In February, NERIC Director Dale Breault presented a proposed $42,294,189 annual budget for the 2015-16 school year to the Regional Advisory Committee (RAC), as well as the Capital Region BOCES Board of Education and administration. NERIC’s budget will be formally adopted by the BOCES Board at its annual meeting on April 1 as part of the Capital Region BOCES budget for 2015-16.

NERIC’s proposed 2015-16 budget includes:

- Most service fee increases of 0.89 percent or less, with the net average increase across all services at 0.80 percent;
- A significant decrease in cost for the Internet Access Connectivity service (NERIC’s single largest subscriber service), to $94 per MB of bandwidth;
- Funding for new and expanded services to be delivered in addition to 2015-16 commitments;
- An increase in spending of about $5.3 million from the final 2014-2015 budget, which reflects anticipated growth in services throughout the fiscal year, along with contractual salaries and benefits and operations and maintenance.

“During the 2015-16 school year, we anticipate enhancing many of the key services we currently provide. We also have some offerings in the works that we believe will help meet districts’ need for enhanced connectivity and will help them further streamline their business operations,” explained Breault. “We have worked together as a management team during this year’s budget-making process to provide a figure for 2015-16 that accurately reflects both the basic costs of doing business, as well as projected increases associated with the growth in services we will be adding throughout the coming school year, based on historical data.”

For information about the varied services NERIC offers schools, visit www.neric.org and click on “NERIC Services” at the top of the home page.
Spotlight on services

Here’s a look at some of NERIC’s new and enhanced services for 2015-16:

Data Administrator Institute
CoSer: 604-7710
Service Code: 604.110.050
Contact: Mary McGeoch, (518) 862-5318, mary.mcgeoch@neric.org

The Data Administrator Institute is a program for school district data administrators. The curriculum covers such areas as identifying data sources and gaps in state reporting requirements, and presenting meaningful data to promote and enhance data-driven decision-making.

The Institute provides training and support beyond the basic tools, such as Level 0 and nySTART. Participants will have access to specific data presentation models, podcasts and other support materials and resources designed to complement the curriculum and promote district-, building- and classroom-level discussions around data.

Managed IT Services
CoSer: 604-7710
Service Codes: 604.002.010 - 050
Contact: Jim McQuade, (518) 862-5363, jim.mcquade@neric.org

NERIC Managed IT Services is a comprehensive, proactive service model that delivers customized IT support to participating school districts. This set of services encompasses all aspects of technology support, allowing the focus for schools to remain on education, while NERIC focuses on their unique technology needs.

NERIC’s professional Service Desk is the foundation of the Managed IT service. Working with on-site technicians and Central-Site Network Administrators, the Service Desk is the focal point for proactive monitoring and technology support. By leveraging skilled technicians, best practices and remote tools, the NERIC Managed Services Team provides a valuable partnership with school districts.

Shared Data Assistance Coordinator
CoSer: 604-7710
Service Code: 604.110.040
Contact: Mary McGeoch, (518) 862-5318, mary.mcgeoch@neric.org

NERIC’s Shared Data Assistance Coordinators offer districts reliable, efficient and time-saving ways to manage, automate and report their student data, including ensuring data readiness as mandated by the New York State Education Department (NYSED).

The service features:
- Guidance to district staff on the interpretation of policy as it pertains to accountability requirements as prescribed by the State Information Repository System (SIRS) as provided by NYSED.
- Assistance with the ongoing readiness (void of potential errors) of data for submission to the state Data Warehouse with the use of tools such as NERIC DataFlow®.
- Alerts to appropriate district staff of data findings and error reports of data to be corrected.
- Assistance with the uploading of data files to the state Data Warehouse (Level 0 and Level 1).
- Coordination with district administrators to assure deadlines for data certification are met as it pertains to the SIRS.
- Periodic checks of data and reasonableness-type reports to catch unreported data.

On the horizon...

These new services are now being developed for 2015-16:
- Cloud Computing Support — Google and MS365
- CMS Learning Management Systems (LMS) Platforms
- TechPlanning & Visioning (for regions not working with local Model Schools programs)
NERIC bandwidth service costs to decrease

What’s working well and what more NERIC can do to meet districts’ needs for educational technology and support have been prime topics, both in community conversations held throughout the NERIC region last year and during one-on-one visits with staff in school districts.

With this in mind, NERIC has begun reviewing the many technology services and supports it delivers. First up was the Internet Access Connectivity bandwidth service (512.070). This was a logical place to start for two major reasons. Internet Access Connectivity is NERIC’s single largest subscription service, with 112 of the 137 school districts NERIC serves participating in 2014-15. It is also a matter of fairness as ample bandwidth provides a vital connection to the Internet, something needed to ensure a robust and equitable education for all students. Also, it is essential in order for students to meet the demands of new, Common Core Learning Standards and accompanying assessments.

After factoring in the costs associated with maintaining the Internet Access Connectivity service, NERIC determined a flat cost of $94/MB/year. During 2015-16, this will result in a significant cost savings for every single districts that subscribes to this service.

Creating a fixed unit cost per MB is an approach that NERIC believes will suit every district it serves, or is interested in contracting for the service. When it comes to bandwidth, one size does not fit all. Offering NERIC’s customers flexibility when purchasing bandwidth services will enable them to meet their Internet capacity needs in the most cost-effective way possible.

Questions about the Internet Access Connectivity service? Contact Steve Yankowski, managing program coordinator, Network Services WAN/Server Infrastructure, at stephen.yankowski@neric.org or (518) 862-5373.

2015-16 Services Guide now online

View 2015-16 Services Guide including the Captial Region BOCES and NERIC service and program descriptors and pricing at http://bit.ly/1FA6Z5T

To go directly to the listing of NERIC programs and services for 2015-16, visit www.neric.org and click on the “NERIC Services” button at the top of the home page.

Service Commitment Letters/Deadlines

Business officials in districts within the Capital Region BOCES who were not part of last year’s online final commitment should have received a WinCap email invitation to participate in the online final commitment process for 2015-16 services and programs. Business officials in districts within the Capital Region BOCES who took part in the WinCap Web process last year may sign in at https://wincapweb.com at their convenience.

Business officials in districts outside of the Capital Region BOCES should follow the commitment process of their local BOCES.

Online final commitments are pre-loaded with estimated usage and quantities based on district’s current service levels and/or anticipated needs communicated to NERIC and/or the Capital Region BOCES during the budgeting process.

Reminder: The deadline for certifying the final commitment form online is April 24, 2015.
NERIC 2015-16 budget at-a-glance

Service and program pricing:
Average service cost increase: 0.89 percent or less
Net average increase across all services: 0.80 percent

Price changes for on-site coordinators based on contractual obligations. Vendor cost increases will be passed through to districts and BOCES.

Appropriation by CoSER:

Questions about NERIC’s 2015-16 budget?
Curious about how NERIC can meet your needs for technology-based services and support?
NERIC’s regional representatives and leadership team are ready to help:

Executive Team:
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David Versocki, deputy director, (518) 862-5303, david.versocki@neric.org

Leadership Team:
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