



# STRONGER TOGETHER:

Connecting & Collaborating for Rural Prosperity

October 13-15, 2016

The Ohio Union

The Ohio State University

Columbus, Ohio



# RURAL EDUCATION

*National Forum and 108th NREA Convention and Research Symposium*

## REGISTRATION BROCHURE

**REGISTER BY OCTOBER 5!**

Hosted by:

**Battelle** for Kids



In partnership with:

**Ohio** | Department of Education



Register at [bfk.org/RuralForum](http://bfk.org/RuralForum)



## **STRONGER TOGETHER:** **CONNECTING & COLLABORATING FOR RURAL PROSPERITY**



Battelle for Kids and the National Rural Education Association (NREA) are pleased to host, in partnership with the Ohio and Kentucky Departments of Education, the 2016 Rural Education National Forum and 108th NREA Convention and Research Symposium.

This event is designed to bring together education leaders from around the country to learn, network, and collaborate on the issues and topics at the forefront of rural education. Our attendees represent key influencers and decision makers in their organizations, school districts, or schools.

Join hundreds of education leaders and practitioners who will share powerful examples of rural investment, innovation, and practice that positively impact teaching, student learning, and community collaboration.

### **WHO SHOULD ATTEND?**

- Rural district, building, and teacher leaders
- Business, civic, and community leaders
- State department of education leaders
- Local, state, and national boards of education leaders
- Established collaboratives/networks of education, business, and community organizations
- Economic development leaders and venture capitalists
- Rural and non-rural education associations
- Philanthropic foundations
- Leaders from institutes of higher education
- Others interested in strengthening rural education, economic/workforce development, and civic/community engagement efforts

Teams are encouraged to attend!



## DON'T MISS THIS INCREDIBLE PROFESSIONAL LEARNING & NETWORKING EVENT FOR RURAL EDUCATION LEADERS & PRACTITIONERS



3 days



5 keynote speakers



125+ sessions



500+ rural education leaders & practitioners to network with and learn from

### WHAT PAST ATTENDEES HAD TO SAY



“...there is an energy at this conference that I’ve not experienced at other events...”

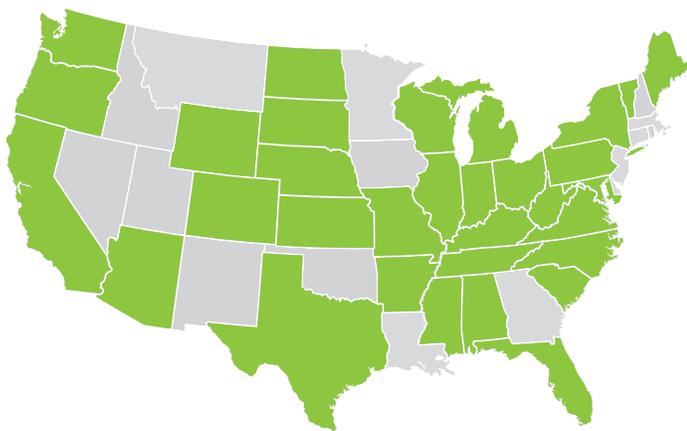
“...hands down, this is the most useful conference I have attended...”

“...I got more out of this conference in two days, than I have in some four-day events...”

### 2015 ATTENDEE DEMOGRAPHICS

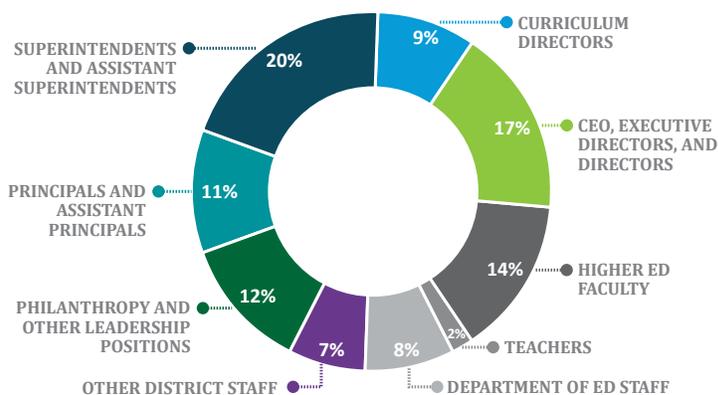
\* The following data reflects a summary of the 2015 Rural Education National Forum and the 2015 NREA Convention and Research Symposium.

#### ATTENDEES BY REGION



34 STATES REPRESENTED

#### ATTENDEES BY TITLE





## FEATURED SPEAKERS & GENERAL SESSIONS

### THURSDAY, OCTOBER 13



**Andrew McCrea, Author and Syndicated Broadcaster | @andrewmccrea**

Farmer and rancher, popular author, and nationally-syndicated radio broadcaster—it's a unique combination that captivates audiences. Andrew McCrea has traveled the nation, producing the *American Countryside* features that are heard each day on radio stations coast-to-coast. He continues to manage and work on his family's 3,500-acre ranch in northwest Missouri. His blend of humor and real-life strategies for living life with purpose inspire groups to action. He believes in building strong communities and promotes raising the quality of life in rural and urban areas.



**Cindy Moss, Director of Global STEM Initiatives, Discovery Education | @STEMBoss**

Dr. Moss supports school districts in their work to develop and deploy student initiatives to drive science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) achievement nationwide. A nationally-respected thought leader in STEM education and reform, Dr. Moss brings over 21 years of experience in district leadership, classroom instruction, and inquiry-based learning to her work as a champion for STEM engagement and career and workforce readiness.

**General Session: Implementing ESSA in Rural Schools**

Late year, Congress passed the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), a comprehensive rewrite of the five-decade old Elementary and Secondary Education Act. As control over K-12 education shifts to states and local school districts under ESSA, rural schools will need to work together to ensure the new law is implemented fairly. During this general session, get a quick overview of ESSA and the areas of opportunity for rural schools, hear from 2-3 rural education leaders as they share their strategies for implementation, and walk away with a tool to help guide your planning efforts. Don't miss this highly engaging and interactive session.

### FRIDAY, OCTOBER 14



**Robert Putnam, Author | @RobertDPutnam**

Robert D. Putnam is the Peter and Isabel Malkin Professor of Public Policy at Harvard University. Nationally honored as a leading humanist and a renowned scientist, he has written 14 books and has consulted for the last four U.S. Presidents. His research program, the Saguaro Seminar, is dedicated to fostering civic engagement in America. In his recent book, *Our Kids: An American Dream in Crisis*, Putnam tells the tale of lessening opportunity through poignant life stories of rich and poor kids across the country, drawing on a formidable body of research.

**General Session: 2016-2017 National Rural Teacher of the Year Announcement**

Watch the 2016-2017 Rural Teacher of the Year be awarded and deliver luncheon remarks.

### SATURDAY, OCTOBER 15



**Liz Meredith, Apple Distinguished Educator | @meredithedtech**

Liz has over a decade of teaching experience, and conducts professional development for educators on technology. In 2015, she became a Star Ambassador for TouchCast, as well as receiving National Science Teachers Association's (NSTA) Distinguished Teaching Award and being accepted into the 2015 class of Apple Distinguished Educators.



## SCHEDULE AT A GLANCE

### Thursday, October 13

8–9:30 a.m.	Registration/Continental Breakfast
9:30–10:30 a.m.	Keynote: Andrew McCrea
10:30–11 a.m.	General Session: Implementing ESSA in Rural Schools
11:15 a.m.–12:15 p.m.	Learning Sessions
12:30–1:15 p.m.	Lunch (provided)
1:15–2 p.m.	Keynote: Dr. Cindy Moss
2:15–3:15 p.m.	Learning Sessions
3:30–4:30 p.m.	Learning Sessions
6 p.m.	Attendee Reception

### Friday, October 14

7:30–8:30 a.m.	Registration/Continental Breakfast
8:30–9:30 a.m.	Keynote: Robert Putnam
9:45–10:45 a.m.	Learning Sessions
11 a.m.–12 p.m.	Learning Sessions
12:15–1 p.m.	Lunch (provided)
1–2 p.m.	General Session: 2016–2017 National Rural Teacher of the Year Announcement
2:15–3:15 p.m.	Learning Sessions
3:30–4:30 p.m.	Learning Sessions

### Saturday, October 15

9:30–11:15 a.m.	Keynote: Liz Meredith NREA Awards Brunch and Closing Session
-----------------	--

**REGISTER BY OCTOBER 5!**



## LEARNING SESSIONS

*\* Learning session content and speakers are subject to change, and additional sessions and speakers may be added at a later time.*

### **Round Up Time! Informing Statewide Policy and Practice Through Research Partnerships**

**Presenters:** Haidee Williams, AIR; Susan Pinson, Oklahoma State Department of Education; Kathren Stehno, Oklahoma Office of Educational Quality and Accountability

How can a research team round up practices in the field and deliver a herd of promising ideas to the Oklahoma Corral? Learn how a research organization teamed up with state education agencies to analyze two challenges in Oklahoma rural schools: educator recruitment and retention, and professional development approaches. This collaborative partnership is leveraging research with current and potential strategies to brand promising ideas statewide.

### **Introducing the NREA Rural Education Research Agenda**

**Presenters:** Members of the NREA Research Team

Over the past 18 months, the NREA Research Team through the involvement of various stakeholder groups has developed a five-year Rural Education Research Agenda. This session will focus on the details of the work and implications for future research.

### **Appalachian Leadership Lab: Building Shared Leadership Capacity in Rural Schools**

**Presenter:** Jennifer Carroll, Appalachian Leadership Lab/Kentucky Valley Educational Cooperative

This session will introduce participants to the Appalachian Leadership Lab, a practitioner-developed clinical professional learning opportunity designed to build shared leadership capacity in rural schools. This session will share how the Lab was designed and how innovative professional learning activities are building and strengthening leadership capacity in rural southeastern Kentucky.

### **Give Them Hope—Teach Them to Read**

**Presenters:** Kristi Hall, David Chambers, & Mike Jones, Fentress County Schools

The ability to read well is a foundational skill required for success. Fentress County Schools in Jamestown, Tennessee has adopted a goal that 90% of its students will be reading at or above grade level by the end of third grade. The school district will share the reading system they are using and how they are engaging parents and the community to help in achieving this goal.

### **Accelerating Student Learning through Personalized Learning Pathways and Dual Enrollment in the Ohio Appalachian Collaborative**

**Presenters:** Paul Hopkins & Charity Dodd, Battelle for Kids; Randy Lucas, Barnesville Exempted Village School District

The Ohio Appalachian Collaborative (OAC) is a group of like-minded school districts that have joined forces to implement educational innovations, share and generate resources, influence local, regional and federal education and economic policy, and build a community that encourages rural prosperity in Appalachian Ohio. Panelists will share strategies and lessons learned overcoming the rural opportunity gap, amplifying the local talent pipeline, and establishing a sustainable collaborative. This session will focus on increasing access to advanced learning and effective instruction through a networked personalized learning pathways system and on driving student success via dual enrollment partnerships. Dual enrollment participation builds aspiration, accelerates postsecondary enrollment and increases retention and degree attainment rates at an even greater rate among traditionally-underserved populations, including rural, low-income, and/or first generation students. In this session, attendees will learn and discuss the strategies developed and implemented across the collaborative to contribute to these significant gains.



## LEARNING SESSIONS

### **Football to Family, Creating a Sportsmanship Culture**

**Presenters:** Chris Sampson, Brent Miller, Eric Ulrich, & Amanda Whitlock, Clinton Prairie School Corporation

This session will focus on the strategy of a middle and high school to instill sportsmanship, positive guidance, and a mentor approach to potential student leaders in grades 10-12. The presentation will provide ways to jump-start a mentor program within your student body along with ways to empower your student leaders throughout their school and community.

### **General Knowledge Among the People: Rural Strategy at College Board**

**Presenter:** Jeff Carlson, College Board, Harvard Graduate School of Education

In 2015, the College Board set a goal to provide greater impact to students in the nation's 14,000+ rural districts. SAT, PSAT, and AP Exams continue to grow over time, but rural students need greater access. Learn about and provide feedback on the College Board's pilot program in Colorado and Idaho rural schools. Information on partnerships with CTE, Khan Academy, and extension agencies to help rural students own their future also will be shared.

### **Dual Enrollment: What Do Students Really Want?**

**Presenters:** Tracy Najera, Battelle for Kids; Molly Kaplet & Debbie Ames, Rolling Hills Local SD

Dive into the results of a survey, designed for students in grades 9-12 to listen to students' needs around dual enrollment. Presenters will share strategies Ohio Appalachian Collaborative districts are using in response to student feedback to focus on student achievement, well-being, and how to compel students to stay at the high school campus for dual enrollment courses.

### **Making Your Title I School Soar with Teacher and Student Growth**

**Presenter:** Frances Harris-Burke, Department of Public Instruction, North Carolina

This session is designed to provide hands-on interaction and inspiring examples of innovative practices that will cause the Title I school to be successful with teacher and student growth. The strategies provide an opportunity for a positive school climate and enhanced academic achievement. Parent support and engagement will also be highlighted. Attendees will leave with a packet of strategies for rural educators to transform their Title I school.

### **Create an Alternative School within Your School**

**Presenters:** Dan Foster, Eastern Pulaski Community School Corporation; Rick DeFries & Karen Bulter, Winamac Community High School

The Warrior Academy was designed primarily as a credit recovery and alternative setting for students who struggle in a traditional setting. In an effort to improve graduation rates and lower dropout rates, the Academy, which is run by a licensed teacher, was created to assist students in catching up on their credits. Learn more about the steps taken to create the Academy within the school.

### **5 Impact Strategies for Student Growth**

**Presenter:** Bobby Moore, Battelle for Kids

Some rural schools in Ohio out-perform suburban and urban districts in student growth by implementing five specific strategies for success. Learn the research and hear from rural educators on how they are accelerating student learning.



## LEARNING SESSIONS

### **The Power of 17: Harnessing Tomorrow's Workforce Today**

**Presenter:** Kirk Koennecke, Graham Local Schools

Problem-based learning = “real world” for rural teenagers. This session will highlight the barriers to the growth mindset we need in place, along with examples that prove “why” schools need this movement now. The audience will be asked some value-based questions challenging the fixed mindset of contemporary media, business, and educators, when it comes to the adolescent workforce.

### **Supporting Rural Innovation Through Ohio's Straight A Fund**

**Presenters:** Erin Joyce, Battelle for Kids; Susan Zelman, Ohio Department of Education

Ohio's Straight A Fund supports ideas from local educators that promote academic achievement and economic efficiencies within schools and districts. Many rural Ohio school districts have successfully applied for Straight A funding, implementing new programs that advance student learning and increase operational efficiency. Learn how Ohio has incentivized innovation and how the program has impacted rural districts across the state.

### **Rural Arts Day: A University/High School Partnership Integrating Music, Writing, and Painting Across STEM Topics**

**Presenters:** F. Todd Goodson, Phil Payne, Vicki Sherbert, & Trina Harlow, Kansas State University

A team of university faculty members created an arts integration project for rural high schools. Students build cajons (a Peruvian percussion instrument), write lyrics, and perform original compositions. The single-day event integrates the arts with construction techniques and principles of the production of sound. Attendees will participate in several of the activities used high school students. Presenters will explain how these events are used to compile research data, and will share our findings to date.

### **A Small Rural School District's Journey to a PK-12 One-to-One iPad Initiative**

**Presenters:** Kristin Brown & Eduardo Infante, Lyford CISD

This session describes the journey taken by a small rural school district in implementing a locally-funded, one-to-one technology initiative. Participants will get an inside look into the logistics, and the funding and administrative procedures for establishing a one-to-one program. Participants will receive access to online resources utilized by the district for replication in other districts.

### **Inspiring Regional Commitment for Student Success**

**Presenters:** David Branch, Muskingum Valley Educational Service Center; Christopher Keylor, Ohio Valley Educational Service Center

Learn the story of Appalachian Ohio P-20 Council's formative stages, its challenges, and strategic plan. Founded in 2013, the 90-100 member council represents nine Appalachian counties (40,000+ students, 79 buildings, etc.). Representatives from higher education, business, workforce, K-12, philanthropy, and elected officials meet quarterly to identify challenges and share solutions and resources. A network of 50 influencers champion the council's vision and advocate for its work. Attendees will see video clips of various meetings and receive sample communications and documents.

### **Online Mentoring for Teacher Effectiveness and Retention**

**Presenter:** Diana Richie, New Teacher Center

Struggling to retain STEM, special education, or other new teachers? Join this session to learn more about a research-based system of support for new teachers with proven results. Learn more about e-Mentoring for Student Success (eMSS) through a case study in Kansas where retention went from 40 percent to 80 percent.



## LEARNING SESSIONS

### **Community Schooling: Paving the Way Forward!**

**Presenters:** Dakisha Perry & Magnus Hemans, North Carolina State University's Northeast Leadership Academy (NELA)

Family and community engagement is an essential component of a successful school. Developing strong community partnerships can help strengthen the community while increasing student academic success. In this session, participants will gain an understanding of community schooling. Participants will explore how to form and enhance meaningful collaborative relationships among schools and business partners to positively impact student academic achievement.

### **Partnering in Teacher Preparation to Respond to the Rural Teacher Shortage**

**Presenters:** Barbara Hansen & Rae White, Muskingum University; Jim Mahoney, Battelle for Kids

Attendees will learn first-hand the process being followed in a pilot project designed to encourage graduates of two-year institutions to enroll in an enhanced teacher preparation program. A collaborative among higher education, K-12 education, and Battelle for Kids is launching this pilot in southeastern Ohio. Features of the project include a year of clinical experience, compacted curriculum, cooperating teacher cohorts, expanded collaboration of higher education faculty with K-12, and more.

### **The Irreplaceables: Building Tomorrow's Irreplaceable, Today**

**Presenters:** Sandra Byrd & Lemondre' Watson, North Carolina State University's Northeast Leadership Academy (NELA)

The session aims to ignite the fire in educators to become irreplaceables. Participants will leave with strategies to support and retain highly effective teachers. The session will explore how to move teachers in your building to become irreplaceable life changers who are committed to impact, support, and move education forward by being irreplaceable.

### **Can You Hear Me Now? Effective Communication to Engage Community**

**Presenters:** Robin Griffin & Andrea Dagnalan, North Carolina State University's Northeast Leadership Academy (NELA)

Effective communication drives stakeholder engagement and support for your school. This session will explore the four A's of communication (Approach, Attitudes, Atmosphere, and Actions) to support intentional and effective interactions with community partners. Presenters will discuss creative and proactive ways to effectively communicate with parents and community to promote a culture of engagement.

### **Explore Free Online Learning Tools Focusing on Essential Leadership Practices**

**Presenters:** Jim Gay & Don Washburn, Ohio Leadership Advisory Council

The leadership development framework presented in this session offers a set of resources, modules, webinars, and videos of essential practices around systemic efforts to improve leadership practices system wide through the development of highly effective leadership teams. These resources are free, meet the criteria for Highly Qualified Professional Development, and users can receive contact hours.

### **College in Rural High Schools: Experiences of Dual Enrollment Teachers**

**Presenters:** Marsha Lewis, Daniel Kloepfer, & Margaret Hutzal, Ohio University; Julie Haines, South Webster Jr/Sr High School

This session presents findings from two studies of rural high school collaboratives (involving 40 districts) offering dual enrollment courses in small, rural high schools. Hear teacher perspectives on the credentialing process, working with colleges and universities, and balancing rigor and support to high school students as they transition to college students. Presenters include teachers at different stages of experience teaching dual enrollment courses who will share their experiences and insights.



## LEARNING SESSIONS

### **Hybrid Teaching & Learning for Rural Populations and Beyond**

**Presenters:** Ketal Patel, Lori Trent, Mary Schneider, & Jeff Schneider, PAST Foundation

The PAST Team is proud to share the Hybrid Teaching and Learning Model it's been refining and growing over the past five years in rural South Dakota. The session will share the practical iterations we have gone through as a team to develop a model that hones in on best practice and leverages the strengths of our educator team to design relevant transdisciplinary problem-based learning opportunities that is best for students.

### **2015 Professional Standards for Educational Leaders: Implications for Professional Development and Administrator Preparation**

**Presenters:** James Freeland & Marilyn Hirth, Purdue University

In 2015, the National Policy Board for Educational Administration (NBPEA) updated their professional standards. This research surveys Indiana superintendents regarding their perceptions of the levels of proficiency of their principals on each of the ten standards. Suggestions for professional development to assist principals in updating their knowledge and skills are offered as well as areas where new or added focus is needed to ensure future school leaders are prepared to achieve excellence in the profession.

### **Leadership's Magic Wand: Collaborating to Align Resources for Durable Change**

**Presenters:** Bill Clarke, School Turnaround at The Rensselaerville Institute; Cheryl Malcom, Homer Community School District

Most rural schools are expected to do more with less. But when it comes to valuable resources, we often only think in dollar amounts of various funding streams and maybe a little beyond into personnel lines and what's in the supply closet. This interactive session will focus on how to work collaboratively within and outside of school walls to align limited resources to outcomes that matter most. It's time to break out the magic wand and figure out what our schools really need to improve student achievement.

### **Mindset Matters! Cultivating Hope, Engagement, & Student Success**

**Presenter:** Jamie Meade, Battelle for Kids

Academic achievement is essential for student success, but academics alone do not ensure future success and overall well-being. In this interactive session, participants will explore the relationship between hope and future success and well-being. Participants will be invited to share experiences, practices, and strategies utilized to foster hope in the classroom and throughout the school community to support students in the rural setting to be successful. Participants from the Ohio Appalachian Collaborative (OAC) are invited to share their experiences with implementing and using The Student Experience Survey® to capture and respond to student feedback related to hope and engagement.

### **Rural Students and College Persistence: Have We Missed the Mark?**

**Presenter:** J. Kessa Roberts, The Ohio State University

With an ever-growing emphasis on college readiness in current federal and state educational policy, schools are increasingly concerned with how to prepare their students for college. While more rural students are enrolling in college than ever before, rural students continue to earn degrees at rates lower than their non-rural peers. This session will explore potential disconnects between educational policy and practices in K-12 and higher education and offer recommendations for bridging the existing gaps.



## LEARNING SESSIONS

### **The Interface Between Facilities and Student Learning in Rural Schools**

**Presenters:** Jerry Lowe & Velma Menchaca, The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley

Impact of the built environment on perceptual development and human behavior is gradually being recognized by educators as an important variable in the learning process. Consequently, an increased number of individuals and organizations responsible for planning, designing, and utilizing educational facilities are considering them as having significant impact upon the learning experiences of children. This presentation will examine the interface between the school building and student learning.

### **School Leaders' Perceptions and Knowledge of Neuroscience Findings in Rural Schools**

**Presenters:** Patty Kero & Charity Atteberry, University of Montana

This presentation is a quantitative study examining the perceptions and knowledge of brain research of practicing principals and superintendents in rural Montana. Recently, there has been a vast interest among rural educators in the area of educational neuroscience (or mind, brain, and education). This new frontier is transforming how rural school leaders think about learning. By bringing together the disciplines of psychology, neuroscience, and pedagogy, educators can enrich teaching and learning practices.

### **Virtual Leadership Mentoring: Preparing College and Career Ready Rural Students**

**Presenters:** Matthew Ohlson, University of North Florida (UNF); Mark Bracewell, North East Florida Educational Consortium (NEFEC)

The Collegiate Achievement Mentoring Program (C.A.M.P.) is a multi-state, leadership-mentoring program in which collegiate student leaders serve as mentors to K-12 students. To overcome geographic and financial barriers faced by our rural partners throughout the nation, we harness the power of “virtual leadership mentoring” and videoconferencing technology available on the UNF campus to help students become college and career ready. Participants in the pilot program experienced increased standardized test scores and attendance, and decreased school suspensions.

### **Becoming a Culturally Competent Educator**

**Presenter:** Denise Schares, University of Northern Iowa

As our schools become more culturally diverse, the challenge of serving all students becomes increasingly important to address. This session will focus on understanding the role of school leaders, teachers and support staff in meeting the learning needs of all students. Strategies, conversations and reflection prompts will be shared to promote a greater understanding of the impact of cultural diversity on learning and potential actions to effectively serve all students.

### **You Come Too: University Study-Abroad Meets Middle School Students**

**Presenters:** Jennifer Collins & Lindsay Hollingsworth, University of Wisconsin-Platteville

This session outlines an innovative partnership between a rural university and middle school. Pre-service teachers participating in a short-term study abroad program in England were partnered with middle school “research partners” to explore their identities. Having collectively defined how geography, history, politics, and economic systems intersect to define them as rural Midwesterners, the pre-service teachers gathered similar information from British middle school partners.



## LEARNING SESSIONS

### **Pipelines and Partnerships: Coordinating Statewide Rural Education Outreach**

**Presenters:** Christopher Benedetti & Megan Quitter, Western State Colorado University

Rural districts face an increasing challenge of securing effective, highly qualified teachers for their schools. To address this challenge, teacher recruitment pipelines must be built that increase awareness and access to rural districts. Building these pipelines requires the development of partnerships between universities, teacher preparation providers, and rural districts. This session will discuss a current state-funded initiative that is working toward addressing the challenge of teacher recruitment through these pipelines and partnerships.

### **Does Class Rank Truly Tell the Whole Story for College Admissions?**

**Presenter:** Kim Kaukl, Wisconsin Rural Schools Alliance

Why move away from class rank? Because rank is misinterpreted, it can negatively impact students and taint the school atmosphere. Class rank fosters student behaviors that educators view as counterproductive: Avoidance of challenging classes that impact GPA/Rank. Excessive competition. An unwillingness to take an intellectual and academic risk. Increased pressure from students/parents to inflate/change grades. Without reporting rank, colleges are forced to review factors, like rigor of the student's curriculum, students' activities and accomplishments, and test scores.

### **Successful School Readiness Strategies: Partnering with Parents and Preschools**

**Presenter:** Tennant Kirk, Berea College Promise Neighborhood

Research shows that children who start school behind tend to stay behind, and struggle to learn at the same rate as their peers. Their teachers struggle to help them catch up and to balance their needs with those of the whole class. Patterns of disruptive behavior often emerge during these early school years as children are frustrated by expectations they are unable to meet. However, children who enter school with age appropriate functioning across developmental domains thrive in kindergarten. This session describes how three rural school districts increased school readiness by partnering with parents and preschool teachers.

### **Learning From the Past: Creating Citizens for the Future**

**Presenters:** Dale Fleury, A+ College Ready; Heather Hawk, Eastside High School

There is a growing achievement gap in citizenship and social studies literacy due to a number of factors, including the focus on STEM education. Yet, social studies is the only core discipline essential to civic competence and the maintenance and enhancement of a free and democratic society. This session will examine the success of a social studies and civics initiative in the state of Alabama that is bringing civic literacy back to the forefront, while integrating social studies with STEM education.

### **Beyond Compliance: School Safety is More Than Just an Emergency Operations Plan**

**Presenter:** Gary Sigrist, Jr., Safeguard Risk Solutions LLC

Many schools believe they are in compliance with state and federal guidelines and laws, simply because they have an Emergency Operations Plan. School safety is not just 'one' thing. School safety is many layers and schools cannot do it alone. School safety is a cooperation between schools and first responders. School safety means training and exercises to test plans. And most important, schools need to realize school safety is a never ending task.



## LEARNING SESSIONS

### **Just Ask! Ways to Create Community Partnerships that Last**

**Presenter:** Derek Hinkle, Southwest Licking Schools

Many districts struggle with creating community partnerships. In this session, learn practical ways to get partnerships formed with families, businesses, and universities. Additionally, attendees will see first-hand evidence from school districts who have implemented these simple strategies. These are sure-fire ways to increase student engagement.

### **An Ecological Leadership Approach for School Counselors in Rural Communities**

**Presenters:** Tameka Oliphant, Bethany Poole, Meaghan Rolle, & Jennifer Voyles, The University of Georgia

Through this interactive presentation, attendees will discover a new framework that will help school counselors support students' emotional, academic, and career development more effectively. The innovative Ecological School Counseling model considers the way school counselors can connect and collaborate with school and community members to make a significant impact in their community. Attendees will have an opportunity to brainstorm ecological solutions to concerns impacting rural education, including burnout, and leave with a next-steps action plan.

### **Connecting the Community to Curriculum Through a Problem Scenario Process**

**Presenters:** Tasha Werry, Building Bridges to Careers/Marietta City Schools; Nick Arnold, Pickering Associates; DeeAnn Gehlauf, Memorial Health System

Building Bridges to Careers has created a process that directly connects students, teachers, and local business representatives. The process includes four phases: professional development, implementation, reflection, and networking. Attendees will learn how this process has impacted all three stakeholders and how this process can be implemented in your district.

### **Lessons Learned About Student Engagement**

**Presenters:** Julie Sumpter & Pat Smith, Coalition of Country Schools

The presenters will share insights and lessons learned about student engagement while working with teachers and administrators in the small rural schools of more than 35 school districts in southeast Colorado. Participants will experience some of the techniques and strategies proven effective for engagement, including how to get students to take ownership for their learning. Attendees also will leave with a toolkit for engagement.

### **Epic Outdoor Adventures: See What Rural Schools Can Do**

**Presenter:** Scott Jordan, Cuba-Rushford Central School

Welcome to Cuba-Rushford Central School (CRCS)—a rural public school located in western New York. CRCS, where the outdoors comes first, has a fish hatchery, research pond, log home wildlife research center, captive deer herd, collared animals, and provides annual field trips to New Zealand, Alaska, South Africa, Canada, Florida, Texas, Nebraska, and Pennsylvania. CRCS also has its own national television show featuring students hunting and fishing around the globe. Learn how middle and high school students are involved in real scientific research, and how educators are making scientific principals relevant and fun!

### **Developing 21st Century Learning Spaces in Rural Communities**

**Presenters:** Travis Dunlap & Victor Hellman, Education Facilities Clearinghouse

How are rural schools embracing the new research on effective learning spaces? Classrooms have long been a place for direct instruction; however, new education research centers on trends like maker-space, project-based learning, mindfulness, the role of nature, and other themes. This presentation will explore how to develop learning spaces that ensure our students benefit from the emerging best practices in classroom design.



## LEARNING SESSIONS

### **Leading Networks with Intension**

**Presenters:** Danette Parsley & Matt Eide, Education Northwest

What makes a rural network successful? More member autonomy or greater accountability? Pursuing growth or maintaining an intimate community? The answer is both/and. A network is a complex, dynamic human system that requires its leadership to balance tensions like these to optimize the collaborative experience using input from the members themselves. Learn how one rural network's steering committee has managed such tensions over time.

### **Improving School Engagement for Employees, Students, and Parents**

**Presenters:** Tim Hodges & Joni Booth, Gallup

Effective schools require a high level of engagement from all constituents—the employees, students, and parents. Gallup defines engagement by using the terms “involvement” and “enthusiasm.” Extensive research shows that engagement can be effectively measured and intentionally managed. This session will share highlights from the national research and provide strategies rural school leaders can implement to ensure school engagement.

### **Where to Find Innovation**

**Presenters:** Bobby Dodd, Neil Gupta, & Craig Vroom, Leading Learning, Inc.

Innovation in rural education is really not as difficult as it may seem. Sometimes it is just getting started that is the biggest hurdle to overcome. This session will focus on what is behind innovation and how every educator can be innovative to help their classes and schools. Attendees will learn the key components of innovation, examples of innovative practices and programs that are already in place at different schools, and how to apply innovation in rural schools to make a difference.

### **The Power of Two: District + University = Powerful Rural Principals**

**Presenters:** Bonnie Fusarelli & Catherine Edmonds, North Carolina State University's Northeast Leadership Academy (NELA)

Rural districts struggle with recruiting and retaining highly effective principals. The Northeast Leadership Academy (NELA) is a nationally recognized innovative research-based principal preparation program that works in collaboration with local districts to prepare school leaders for low-performing, hard-to-staff schools located in rural northeast North Carolina. NELA's approach to principal preparation is uniquely different than that of traditional principal preparation programs.

### **Give Students Ownership? We Did, and Here's What Happened**

**Presenters:** Aaron Sitze, Cole Davidson, & Chance Merrill, Oregon High School

The Open Program (OP) is a third-year initiative in a small, rural high school, created by teachers to empower students to take ownership of their own learning through metacognitive training. OP students enjoy an “open” educational climate across multiple class periods, choosing their own pacing, mastery methods, and community-based projects. The result is incredible growth and wild success, beyond where you'd expect it. This session is designed for schools looking in-house for innovative progress.

### **Impacting Teacher Recruitment and Retention: The Colorado Rural Education Collaborative**

**Presenters:** Denille LePlatt, Primero School District; Jon Reinhard, Generation Schools Network

Finding and keeping high quality teachers in rural school districts is a major concern among rural superintendents across the United States. See how a small rural school district in southern Colorado has made the investment as a district to effectively recruit high quality teachers, and what they are doing to retain them. Hear from a successful rural superintendent about key practices.



## LEARNING SESSIONS

### **Closing the Achievement Gap in Rural Districts: Success Stories From Multiple States**

**Presenters:** Shelley Billig & Stephany Brown, RMC Research Corporation; Tina Goar, Colorado Department of Education; Jon Habben, Nebraska Rural Communities and Schools Association

Hear from local superintendents and staff about the instructional and organizational practices they used to close the achievement gap between free and reduced-lunch (FRL) students and non-FRL students and keep it closed for at least four years. Presenters will provide the research base and examples from successful rural districts.

### **Leveraging Technology to Personalize College and Career Readiness**

**Presenters:** Kevin Jacka, Mary Walker School District; Tyler Sussman, Summit Public Schools; Jerry Dyar, Rural Alliance for College Success

See how every student can have a strong personal vision of his/her future and develop the academic and supporting 21<sup>st</sup> century skills to make that dream attainable. Attendees will have hands-on experience with Basecamp—a powerful, free personalized learning program—and hear from practitioners about their successes and challenges in using the latest technology to customize learning for each individual.

### **Problem-Based Learning: Innovative, Empowering, and an Equalizer for Students**

**Presenters:** Barb Cockroft, Young Entrepreneurs Consortium; Kristi Foss, Osnaburg Local School District

Problem-based learning (PBL) is an instructional approach designed to encourage students to conduct research and apply knowledge and skills to solve a problem. As an area of focus for the Young Entrepreneurs Consortium, students identify what they already know, what they need to know, and how to get there. YEC educators support and guide the learning process through a comprehensive model approach that includes training lead PBL instructors, using a PBL template and curated resources to create units, and access to a robust library of sample units. In this session, attendees will learn how PBL is innovative, empowering, and the equalizer for all students. The student-centered approach to learning promotes creative thinking, teamwork, problem solving, and flexibility, which are all important skills for success in college and on the job.

### **Student Leadership Development as a Catalyst for Community Growth**

**Presenters:** Patrick Klein, Ben Scragg, & Jordan Moseley, The iBELIEVE Foundation

In this session, presenters will share how they provide opportunities to Appalachian youth to develop 21st century skills such as leadership, communication, and problem solving. Ultimately, iBELIEVE's ambitious goal is to increase collegiate attendance and retention in the Appalachian communities of Ohio, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia. Through its unique programming, students develop the locus of control and drive to pursue their goals in higher education, with a focus on their communities.

### **Creating a Pre-K Through Post Graduate System for All Students**

**Presenters:** Dennis Recker & Craig Hurley, Upper Scioto Valley Local Schools; Sybil Truster, Mid-West Regional Educational Service Center; Doug Durli, Rhodes State College

This session will demonstrate how a small, rural district was able to re-establish itself as a positive change agent for an entire community. Presenters will provide the actions taken, based on locally-developed models, including those that were grant funded. Presenters will share evidence of what worked and what didn't work, their approach to community engagement, and process for industry-based credentialing.



## LEARNING SESSIONS

### **Pre-Kindergarten in Rural America: Finding the Teacher is Key to a Successful Program**

**Presenters:** Cathy Grace & Devon Brenner, University of Mississippi

As pre-kindergarten classrooms become more institutionalized in public schools, rural communities may be challenged to meet state and national standards for finding qualified teachers. This session explores how rural communities can identify and hire highly qualified early childhood teachers. Strategies for working with area colleges and universities to grow partnerships that produce well prepared early childhood teachers will be shared.

### **Prosperity & Gifted Education's Place-based Investment Model of Talent Development**

**Presenters:** Kristen Seward, Purdue University; Kristina Ayers Paul, Lower Merion School District

The Place-based Investment Model of Talent Development proposes investing in the talent development of the gifted people who grow up in specific locales, who may re-invest their talents in the community. Five pathways (enrichment, advanced learning, human connections, strategic thinking, and specialized guidance) and three imperatives (broad academic preparation, development of cultural and social capital, and entrepreneurial skill development) will be discussed in relation to unique rural needs and challenges.

### **Rural Districts Collaborating to Provide Opportunities for All Students**

**Presenters:** Patricia Ross, Rebecca Short, & Erik Belcher, Fayette Local Schools; Diana Rogge, Antwerp Local Schools; Brett Green, Liberty Center Local Schools

Providing a variety of electives is challenging in rural districts. NOVA is a collaboration that began with 17 districts and has grown to 34 districts working together to offer opportunities to overcome the rural opportunity gap in Ohio and Michigan. Learn how districts joined to provide curriculum, teachers, summer school, credit recovery, support, and professional development through virtual learning. Presenters will share how districts can provide opportunities they never imagined were possible.

### **The Promise and Peril of Place-based Education**

**Presenter:** Erin Small, University of Missouri, Columbia

Place-based education may offer an opportunity for rural schools to help students connect with their communities and help communities retain their youth. However, creating idealized vision of their community through traditional place-based assignments could instill a feeling of hopelessness in students. Participants will be invited to explore critical place-based pedagogy that is action-oriented and designed to help students view themselves as active, long-term citizens in their rural communities.

### **The Ins and Outs of a Successful CCP Program**

**Presenters:** Janelle Comstock, Belmont College; Jennifer Bohach, Switzerland of Ohio Local School District

In this session, learn about the ins and outs of developing and running a successful College Credit Plus (CCP) program within the high school alongside higher education partners. Areas of focus will include how to develop and maintain working relationships with higher education, lessons learned throughout the process, factors to consider when designing and implementing a CCP program, and useful resources.



## LEARNING SESSIONS

### **Successful School-Community Collaboration is Key**

**Presenters:** Franco Gallo, Keystone Local School District; Erin R. Murphy, MPH, Lorain County General Health District

Districts that work with external partners are better able to build the strengths of their students and staff by looking outside school walls. The Keystone Empowers You Collaborative (K.E.Y.) represents 13 partners, including the local school district, which covers 48 square miles. This session will demonstrate the systematic process the Collaborative uses to enhance the relationship between the school and community to improve health and wellness.

### **Passionately Pitch and Promote the Positive Happenings in Your School**

**Presenter:** Eric Lowe, Beaver Local Schools

“Nothing.” How many times each week do your students respond to the question “What happened at school today?” with that single, uninspiring, and untrue word? This session will help you to find ways to tell your school’s story on a daily basis so that will never be the answer again. Leave with practical tools to keep students’ families and the community connected, informed, and excited about what’s going on in your school.

### **Developing the Workforce Talent of the Future Through STEM K-12 Education**

**Presenters:** Anne Seifert, Idaho National Laboratory; Melinda Hamilton, University of Idaho

This presentation showcases how STEM literacy has evolved through a teacher STEM professional development initiative and how stakeholders (government, workforce development, education, business and industry) come together to enhance K-20 STEM education. The initiative, led by a national lab in partnership with higher education, industry, and government agencies, builds a unified statewide STEM focus and educators’ capacity and confidence to transfer STEM knowledge and skills to students; thus, enhancing the students’ ability to become informed and involved citizens, solution-oriented decision makers, and competitive and innovative contributors to the 21st century global workforce.

### **The Key to Forming Productive Partnerships**

**Presenters:** Dana Pomykal Franz & Devon Brenner, Mississippi State University

Creating partnerships that result in productive, collaborative work is essential. This session will identify multiple types of partnerships, including school-university, teacher-teacher candidate-professor, school-political office, etc., that may result in collaborative work that ultimately improves student learning. Attendees will have the opportunity to discuss their own partnerships and share what has worked and not worked and discuss needs in rural education advocacy to improve partnerships.

### **An Innovative Approach to School Improvement Through Continuous Data Analysis**

**Presenters:** Abbie Combs, Jennifer Carroll, Cheryl Mathis, & Dionne Bates, Kentucky Valley Education Cooperative

Kentucky Valley Educational Cooperative (KVEC), in an endeavor to provide leadership and support for educators’ effective utilization of data, has developed and launched the Perpetual Data Analysis System (PDAS). PDAS relies on multiple types of current and real-time data for school decision making. It requires an in-depth data analysis that goes beyond the traditional once-a-year data retreat to provide school and district personnel with the knowledge, skill, and dispositions to use data and assessment results to improve next generation teaching, learning, and leading. The session is designed for any educator who is interested learning more about continuous school improvement through effective data analysis.



## LEARNING SESSIONS

### **Strong Readers=Strong Leaders: Mississippi's Journey to Improving Literacy Outcomes**

**Presenters:** Kymyona Burk & Jill Hoda, Mississippi Department of Education

The Mississippi Department of Education will share the process used to implement its innovative and comprehensive approach to building teacher capacity and increasing student outcomes. Participants will explore the coaching model used to enhance instructional practices; innovative strategies used to recruit, identify, and retain literacy coaches; and approaches to delivering statewide professional development and targeted onsite support. This session will also provide implementation guidance for states regarding 3rd grade reading policies.

### **Professional Development Partnerships for Paraprofessionals in Rural Districts**

**Presenters:** Catherine Woods & Cary Jenkins, Walters State Community College

Every educator deserves access to high quality professional learning. This session will show the audience how Walters State Community College, Battelle for Kids, and nine rural districts collaborated to provide paraprofessionals, substitutes, and teachers a unique arrangement for skill-set training in Formative Instructional Practices (FIP) and Response to Intervention (RTI). Using a blended learning approach for instruction allowed participants to pace themselves, while increasing participants' confidence that learning can take place in various formats.

### **Connecting and Supporting Rural Educators Weekly via Technology**

**Presenters:** Mark Stock, Wyoming Center for Educational Leadership; Jillian Balow, Wyoming State Department of Education

This session will explain how Wyoming is connecting and networking its educators through the E.C.H.O. project. This innovative project taken from the medical field, seeks to connect rural educators with weekly professional development and problem-solving opportunities accessed by computer, tablet, or phone. Training topics and case presentations are scheduled and published for the entire year based on survey results and suggestions from the field. ECHO communities in education include educational leadership/district level, educational leadership/building level, assistive technology, autism, positive behavioral interventions and supports, and secondary transitions.

### **Getting to the 'Work' in a Rural Network**

**Presenters:** Rob Spriggs & Christina Spriggs, Glens Ferry School District; Ryan Markel, Cusick School District; Mike Siebersma, Education Northwest

Networks of educators separated by vast distance, district boundaries, and even state lines work only with deliberate support. Hear how teachers in rural schools from different Northwest states form close personal and professional relationships with job-alike peers and help each other get better at classroom practice. Learn what school administration does to create the optimal conditions for teachers to engage in and benefit from the network and what SEAs do to help in the process.

### **The Benefits and Challenges of Developing Youth Entrepreneurship**

**Presenter:** Thomas Long, Michigan State University Extension

In this open participation session, presenters will discuss the benefits of engaging youth in entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship. Presenters will highlight the challenges we face and the possible solutions. An introduction to best practices for recruiting youth will be covered along with partnerships and organizations to engage. Program funding strategies, available resources, and others success strategies will be shared.



## LEARNING SESSIONS

### **Connecting Research, Policy, and Practice: The Regional Educational Laboratory Program**

**Presenters:** Tori Cirks, REL Midwest at American Institutes for Research; Michael Flory, REL Appalachia; Shelley Billig, REL Central; Jerry Johnson, REL Mid-Atlantic; Sarah Frazelle, REL Northwest; Pam Buffington, REL Northeast and Islands; Haidee Williams, REL Southwest; Stepany Brown, REL Central

See how research translates into practice by attending an interactive session provided by the Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) Program. Attendees will learn how to unpack data and research to address pressing rural education issues, including college and career readiness, educator recruitment and retention, and data use.

### **Connecting Students Globally with Video Everywhere**

**Presenters:** Janet Zanetis & Tami Moehring, Center for Interactive Learning & Collaboration

We often hear that we should be teaching our students how to interact and collaborate with their peers across different countries, background, cultures, and practices. Indeed, the global citizens and the workforce of the future require employees that are adept with team problem solving through multi-cultural experience and collaboration skills. Using high-speed bandwidth and cloud-based Interactive Videoconferencing (IVC), students across the globe are practicing these types of skills while covering the national curriculum.

### **Impacting the Lives of Expelled and Suspended Students in South-Central Colorado**

**Presenters:** Katie Peyton & Ashleigh Valentine, Generation Schools Network; Victoria Stone, Custer County Schools

Through the work of the Expelled and At-Risk Student Services (EARSS) Grant in Colorado, Generation Schools Network (GSN) has provided organization, training, and support to students, their parents, and school staff. By implementing the advocacy program, including hiring and training of advocates, student attendance, engagement, and parent involvement have all increased in the first year of the program. GSN staff and school-based advocates will share objectives, lessons learned, and provide strategies for replication and resources.

### **Differentiating Approaches to Working with Low-, Middle-, and High-Income Families**

**Presenter:** Melinda Dalton, Waterford Institute UPSTART

This session goes into depth on the sociological and psychological differences in families from low-, middle-, and high-income statuses. Understanding the differences between these groups, especially their priorities and concerns, as well as what patterns are present in their lives, will increase your understanding of what motivates them and how working and communicating with families from the different income levels needs to change to be more effective.

### **Not Your Typical Career Fair**

**Presenters:** Shelly Vaughn, Mercer County Educational Service Center; Jared Ebbing, Mercer County Economic Development, Mary Riepenhoff & Kelli Tebbe, Auglaize County Educational Service Center

How do you get juniors and seniors to make meaningful connections with local businesses? Nearly 100 businesses spent time sharing their stories with more than 1,400 Ohio students who selected a career interest matched to local business professionals. The connections made led to continued mentorship, job shadowing opportunities, internships, and employment from this extraordinary career opportunity.



## LEARNING SESSIONS

### **Taking “Rural” Advantage of Opportunities in the Every Student Succeeds Act**

**Presenters:** Hobart Harmon & Veronica Tate, Virginia Advanced Study Strategies (VASS), Inc; Paul Nichols, Mecklenburg County Public Schools

How can rural school systems gain maximum benefits from the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)? Session participants will learn how to target local planning needs, leverage flexibility in ESSA funding streams, and foster ideas for winning innovation funds. A checklist tool will engage participants in self-assessing district readiness for taking advantage of the opportunities ESSA offers. Presenters include: rural superintendent, recent director of state department of education federal programs, and a leading expert in rural education.

### **Leveraging Strategic Partnerships: Maximizing Your Program’s Potential**

**Presenter:** Thomas Richardson, Van Buren Technology Center

Learn how the Van Buren Intermediate School District in Lawrence, Michigan has developed national and state award-winning educational programs that have secured and leveraged millions of dollars of investments; supporting our district’s mission through innovative, intentional strategic partnerships with business and industry, governmental agencies, community, and philanthropic organizations. Learn the fundamental elements of developing strategic partnerships in your school district.

### **Creating a STEM Culture Through a Leadership Lens**

**Presenters:** Mike Whaland & Todd Lamarque, Lancaster School

Advancing STEM education has become an initiative across the state and country. This session will provide methods to build a culture of STEM through focusing efforts around four major constructs to include systematic program shifts, professional development aligned to Next Generation Science Standards, community partnerships, and student engagement.

### **Weatherman, Cow Herder, and Teacher: The Complementary and Competing Roles of the Rural Multi-District Superintendent**

**Presenters:** Erin McHenry-Sorber, West Virginia University; Daniella Hall, Northwestern University

This session explores ethnographic research on the multiple roles and time allocation of a rural multi-district superintendent and his ability to engage in place-conscious leadership.

### **Florida’s Rural Consortia Serve as a Catalyst for Collaboration**

**Presenters:** John Selover, Panhandle Area Educational Consortium (PAEC); Patrick Wnek, North East Florida Educational Consortium (NEFEC); Debra Elliott, Heartland Educational Consortium (HEC)

This session will focus on the journey of Florida’s rural educational consortia who have worked collectively to address common challenges that include the coordination of legislative advocacy, student assessment, professional development, virtual education, IT support, STEM initiatives, and teacher and principal performance, to maximize district effectiveness and student growth.

### **Dropout Prevention: Implementing Early Warning Systems in Rural High Schools**

**Presenter:** Jenny Scala, American Institutes for Research

Learn the specific strategies rural high schools can utilize to develop and implement early warning systems (EWS) to support students at risk of dropping out. Find out how to build on rural district characteristics, such as lower student enrollments, smaller teacher-to-student ratios, and stronger ties with the community to support EWS implementation.



## LEARNING SESSIONS

### **Partnerships, Primary Sources, and Archeological Digs: Igniting Place-Based Education**

**Presenters:** Grant Miller & Dave Ardrey, Southern Illinois University

Learn how local leaders from the Library of Congress and the U.S. National Forest Service provided a summer course for rural teachers to investigate Underground Railroad sites in Southern Illinois, including an archeological dig at an African-American ghost town. Attendees will see ways teachers were able to utilize these experiences and free sources from the Library of Congress to develop local history lessons and assessments aligned with the Common Core State Standards.

### **Promising Practices for Rural Educator Recruitment and Retention**

**Presenters:** Tori Cirks, REL Midwest at American Institutes for Research; John Hill, National Rural Education Association; Erin Joyce, Battelle for Kids; Marsha Lewis, Ohio University

The Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) Midwest Rural Research Alliance has been exploring the topic of rural educator recruitment and retention. Hear lessons learned and what evidence-based and promising practices are helping states and districts find and keep highly effective educators.

### **Rural Gifted Education: Building a Culture of Enrichment**

**Presenters:** Heather Clark & Jaime Scott, Northridge Local School District

This session will showcase the four-year journey taken to bring back gifted and talented programming in a small rural district with limited funds. Using a step-by-step process, enrichment became a priority by providing high quality professional development, communicating with parents, encouraging acceleration, increasing advanced course offerings and College Credit Plus programming, creating STEM opportunities, etc. Leave with impactful ideas and strategies that maximize your resources for supporting students.

### **Always Listen to Your PALS: Promising Appalachian Leaders in Service**

**Presenters:** Mary Gibson, Partners for Education; Michael Hughes, Berea College

The mission of Partners for Education (PfE) at Berea College is All Appalachian Youth Succeed in School. A piece of our work impacts students' lives outside the classroom. This session highlights our regional high school leadership team that has shared the stage with nationally known educators, state politicians, and hometown heroes. They share their stories to bring attention to myriad issues they believe impact high school students and today's Appalachian rural families.

### **From Caterpillar to Butterfly: The "Nature" of Change**

**Presenters:** Vivian Franklin & Nancy Dishner, Niswonger Foundation

A group of teachers, principals, supervisors, or superintendents come together and discuss education. But how does that group discussion go through a metamorphosis to form more than association? How does this group become a consortium that collaborates to lead the education practice in a rural setting? What changes occur that build relationships, capacity, and quality so that through training, support, and action educational, practice is transformed so that every child can soar?

### **Focused Professional Development: An Inclusive Model in a Rural District**

**Presenters:** Heather Clark & Jaime Scott, Northridge Local School District

How do you provide professional development that applies to everyone in the district? Learn about one district's struggle, and hear about the systems developed over the past four years for planning, receiving feedback, technology integration, and the overall strategies for making professional development relevant to every teacher, every time!



## LEARNING SESSIONS

### **Engaging Families Through Parenting Education**

**Presenters:** Christine Cox, The Ford Family Foundation; Denise Rennekamp, Oregon State University

Looking for a way to engage with families before their children walk through your elementary school doors? Learn how the Oregon Parenting Education Collaborative has partnered with rural schools to offer parenting classes and other supports. Roughly 40 percent of children in Oregon are at risk for meeting school readiness benchmarks at kindergarten entry. Parents are key to addressing the issue. Evidence-based parenting education is a strategy for improving parenting skills, which in turn, support young children's school-readiness (e.g. social/emotional, self-regulation and early literacy). With rural schools frequently acting as a community hub, they can be natural hosts for parenting education classes. Learn more about the power of parent education.

### **Doing More for Rural Students Together Than Alone**

**Presenters:** Alicia Sells, iLEAD Academy; Rob Stafford, Owen County Schools; Bill Hogan, Carroll County Schools; Tim Abrams, Henry County Schools

Five small, rural school districts in Kentucky came together to create the state's first regional high school. iLEAD is a Career Academy preparing students for the fastest growing, highest paying jobs in their region. Learn how these districts have immeasurably expanded opportunities for students by sharing resources and breaking the mold of high school education.

### **Building and Launching a Rural Collaborative**

**Presenter:** Jon Andes, Eastern Shore of Maryland Educational Consortium

This interactive session will provide a step-by-step model process to create and sustain a rural education collaborative. The major themes that will be addressed include: finding appropriate partner school systems; identifying common needs to be met through a rural collaborative; creating a decision making or governance structure; and sustaining the rural collaborative after the 'original creators' have retired or transitioned to other ventures. By participating in this session, the attendees will leave with a plan to build and launch a rural collaborative.

### **Does the Hat Fit? Teacher Leadership in Rural Schools**

**Presenter:** Jayna Ashlock-Huston, Spokane Public Schools/Washington State University

This session will examine research conducted from three successful rural high schools in Washington. It will cover the roles, characteristics, perceptions, and challenges facing rural schools and how they have continued to be successful.

### **Developing Industry Partnerships and Innovative Pathways in Advanced Manufacturing**

**Presenters:** Allen Pratt, Marion Co Schools/TNREA; Renee Murley, University of Memphis; Joe T. Wood, Battelle for Kids

This session will focus on the process of creating partnerships with local government and industry in the area of advanced manufacturing. Marion County Schools is creating multiple delivery options for students to obtain nationally-recognized credentials while in high school. These options align with the local industry needs. Marion County Schools will share how these partnerships led to being able to significantly increase the number of high school students receiving postsecondary credit. Different options for providing a blended, personalized approach will be discussed, as well as the funding options to implement the program.



## LEARNING SESSIONS

### **Teacher Leadership: An Important Resource for Rural Education**

**Presenter:** Tami Fitzgerald, National Board for Professional Teaching Standards

Teacher leadership has created a burst of energy in the field of education. As we advance from a predominantly industrial era into a knowledge-based economy, the U.S. educational system must leverage the power and potential of teacher leaders as agents of systemic change. Teachers have the expertise to drive improvement and reform in our schools. During a time when teacher recruitment, retention, and career satisfaction are topics of concern, especially in rural areas, teacher leadership can be a game changer. This interactive session will engage participants in thinking how they can best utilize the human capital of teacher leaders to maximize system advancement.



## RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM SESSIONS

### **The National Rural Education Association Diversity Self-Study**

**Presenters:** Gerri M. Maxwell, Texas A&M University, Kingsville; John Hill, Ed.D., Purdue University; Scott Turney, Indiana Small and Rural Schools

This session will provide the results of the NREA Diversity committee survey relative to the diversity of the organization in order to inform future growth and expansion of the organization.

### **Sustaining Special Educators Through Collaboration: Lessons From Rural Areas**

**Presenter:** Dr. Ann Berry, Plymouth State University

Research has identified sources of work-related support that have a positive effect on teachers' sense of efficacy and satisfaction. One of these factors is a shared sense of responsibility when educating students with disabilities. Results from a two-year investigation in rural districts will provide insight from the special education and general education teachers' point of view. Implications and future directions to support teachers in a collaborative structure for service delivery will be discussed.

### **Democratic Education for Diversity: Three Rural Classrooms in Ontario, Canada**

**Presenter:** Joanne Pattison-Meek, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto

Based on case study research in rural Ontario, Canada, this presentation explores how and why three high school social studies teachers selected and taught subject matter, and implemented pedagogies, to facilitate students' expression in relation to various social and cultural differences and conflicts. This study brings to light pedagogical challenges and opportunities for democracy-committed teachers to affirm social, political, and ethno-cultural diversity and justice in predominantly white and rural classroom settings.

### **Rural Educational Attainment in the 21st Century: Current Status and Future Considerations**

**Presenters:** Sarah Schmitt-Wilson, Jayne Downey, & Ashley Beck, Montana State University

This interactive research session will provide an updated perspective on the educational attainment of rural students by utilizing data from the Educational Longitudinal Study of 2002 (ELS: 2002). Presenters will show how the most recent data aligns with previous findings and also sheds new light on this generation of rural youth. Attendees will have a forum for discussing various factors influencing educational attainment among students from rural communities.

### **Rural High School Students' Barriers to Tuition-Free Community College**

**Presenters:** Marcus Green & Jeff Fleckenstein, North Carolina New Schools/Breakthrough Learning

Despite the current commitment and funding of tuition-free community college for high schoolers in North Carolina, discrepancies exist in the number of students who are eligible for this opportunity and the number of students who are utilizing the program who are eligible. This session will highlight findings on the obstacles limiting rural students' access to free community college and also share ways NC rural high schools are working to overcome these obstacles.

### **College and Career Decisions of Students in a De-industrialized Rural Community**

**Presenters:** Dr. Tena Versland, Montana State University; Lynne Scalia, Livingston Public Schools

This study describes the complexity of factors as rural students in a de-industrialized community move from high school into college and work. Students identified economic uncertainty, lack of adult mentoring, and doubts about the benefits of a college degree as factors influencing post-secondary decisions. Rural high schools can ease these transitions by increasing career counseling, offering dual credit courses in vocational and academic subjects, and by creating real-world experiences that better prepare students for adult life.



## RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM SESSIONS

### **College and Career Readiness in Middle Appalachia: Statistics and Perceptions**

**Presenters:** Dr. Michael Flory & Dr. Patricia Kannapel, CNA Analysis & Solutions

A literature and data review with information about the current state of college and career readiness statistics and challenges in Middle Appalachia. The presentation points policymakers and researchers toward what we need to know and do next, and provides information specific to college and career readiness and is a follow-up to the *2015 Appalachia Rising* report.

### **Implementing Dual Credit Programs in Rural Kentucky**

**Presenters:** Dr. Michael Flory & Dr. Patricia Kannapel, CNA Analysis & Solutions

Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) Appalachia examined dual credit programs in six nonurban school districts in Kentucky. The study provides information about how such districts are responding to a statewide emphasis on increasing dual credit opportunities. Profiles of dual credit programs describe the following for each district: structures and policies/practices; postsecondary partnerships; course offerings; course location and scheduling; instructors and credentialing; student supports; quality assurance; costs and funding sources; and successes and challenges to implementation.

### **A View from the Top: Superintendents' Perceptions of Mental Health Supports in Rural School Districts**

**Presenters:** Christina Pate, Meagan O'Malley, & Staci Wendt, WestEd

This preliminary study examines superintendents' perceptions of variables that facilitate or inhibit the provision of school mental health supports in rural California school districts. Sixty-two superintendents responded to an anonymous survey and provided their thoughts on the strengths and gaps in community ethos and district infrastructure supporting school mental health, variance in staff knowledge and skills related to school mental health, and the predominant barriers for school-based mental health supports.

### **A Rural South Texas District in Threat of Closure: Follow-Up Report**

**Presenters:** Gerri M. Maxwell, C. Lisa McNair, & Alexis Gutierrez, Texas A&M University

This session provides a progress report on a struggling rural high-needs school district that appears to be reversing a downward spiral. With an unprecedented university partnership, and nearly \$10 million dollars in competitive grant funding awarded to support critical turnaround initiatives, the district is showing progress.

### **School/Community Partnerships for Reform: Lessons from Rural and Tribal Schools**

**Presenters:** Catharine Biddle & Ian Mette, University of Maine

This presentation examines the power of community-based action research to address pressing local issues in rural and tribal communities and schools, specifically by focusing on the work of one such project on how rural and tribal communities in a Northern state work together to critically examine issues of child poverty, trauma, and racial difference in the context of their school system.

### **Pushing Back: Counter Narratives to *Hollowing Out the Middle***

**Presenter:** Brandi Slider Weekley, West Virginia University

This session will discuss the results of a critical ethnography exploring postsecondary trajectories in rural West Virginia. Participants' attachment to family and place disrupted the hollowing out narrative that success is found elsewhere and students who stay in rural places are settling for less than the best. The local economic climate and the contexts of globalization and neoliberalism, rather than middle class biases, pushed students away from their local communities and commitments.



## RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM SESSIONS

### **Principal Leadership and Labor Events: The Impact on Rural School Reform**

**Presenters:** Dr. Tena Versland, Montana State University; Robert Moore, Stevensville Public Schools

This presentation of an embedded case study examines the effects of significant contract events on rural principal behaviors and actions as they seek to implement school improvement processes in rural high schools in Montana. Presenters will discuss how rural principals who, successfully implemented change initiatives during significant labor events, increased their visibility and accessibility to listen to concerns and communicate support for teachers. Presenters will also discuss how other issues interfered with school improvement.

### **UPSTART: Using Technology to Achieve Kindergarten Readiness in Rural Utah**

**Presenters:** Haya Shamir & Claudia Miner, Waterford Research Institute

UPSTART is a home-based, technology-delivered kindergarten-readiness program that couples software with parent training and support. With an i3 grant, pre-kindergarteners from 18 rural districts were randomly assigned to reading or math/science software. A computer-adaptive test was administered at the beginning and end of the program to assess gains in early literacy skills, and the i3 external evaluator used Brigance and PELI. Usage fidelity and parent satisfaction were also measured. Analysis revealed significant differences between groups due to higher gains for students using reading, indicating strong empirical evidence that UPSTART successfully helped children develop early literacy skills with improvement across ethnicity, SES, language, and preschool attendance.

### **Online STEM Education Content Modules: An Ongoing Success Story**

**Presenters:** Lee Allen & Stephanie Ivey, University of Memphis

A team comprised of rural West Tennessee master teachers has developed, and continues to develop and disseminate Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) education high school level content modules and online resources accessible to all teachers in TN via a web portal. These virtual STEM education components have been designed to meet the needs of rural teachers and students who often lack access to resources of higher level STEM instruction.

### **Motion Virtual Manipulatives and Elementary School Mathematics**

**Presenters:** Adam Feldhaus & Sarah Diesburg, University of Northern Iowa

Motion virtual manipulatives (MVMs) are a new toolset that transforms an ordinary classroom wall into an interactive manipulative space through the use of a projector, a motion-sensitive camera, and virtual manipulative software developed by researchers. MVMs utilize an emerging technology for providing enriching mathematical experiences and opportunities for mathematical collaboration to elementary school students. MVMs are also an affordable solution when compared to other existing technologies.

### **National Writing Project: Effective Professional Development for Rural Teachers of College-Ready Writing**

**Presenters:** Laura Stokes, Inverness Research; Alix Gallagher, SRI International

The National Writing Project's College-Ready Writers Program served teachers in high poverty rural districts in 10 states over two years. A randomized, controlled trial showed positive impacts on a rigorous measure of academic argument writing. Presenters will describe features of the program that made it particularly effective for rural educators. Participants will be invited to reflect on implications for rural efforts to prepare students for college and careers.



## RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM SESSIONS

### **Self-perceptions of Reading Among Rural and Urban Elementary Students**

**Presenters:** Jennifer Chambers, Jason Creekmore, Shannon Deaton, & Jennifer Simpson, University of the Cumberlands

Leaders in this session will discuss the results of an interest survey concerning reading perceptions among rural and urban students across regions of Kentucky, Tennessee, and Ohio. The session will contain a review of relevant literature and methodology, including a summary of study results and implications for practitioners. Following a discussion of findings, participants will be asked to share how their own experiences with P-12 students compare to findings suggested by the research.

### **Design of Learning and Evaluation Features for a Federally-funded Rural Math and Science Teacher Professional Development Program in Engineering Bio-analytics**

**Presenter:** Pat Hardre, Oklahoma University

This study tracks the design and development of a teacher professional development program in the novel, interdisciplinary field of engineering bioanalytics. The program is a university-based, resident experience partnering engineering and bioanalytics, followed by a supported classroom implementation back in the teachers' rural classrooms. The program was created and designed exclusively for rural math and science teachers. Goals were to build a program that offered rural teachers explicit support for learning the key content and transferring it to their classrooms.

### **The Collaborative Step Stool**

**Presenter:** Liz Meredith

Liz Meredith presents her journey through the multiple stages of collaboration, learning to take it one step at a time. The lively session will illustrate ways to create a collaborative approach to education in the classroom, the school, and across the world. Attendees will gain an understanding of the benefits of collaboration and new ideas to incorporate in their own schools. The future of education depends upon our ability to work together, preparing students to be successful in a globally interconnected world.

### **Coll"app"oration**

**Presenter:** Liz Meredith

In this BYOD session, attendees will explore a variety of iPad apps that allow for student collaboration. Participate in hands-on exploration of TouchCast, Stop Motion Studio, and Padlet, as well as hear about other apps that offer collaborative possibilities in the classroom.

### **GlobalCOLab Session**

**Presenter:** Liz Meredith

In this session, attendees will learn about the GlobalCOLab project in which students from multiple socio-economic backgrounds, cultures and countries collaborate to investigate and construct scientific investigations. Hear about the power of global learning and why global collaborations are needed to prepare students to solve tomorrow's issues. Participants will gain insights into how to implement GlobalCOLab, creating an asynchronous classroom that allows for students to post their work in video format and receive authentic peer feedback. To learn more about the project, visit [www.globcolab.com](http://www.globcolab.com).



## RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM SESSIONS

### **Creativity Tools for iPad**

**Presenter:** Apple Inc.

Students need to be able to create and share content which demonstrates evidence of learning. In this hands-on session, explore creativity apps on iPad that let students share their knowledge in compelling new ways. These tools give students and teachers the power to become a filmmaker, have a drawing canvas at their fingertips, or redefine reports with screencasts, books and animations.

- Explore built-in productivity apps on iPad that allow students to produce professional-looking documents, spreadsheets, and presentations.
- Learn how to create images and video using the built-in camera and iMovie on iPad.
- Experience apps for drawing and creating 3D images which help students bring their ideas to life.

### **Everyone Can Code**

**Presenter:** Apple Inc.

In this session, learn about Everyone Can Code, a new approach to coding that gives everyone the power to learn, write, and teach code. Hear about Swift Playgrounds, a new app for iPad that makes getting started with coding fun and interactive, and get a first look at the accompanying teacher guide. Explore App Development with Swift, a high school and college curriculum for Mac that shows students how to create apps from start to finish.

### **Cultivating Higher Levels of Teaching and Learning**

**Presenter:** Apple Inc.

Digital content and mobile devices are changing the education landscape. Ultimately, the greatest improvement to learning occurs when educators integrate technology to modify and redefine the learning experience. Through a hands-on approach, participants will engage in activities that demonstrate ways to integrate technology into the learning environment to empower students and increase achievement.

REGISTER BY OCTOBER 5!

## Register online at: [bfk.org/RuralForum](http://bfk.org/RuralForum)

### REGISTRATION FEES

Includes breakfasts and lunches

- **After June 30:** \$350

Pay by credit card, check, or purchase order.

Make purchase orders and checks payable to:

Battelle for Kids  
1160 Dublin Road, Suite 500  
Columbus, OH 43215

Please indicate "Rural Forum" on your check or purchase order.

### CANCELLATION & REFUND POLICY

Refunds will only be offered for cancellations submitted via the registration website at least 10 days prior to the event. Cancellations received less than 10 days prior to the event will be eligible for a refund equal to 50 percent of your registration fee to cover meal and administrative costs. "No-shows" are not eligible for a refund.

### GRADUATE CREDIT

One and two hours of graduate credit will be available to attendees who participate in all days of the Forum. Registration will be available onsite.

### ACCOMMODATIONS

#### HILTON COLUMBUS DOWNTOWN

401 N. High Street  
Columbus, OH 43215  
614-384-8600

**Code: KIDS16**

Event Rate: \$165/night plus fees and taxes

*Limited rooms are available.*

### QUESTIONS?

[BFKNREA@bfk.org](mailto:BFKNREA@bfk.org)



### ABOUT BATTELLE FOR KIDS

Battelle for Kids is a national, not-for-profit organization dedicated to moving education forward for students by supporting the educators who work with them every day. Our mission-driven team of education, communications, technology, and business professionals provides innovative services, solutions, and products that empower teachers, leaders, and school systems to advance educational equity and opportunity for all students. Learn more at [www.BattelleforKids.org](http://www.BattelleforKids.org).



### ABOUT THE NATIONAL RURAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION (NREA)

NREA is the voice of all rural schools and rural communities across the United States. In an increasingly confusing system, we are at your service to help rural educators find and use the resources you need to educate today's students. Whether you need to know about the current legislation that affects rural communities, have completed important research that needs to be published, or are looking for help with the specific education needs you face within your community, our national organization can help. We are your advocates – your voice – in education.

NREA was originally founded as the Department of Rural Education in 1907. It is the oldest established national organization of its kind in the United States. Through the years it has evolved as a strong and respected organization of rural school administrators, teachers, board members, regional service agency personnel, researchers, business and industry representatives, and others interested in maintaining the vitality of rural school systems across the country. Learn more at [www.NREA.net](http://www.NREA.net).



**TWEET! TWEET!**

**JOIN THE CONVERSATION AT #RURALEDFORUM AND #NREA108TH.**