science, and workforce organizations allow us to identify educator-driven needs and build meaningful connections between education and industry, reinforcing a cohesive and responsive regional STEM ecosystem.

Minnesota Statewide Longitudinal Education Data System (SLEDS) Coaching

Statewide Longitudinal Education Data System (SLEDS) connects education to employment outcomes by securely linking data from Minnesota’s K–12 system, postsecondary institutions, and workforce and wage records. By integrating information from the Minnesota Department of Education, Office of Higher Education, and Department of Employment and Economic Development, SLEDS shows how individuals move from school, training, or college into real jobs with real wages.

As regional coaches, we actively use SLEDS to support and strengthen data-informed decision-making across our schools and districts. We plan to prepare and share customized school summary slides with each district in our region, highlighting key education-to-employment outcomes while promoting both SLEDS and NESC as trusted resources. Through targeted coaching, we will guide educators and leaders in understanding and applying SLEDS data to support program improvement, career pathway development, and student success. In addition, we will continue to integrate SLEDS into existing NESC educational programs, ensuring the data is embedded into ongoing initiatives and used consistently to align education, workforce preparation, and regional economic needs.



Contact

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Telecommunications & Technology

Our Telecommunications and Technology (TnT) division plays an essential role at the Northeast Service Cooperative and working with members to find solutions and form plans for efficient and effective operations. The TnT team designs, develops, supports, and manages networks. We train our staff to be at the cutting edge of technology and telecommunications in order to provide expertise and valuable information to our members.

Services

- Network Services
 - ◇ Ethernet Transport: Transport for point-to-point and point-to-multipoint connections
- Broadband Internet Services
 - ◇ Ethernet: Direct Internet access from local central office
- Space and Power Services
 - ◇ Collocation: Rack and floor space, back-up power and storage
- Leased Fiber Services
 - ◇ Dark Fiber: Unit fiber for point-to-point connections
- Professional Services
 - ◇ Information Technology
 - Project Management
 - Strategic Planning
 - Engineering/Design
 - Network Support/Administration
 - Installation & Repair
 - Remote Support
 - Records
 - ◇ Telecommunications
 - Project Management
 - Engineering/Design-Large Scale
 - Engineering/Design-Small Scale
 - Installation & Repair
 - Testing
 - Records & Mapping
 - ◇ Administration
 - Project Coordinator
 - Scheduling/Dispatch
 - Purchasing/Inventory
 - Service Order & Ticket Management



Innovation in Technology

As part of striving for excellence in service in the region and for our members, the TnT team at NESC reviews opportunities and ways to expand networking and technology.



Telecommunications & Technology

Northeast Fiber Network

The Northeast Fiber Network is a fiber optic network that spans across northern Minnesota in the counties of St. Louis, Lake, Cook, Koochiching, Carlton, Pine, Itasca, Aitkin, Chisago, Kanebec, and Isanti. It was designed by the Northeast Service Cooperative to serve unserved and underserved regions in northeastern Minnesota. The network serves critical service sites including schools, libraries, sovereign nations, counties, cities, health care, and state entities. We also have dark fiber, wavelength services available to the public sector and to private sector service providers. The network provides 2.8 Terabit current core switching capacity using DWDM technology. There are Optical Transport Network facilities across the region with collocation availability.

- \$43.5 million federally funded project
- 50% grant / 50% loan through the United States Department of Agriculture Rural Utilities Service
- More than 1,220 miles of fiber optic network in the counties of St. Louis, Cook, Lake, Pine, Itasca, Koochiching, Carlton, Aitkin, Chisago, Kanebec, and Isanti
- Approximately 685 critical service sites connected
- Additional expansion under the EDA grant of 136 miles of fiber optic plant construction completed in 2026

Border-to-Border Broadband Development Project

This project utilized the Northeast Fiber Network to expand 70 miles of fiber network into underserved and unserved regions in St. Louis County. The NESC/Frontier Border to Border Phase I Broadband Project leverages funding from the Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) and Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation Board (IRRRB). The fiber to the node equipment upgrade by Frontier Communications exceeded project goals of increasing capacity to 877. As part of this project, 30 township hall and fire halls are connected with high-speed connectivity and wireless access.

- \$4.35 million state funded project
- 45% DEED funded, 35% IRRRB funded and 20% NESC match
- Approximately 70 miles of fiber network in St. Louis County
- Provides middle mile fiber to Frontier Communications that impacts at least 877 households
- Provides direct connectivity to rural town halls and fire halls

NE MN Broadband & Economic Development Initiative

The Department's Economic Development Administration (EDA) awarded a \$3.4 million CARES Act Recovery Assistance grant to support broadband expansion in Northeast Minnesota.

The pandemic shed light on the vital importance of broadband. This grant will allow Northeast Service Cooperative to meet the region's explosive demand for broadband connectivity to boost businesses, provide new opportunities and diversify the region's economy. The project consists of two main components: middle-mile fiber optic infrastructure and last-mile fiber optic service connections to businesses within Opportunity Zones & other locations across the NE region of MN.



Telecommunications & Technology

NE MN Broadband & Economic Development Initiative (continued)

The middle-mile portion of the project extended Northeast Service Cooperative's Fiber Network to other statewide fiber networks and wholesale bandwidth providers. This increases the region's broadband capacity to 200Gbps. The last-mile component installed fiber optic, Gigabit broadband services to businesses across northeast Minnesota. This EDA grant, matched with \$835,000 in local funds, is expected to generate \$20 million in private investment.

- \$4.175 million federal funded project
- 80% US EDA funded and 20% NESC match
- Approximately 136 miles of fiber network in Aitkin, Pine, Kanabec, Isanti & St. Louis counties (expansion includes Barnum to Aitkin, Virginia and Hibbing sections, and Willow River to Cambridge)
- Diverse & redundant interconnection points to wholesale providers in Minneapolis and Fargo/Moorhead
- Last mile Gigabit fiber optic broadband services to over 100 businesses
- Groundbreaking was held in April 2024 with construction completed in August 2025.

NESC Core Network Upgrade

Substantial completion of the Core Network Upgrade was achieved by year-end 2025, with full completion finalized in January 2026 following final migrations and testing. The project replaced the aging Cyan network with a modern, fully supported Ciena platform, transforming the core from obsolete to future-ready, resilient, and revenue-protecting. The upgrade modernized and secured the network, increased core capacity forty-fold from 10 Gbps to 400 Gbps, enabled rapid service deployment without rebuilds, and improved performance and reliability through built-in redundancy and auto-rerouting, supporting customer speeds from 1 Gbps to 400 Gbps while minimizing downtime.

Network Operations Center (NOC)

1-866-306-3926

support@nescmn.net

Our daytime hours of operation are from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. There is access to someone on call 24 hours a day, seven days a week, by calling or email.

Call Routing:

The call is answered by one of our TnT staff on duty, unless excessive call volume necessitates a call be routed through the voicemail. Callers have the option to leave a message which creates a ticket in our ticketing system.

Technical Support:

We have experienced technical staff available to troubleshoot issues.

Network Monitoring:

Critical systems are monitored 24 x 7 by our Network Management system. We have a live response support system in place, where members can manage and track internal incidents / troubles.

Contact

Joe Weber

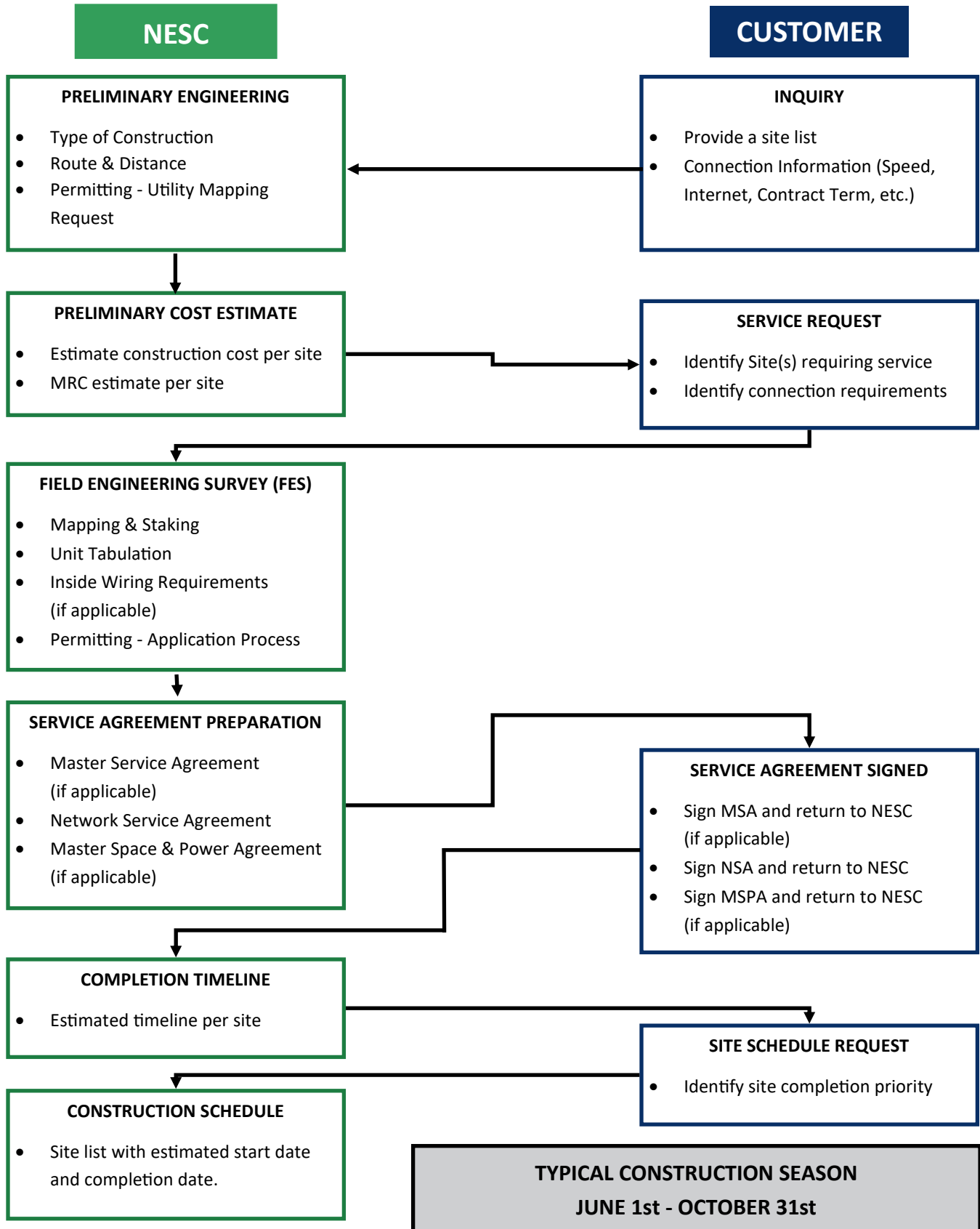
Director, Telecommunications & Technology (TnT)

218-748-7626

jweber@nescmn.net



Telecommunications & Technology



Communications & Marketing

Annual Plan

The Northeast Service Cooperative (NESC) publishes this Annual Plan which provides members with an overview of services and programs. We also highlight our services, members, and programs through emails, publications, handouts, and our website.

The Annual Plan is published on June 1 and posted on NESC's website www.nescmn.net.

Wellness Initiatives

NESC participates in conferences, conventions, and distributes newsletters as a way to connect with members and promote initiatives. Wellness has become a focus as NESC cares about the wellness of its members. We will continue to meet with our members and offer trainings, workshops, and information in the upcoming year.

Follow Us

NESC is on Facebook and LinkedIn.

Website

To learn more about who we are and what we do, we invite you to visit our website a www.nescmn.net. There, you'll find detailed information about the services we offer and how we're making a difference. Whether you're looking to connect, collaborate, or simply explore, our site is the best way to start. Visit us today and discover how we can help you take the next step to providing services and solutions to you.

Contact

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Board of Directors



John Berklich

Board Chair
ISD #701
Hibbing



Walt Hautala

Vice Chair
ISD #2711
Mesabi East



Julie Peterson

Clerk
ISD #97
Moose Lake



Bob Rahja

Treasurer
ISD #695
Chisholm



Tim Riordan

Director
ISD #2909
Rock Ridge



John Klarich

Director
St. Louis County



Jeff Burgess

Ex-Officio
ISD #2711
Mesabi East



Susan Kaslow

Director
Hill City

Our Team Contact Information

The Northeast Service Cooperative employs a dedicated, committed staff.



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