



AESA

ASSOCIATION OF
EDUCATIONAL SERVICE AGENCIES

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Michael Doughty, Chair of NYS Regional Information Center Directors and RIC One Data Privacy & Security Service Recognized For Exemplary Service And Innovation

The Association of Educational Service Agencies (AESAs) presented its 2023 Exemplary Service and Innovation For Technological Advancement Award on Tuesday, October 3. Michael Doughty, Chair of the NYS Regional Information Center Directors and Regional Information Center One (RIC ONE), received the award at the New York State Council of School Superintendents (NYSCOSS), Saratoga Springs, NY.

RIC ONE offers a statewide data privacy and security service to school districts throughout New York State. The AESA award acknowledges an individual or agency for contributions to technological innovation and support to local districts and educational service agencies.

“We are not nominating a single Educational Service Agency – we are nominating the collaboration of 12 Educational Service Agencies who have come together to provide innovative support and tools that help the districts in New York State address the growing need to protect the data and systems of NY State K-12 schools,” said Michael Doughty, Assistant Superintendent of Northeast Regional Information Center, in his nomination form.

“The collaborative effort of the 12 ESAs through the RIC One Data Privacy and Security Service is a shining example of how teamwork and collective vision can drive meaningful change. Your initiative has played a pivotal role in equipping New York State K-12 districts with the tools and support they need to address the critical issue of data protection. In a time when cyber threats are escalating, your work has become more important than ever, ensuring the security of sensitive information and systems.” Stated Dr. Joan Wade, Executive Director for AESA.

The 12 Regional Information Centers (RICs) organized under the state’s Boards of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) collaborated to form RIC One. RIC One Data Privacy and Security Service (DPSS) was formed two years after New York’s Education Law Section 2-d, a comprehensive student data privacy law passed in 2014. When the law was passed, there were no tools available to help districts measure and show compliance with the regulations. Each RIC



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was supporting its BOCES in different ways. By forming RIC One, the tools and support available to districts expanded, as did participation.

RIC One provides tools and resources to help districts protect student privacy, build community trust and transparency, mitigate data breaches and risks, ensure compliance with federal, state, and local regulations, and promote responsible data practices.

By the end of the 2022-23 school year, 78% of New York public K-12 districts had become part of RIC One DPSS. This is the largest non-state-mandated service in New York.

In addition to specific tools and resources, RIC One instituted an annual statewide event for district data protection officers where they can meet with colleagues and share their best practices.

Louise DeCandia, Chief Privacy Officer of the New York State Education Department, also nominated RIC One for the award. She wrote, "My job would be impossible without the support and assistance of RIC One DPSS."

DeCandia said she can use the service to get directions out to school districts and understand districts' problems and concerns with compliance. In addition, RIC One works with her office to provide guidance, training, and resources to ensure that educational service agencies come into compliance with student data privacy requirements.

"New York has set high standards for educational agencies to ensure student data and information privacy," she added. "Most educational agencies would struggle with compliance but for the support they receive from RIC One DPSS."

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