

Historical Perspective

BOCES Statewide

In 1948 the New York State legislature authorized the creation of Boards of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) with the establishment of Intermediate School Districts. The BOCES were actually formed to serve as an interim agency, but the ultimate success of the cooperative service movement for the next 24 years led to a change in the Intermediate School Act in 1972. That change institutionalized Boards of Cooperative Educational Services and eliminated the previous legislative references to Intermediate School Districts in the State of New York.

By 1953, fifty-one BOCES were established based on geography and population distribution. By 1958, eighty-two BOCES had been formed. This number has declined steadily as the Commissioner has ordered mergers of supervisory districts. Currently, 38 BOCES exist in New York State.

In 1955, BOCES were authorized to rent facilities, allowing the establishment of specific sites for occupational education programs. In addition, Union Free Districts were allowed to join BOCES, and all component districts were required to bear the administrative costs.

Another important change in legislation occurred in 1967 when BOCES were permitted to acquire real property. This change also authorized the establishment of contracts to utilize Dormitory Authority funds for construction of facilities. As a result, many BOCES area centers for occupational education and special education became realities.

From the birth of the cooperative service concept in 1948 to the present, through an evolutionary process combining the successes of BOCES services with appropriate changes in legislation, the BOCES of New York State have become true educational service agencies serving local school districts, the community and the State Education Department.

Local BOCES

The Jefferson-Lewis-Hamilton-Herkimer-Oneida BOCES was created through the merger of numerous small Supervisory Districts over a considerable period of time. The most recent history is as follows:

- 1970 Supervisory District #3 merged with Supervisory District #2, in Jefferson County.
- 1971 Supervisory District #1 in Jefferson County merged with Supervisory District #2.

- 1973 Sole Supervisory District of Jefferson County merged with Sole Supervisory District of Lewis County.

- 1976 Sole Supervisory District of Jefferson and Lewis Counties expanded to include districts from Hamilton, Herkimer and Oneida Counties.