

Board of Education Regular Meeting

Monday, October 14, 2024 7:00 PM

Media Center at the Palmyra District OR-1 Public Schools

425 F Street

Palmyra, NE 68418

1. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance
2. Announcement of the Open Meetings Act Posting
3. Construction Manager Progress Report
4. Staff and Student Presentations
5. Consent Agenda
 - 5.1. Approval of Board Agenda
 - 5.2. Approval of minutes of previous meetings
 - 5.3. Approval of construction project invoices at Bennet Elementary and Palmyra Junior/Senior High School, including change orders, construction change directives, payment applications from contractors, and reports, information, and other recommendations by the Project Architect and Owner's Representative (CMAR).
 - 5.4. Approval of Claims/Payment of Bills and Payroll
 - 5.5. Certificated/Classified Hire(s)/Reassignment(s)/Resignation(s)
 - 5.6. Financial Reports
6. Public Comment
7. Administrative Reports
 - 7.1. Superintendent's Report
 - 7.2. Administrative Team Report
8. Discussion Items- Committee Reports
 - 8.1. Activities Committee
 - 8.2. Curriculum, Committee on American Civics Update
 - 8.3. Transportation and Facilities Committee Meeting
 - 8.4. Strategic Planning Committee
 - 8.5. Negotiations Committee
9. Policy Review
 - 9.1. Discussion of Policy # 3241- Emergency Response Mapping
10. Action Items
 - 10.1. Discuss, consider, and take action to appoint one Board member to serve as our district voting delegate at the Nebraska Association of School Board's Assembly Delegate coming up on **Friday, November 22nd, 2024** at the State Education Conference in Omaha.
 - 10.2. Discuss, consider and take action with regard to the **2025–2026** Option Enrollment Appendix
 - 10.3. Discuss, consider, and take action regarding future activities at the high school.
11. Board of Education Development Opportunities
12. Closed Session
13. Topics for Next Month's Agenda
14. Adjournment

Chairperson

Superintendent

NEBRASKA OPEN MEETINGS ACT

84-1407. Act, how cited. Sections 84-1407 to 84-1414 shall be known and may be cited as the Open Meetings Act.

84-1408. Declaration of intent; meetings open to public. It is hereby declared to be the policy of this state that the formation of public policy is public business and may not be conducted in secret. Every meeting of a public body shall be open to the public in order that citizens may exercise their democratic privilege of attending and speaking at meetings of public bodies, except as otherwise provided by the Constitution of Nebraska, federal statutes, and the Open Meetings Act.

84-1409. Terms, defined. For purposes of the Open Meetings Act, unless the context otherwise requires:

(1)(a) Public body means (i) governing bodies of all political subdivisions of the State of Nebraska, (ii) governing bodies of all agencies, created by the Constitution of Nebraska, statute, or otherwise pursuant to law, of the executive department of the State of Nebraska, (iii) all independent boards, commissions, bureaus, committees, councils, subunits, or any other bodies created by the Constitution of Nebraska, statute, or otherwise pursuant to law, (iv) all study or advisory committees of the executive department of the State of Nebraska whether having continuing existence or appointed as special committees with limited existence, (v) advisory committees of the bodies referred to in subdivisions (i), (ii), and (iii) of this subdivision, and (vi) instrumentalities exercising essentially public functions; and

(b) Public body does not include (i) subcommittees of such bodies unless a quorum of the public body attends a subcommittee meeting or unless such subcommittees are holding hearings, making policy, or taking formal action on behalf of their parent body, except that all meetings of any subcommittee established under section 81-15,175 are subject to the Open Meetings Act, (ii) entities conducting judicial proceedings unless a court or other judicial body is exercising rulemaking authority, deliberating, or deciding upon the issuance of administrative orders, and (iii) the Judicial Resources Commission or subcommittees or subgroups of the commission;

(2) Meeting means all regular, special, or called meetings, formal or informal, of any public body for the purposes of briefing, discussion of public business, formation of tentative policy, or the taking of any action of the public body; and

(3) Virtual conferencing means conducting or participating in a meeting electronically or telephonically with interaction among the participants subject to subsection (2) of section 84-1412.

84-1410. Closed session; when; purpose; reasons listed; procedure; right to challenge; prohibited acts; chance meetings, conventions, or workshops.

(1) Any public body may hold a closed session by the affirmative vote of a majority of its voting members if a closed session is clearly necessary for the protection of the public interest or for the prevention of needless injury to the reputation of an individual and if such individual has not requested a public meeting. The subject matter and the reason necessitating the closed session shall be identified in the motion to close. Closed sessions may be held for, but shall not be limited to, such reasons as:

(a) Strategy sessions with respect to collective bargaining, real estate purchases, pending litigation, or litigation which is imminent as evidenced by communication of a claim or threat of litigation to or by the public body;

(b) Discussion regarding deployment of security personnel or devices;

(c) Investigative proceedings regarding allegations of criminal misconduct;

(d) Evaluation of the job performance of a person when necessary to prevent needless injury to the reputation of a person and if such person has not requested a public meeting;

(e) For the Community Trust created under section 81-1801.02, discussion regarding the amounts to be paid to individuals who have suffered from a tragedy of violence or natural disaster; or

(f) For public hospitals, governing board peer review activities, professional review activities, review and discussion of medical staff investigations or disciplinary actions, and any strategy session concerning transactional negotiations with any referral source that is required by federal law to be conducted at arms length.

Nothing in this section shall permit a closed meeting for discussion of the appointment or election of a new member to any public body.

(2) The vote to hold a closed session shall be taken in open session. The entire motion, the vote of each member on the question of holding a closed session, and the time when the closed session commenced and concluded shall be recorded in the minutes. If the motion to close passes, then the presiding officer immediately prior to the closed session shall restate on the record the limitation of the subject matter of the closed session. The public body holding such a closed session shall restrict its consideration of matters during the closed portions to only those purposes set forth in the motion to close as the reason for the closed session. The meeting shall be reconvened in open session before any formal action may be taken. For purposes of this section, formal action shall mean a collective decision or a collective commitment or promise to make a decision on any question, motion, proposal, resolution, order, or ordinance or formation of a position or policy but shall not include negotiating guidance given by members of the public body to legal counsel or other negotiators in closed sessions authorized under subdivision (1)(a) of this section.

(3) Any member of any public body shall have the right to challenge the continuation of a closed session if the member determines that the session has exceeded the reason stated in the original motion to hold a closed session or if the member contends that the closed session is neither clearly necessary for (a) the protection of the public interest or (b) the prevention of needless injury to the reputation of an individual. Such challenge shall be overruled only by a majority vote of the members of the public body. Such challenge and its disposition shall be recorded in the minutes.

(4) Nothing in this section shall be construed to require that any meeting be closed to the public. No person or public body shall fail to invite a portion of its members to a meeting, and no public body shall designate itself a subcommittee of the whole body for the purpose of circumventing the Open Meetings Act. No closed session, informal meeting, chance meeting, social gathering, email, fax, or other electronic communication shall be used for the purpose of circumventing the requirements of the act.

(5) The act does not apply to chance meetings or to attendance at or travel to conventions or workshops of members of a public body at which there is no meeting of the body then intentionally convened, if there is no vote or other action taken regarding any matter over which the public body has supervision, control, jurisdiction, or advisory power.

84-1411. Meetings of public body; notice; method; contents; when available; right to modify; duties concerning notice; videoconferencing or telephone conferencing authorized; emergency meeting without notice; appearance before public body.

(1) Until January 1, 2025:

(a) Each public body shall give reasonable advance publicized notice of the time and place of each meeting as provided in this subsection. Such notice shall be transmitted to all members of the public body and to the public.

(b)(i) Except as provided in subdivision (1)(b)(ii) of this section, in the case of a public body described in subdivision (1)(a)(i) of section 84-1409 or such body's advisory committee, such notice shall be published in a newspaper of general circulation within the public body's jurisdiction and, if available, on such newspaper's website.

(ii) In the case of the governing body of a city of the second class or village or such body's advisory committee or the governing body of a rural or suburban fire protection district, such notice shall be published by:

(A) Publication in a newspaper of general circulation within the public body's jurisdiction and, if available, on such newspaper's website; or

(B) Posting written notice in three conspicuous public places in such city, village, or district. Such notice shall be posted in the same three places for each meeting.

(iii) In the case of a public body not described in subdivision (1)(b)(i) or (ii) of this section, such notice shall be given by a method designated by the public body.

(iv) In case of refusal, neglect, or inability of the newspaper to timely publish the notice, the public body shall (A) post such notice on its website, if available, and (B) post such notice in a conspicuous public place in such public body's jurisdiction. The public body shall keep a written record of such posting. The record of such posting shall be evidence that such posting was done as required and shall be sufficient to fulfill the requirement of publication.

(c) In addition to a method of notice required by subdivision (1)(b)(i) or (ii) of this section, such notice may also be provided by any other appropriate method designated by such public body or such advisory committee.

(d) Each public body shall record the methods and dates of such notice in its minutes.

(e) Such notice shall contain an agenda of subjects known at the time of the publicized notice or a statement that the agenda, which shall be kept continually current, shall be readily available for public inspection at the principal office of the public body during normal business hours.

Agenda items shall be sufficiently descriptive to give the public reasonable notice of the matters to be considered at the meeting. Except for items of an emergency nature, the agenda shall not be altered later than (i) twenty-four hours before the scheduled commencement of the meeting or (ii) forty-eight hours before the scheduled commencement of a meeting of a city council or village board scheduled outside the corporate limits of the municipality. The public body shall have the right to modify the agenda to include items of an emergency nature only at such public meeting.

(2) Beginning January 1, 2025:

(a) Each public body shall give reasonable advance publicized notice of the time and place of each meeting as provided in this subsection. Such notice shall be transmitted to all members of the public body and to the public.

(b)(i) Except as provided in subdivision (2)(b)(ii) of this section, in the case of a public body described in subdivision (1)(a)(i) of section 84-1409 or such body's advisory committees, such notice shall be given by:

(A)(I) Publication in a newspaper of general circulation within the public body's jurisdiction that is finalized for printing prior to the time and date of the meeting, (II) posting on such newspaper's website, if available, and (III) posting on a statewide website established and maintained as a repository for such notices by a majority of Nebraska newspapers. Such notice shall be placed in the newspaper and on the websites by the newspaper; or

(B)(I) Posting to the newspaper's website, if available, and (II) posting to a statewide website established and maintained as a repository for such notices by a majority of Nebraska newspapers if no edition of a newspaper of general circulation within the public body's jurisdiction is to be finalized for printing prior to the time and date of the meeting. Such notice shall be placed in the newspaper and on the websites by the newspaper.

(ii) In the case of the governing body of a city of the second class or village, any advisory committee of such governing body, or the governing body of a rural or suburban fire protection district, such notice shall be given by:

(A)(I) Publication in a newspaper of general circulation within the public body's jurisdiction that is finalized for printing prior to the time and date of the meeting, (II) posting on such newspaper's website, if available, and (III) posting on a statewide website established and maintained as a repository for such notices by a majority of Nebraska newspapers. Such notice shall be placed in the newspaper and on the websites by the newspaper;

(B)(I) Posting to the newspaper's website, if available, and (II) posting on a statewide website established and maintained as a repository for such notices by a majority of Nebraska newspapers if no edition of a newspaper of general circulation within the public body's jurisdiction is to be finalized for printing prior to the time and date of the meeting. Such notice shall be placed in the newspaper and on the websites by the newspaper; or

(C)(II) Posting written notice in three conspicuous public places in such city, village, or district. Such notice shall be posted by the public body in the same three places for each meeting.

(iii) In the case of a public body not described in subdivision (2)(b)(i) or (ii) of this section, such notice shall be given by a method designated by the public body.

(iv) In case of refusal, neglect, or inability of the newspaper to publish the notice, the public body shall (A) post such notice on its website, if available, (B) submit a post on a statewide website established and maintained as a repository for such notices by a majority of Nebraska newspapers, and (C) post such notice in a conspicuous public place in such public body's jurisdiction. The public body shall keep a written record of such posting. The record of such posting shall be evidence that such posting was done as required and shall be sufficient to fulfill the requirement of publication.

(3)(a) The following entities may hold a meeting by means of virtual conferencing if the requirements of subdivision (3)(b) of this section are met:

(i) A state agency, state board, state commission, state council, or state committee, or an advisory committee of any such state entity;

(ii) An organization, including the governing body, created under the Interlocal Cooperation Act, the Joint Public Agency Act, or the Municipal Cooperative Financing Act;

(iii) The governing body of a public power district having a chartered territory of more than one county in this state;

(iv) The governing body of a public power and irrigation district having a chartered territory of more than one county in this state;

(v) An educational service unit;

- (vi) The Educational Service Unit Coordinating Council;
- (vii) An organization, including the governing body, of a risk management pool or its advisory committees organized in accordance with the Intergovernmental Risk Management Act;
- (viii) A community college board of governors;
- (ix) The Nebraska Brand Committee;
- (x) A local public health department;
- (xi) A metropolitan utilities district;
- (xii) A regional metropolitan transit authority; and
- (xiii) A natural resources district.

(b) The requirements for holding a meeting by means of virtual conferencing are as follows:

(i) Reasonable advance publicized notice is given as provided in subsections (1) and (2) of this section, including providing access to a dial-in number or link to the virtual conference;

(ii) In addition to the public's right to participate by virtual conferencing, reasonable arrangements are made to accommodate the public's right to attend at a physical site and participate as provided in section 84-1412, including reasonable seating, in at least one designated site in a building open to the public and identified in the notice, with: At least one member of the entity holding such meeting, or his or her designee, present at each site; a recording of the hearing by audio or visual recording devices; and a reasonable opportunity for input, such as public comment or questions, is provided to at least the same extent as would be provided if virtual conferencing was not used;

(iii) At least one copy of all documents being considered at the meeting is available at any physical site open to the public where individuals may attend the virtual conference. The public body shall also provide links to an electronic copy of the agenda, all documents being considered at the meeting, and the current version of the Open Meetings Act; and

(iv) Except as otherwise provided in this subdivision or subsection (4) of section 79-2204, no more than one-half of the meetings of the state entities, advisory committees, boards, councils, organizations, or governing bodies are held by virtual conferencing in a calendar year. In the case of (A) an organization created under the Interlocal Cooperation Act that sells electricity or natural gas, (B) an organization created under the Municipal Cooperative Financing Act, (C) a governing body of a risk management pool and any advisory committee of such governing body, or (D) any advisory committee of any state entity created in response to the Opioid Prevention and Treatment Act, such the organization, governing body, or committee may hold more than one-half of its meetings by virtual conferencing if such organization holds at least one meeting each calendar year that is not by virtual conferencing.

(4) Virtual conferencing, emails, faxes, or other electronic communication shall not be used to circumvent any of the public government purposes established in the Open Meetings Act.

(5) The secretary or other designee of each public body shall maintain a list of the news media requesting notification of meetings and shall make reasonable efforts to provide advance notification to them of the time and place of each meeting and the subjects to be discussed at that meeting.

(6) When it is necessary to hold an emergency meeting without reasonable advance public notice, the nature of the emergency shall be stated in the minutes and any formal action taken in such meeting shall pertain only to the emergency. Such emergency meetings may be held by virtual conferencing. The provisions of subsection (5) of this section shall be complied with in conducting emergency meetings. Complete minutes of such emergency meetings specifying the nature of the emergency and any formal action taken at the meeting shall be made available to the public by no later than the end of the next regular business day.

(7) A public body may allow a member of the public or any other witness to appear before the public body by means of virtual conferencing.

(8)(a) Notwithstanding subsections (3) and (6) of this section, if an emergency is declared by the Governor pursuant to the Emergency Management Act as defined in section 81-829.39, a public body the territorial jurisdiction of which is included in the emergency declaration, in whole or in part, may hold a meeting by virtual conferencing during such emergency if the public body gives reasonable advance publicized notice as described in subsections (1) and (2) of this section. The notice shall include information regarding access for the public and news media. In addition to any formal action taken pertaining to the emergency, the public body may hold such meeting for the purpose of briefing, discussion of public business, formation of tentative policy, or the taking of any action by the public body.

(b) The public body shall provide access by providing a dial-in number or a link to the virtual conference. The public body shall also provide links to an electronic copy of the agenda, all documents being considered at the meeting, and the current version of the Open Meetings Act. Reasonable arrangements shall be made to accommodate the public's right to hear and speak at the meeting and record the meeting. Subsection (5) of this section shall be complied with in conducting such meetings.

(c) The nature of the emergency shall be stated in the minutes. Complete minutes of such meeting specifying the nature of the emergency and any formal action taken at the meeting shall be made available for inspection as provided in subsection (5) of section 84-1413.

(9) In addition to any other statutory authorization for virtual conferencing, any public body not listed in subdivision (3)(a) of this section may hold a meeting by virtual conferencing if:

(a) The purpose of the virtual meeting is to discuss items that are scheduled to be discussed or acted upon at a subsequent non-virtual open meeting of the public body;

(b) No action is taken by the public body at the virtual meeting; and

(c) The public body complies with subdivisions (3)(b)(i) and (ii) of this section.

84-1412. Meetings of public body; rights of public; public body; powers and duties.

(1) Subject to the Open Meetings Act, the public has the right to attend and the right to speak at meetings of public bodies, and all or any part of a meeting of a public body, except for closed sessions called pursuant to section 84-1410, may be videotaped, televised, photographed, broadcast, or recorded by any person in attendance by means of a tape recorder, a camera, video equipment, or any other means of pictorial or sonic reproduction or in writing.

(2) It shall not be a violation of subsection (1) of this section for any public body to make and enforce reasonable rules and regulations regarding the conduct of persons attending, speaking at, videotaping, televising, photographing, broadcasting, or recording its meetings, including meetings held by virtual conferencing. A body may not be required to allow citizens to speak at each meeting, but it may not forbid public participation at all meetings.

(3) No public body shall require members of the public to identify themselves as a condition for admission to the meeting nor shall such body require that the name of any member of the public be placed on the agenda prior to such meeting in order to speak about items on the agenda. The body shall require any member of the public desiring to address the body to identify himself or herself, including an address and the name of any organization represented by such person unless

the address requirement is waived to protect the security of the individual.

(4) No public body shall, for the purpose of circumventing the Open Meetings Act, hold a meeting in a place known by the body to be too small to accommodate the anticipated audience.

(5) No public body shall be deemed in violation of this section if it holds its meeting in its traditional meeting place which is located in this state.

(6) No public body shall be deemed in violation of this section if it holds a meeting outside of this state if, but only if:

(a) A member entity of the public body is located outside of this state and the meeting is in that member's jurisdiction;

(b) All out-of-state locations identified in the notice are located within public buildings used by members of the entity or at a place which will accommodate the anticipated audience;

(c) Reasonable arrangements are made to accommodate the public's right to attend, hear, and speak at the meeting, including making virtual conferencing available at an in-state location to members, the public, or the press, if requested twenty-four hours in advance;

(d) No more than twenty-five percent of the public body's meetings in a calendar year are held out-of-state;

(e) Out-of-state meetings are not used to circumvent any of the public government purposes established in the Open Meetings Act; and

(f) The public body publishes notice of the out-of-state meeting at least twenty-one days before the date of the meeting in a legal newspaper of statewide circulation.

(7) Each public body shall, upon request, make a reasonable effort to accommodate the public's right to hear the discussion and testimony presented at a meeting.

(8) Public bodies shall make available at the meeting or the in-state location for virtual conferencing as required by subdivision (6)(c) of this section, for examination and copying by members of the public, at least one copy of all reproducible written material to be discussed at an open meeting, either in paper or electronic form. Public bodies shall make available at least one current copy of the Open Meetings Act posted in the meeting room at a location accessible to members of the public. At the beginning of the meeting, the public shall be informed about the location of the posted information.

84-1413. Meetings; minutes; roll call vote; secret ballot; when.

(1) Each public body shall keep minutes of all meetings showing the time, place, members present and absent, and the substance of all matters discussed.

(2) Any action taken on any question or motion duly moved and seconded shall be by roll call vote of the public body in open session, and the record shall state how each member voted or if the member was absent or not voting. The requirements of a roll call or viva voce vote shall be satisfied by a public body which utilizes an electronic voting device which allows the yeas and nays of each member of such public body to be readily seen by the public.

(3) The vote to elect leadership within a public body may be taken by secret ballot, but the total number of votes for each candidate shall be recorded in the minutes.

(4) The minutes of all meetings and evidence and documentation received or disclosed in open session shall be public records and open to public inspection during normal business hours.

(5) Minutes shall be written or kept as an electronic record and shall be available for inspection within ten working days or prior to the next convened meeting, whichever occurs earlier, except that cities of the second class and villages may have an additional ten working days if the employee responsible for writing or keeping the minutes is absent due to a serious illness or emergency.

(6) Beginning July 31, 2022, the governing body of a natural resources district, the city council of a city of the metropolitan class, the city council of a city of the primary class, the city council of a city of the first class, the county board of a county with a population greater than twenty-five thousand inhabitants, and the school board of a school district shall make available on such entity's public website the agenda and minutes of any meeting of the governing body. The agenda shall be placed on the website at least twenty-four hours before the meeting of the governing body. Minutes shall be placed on the website at such time as the minutes are available for inspection as provided in subsection (5) of this section. This information shall be available on the public website for at least six months.

84-1414. Unlawful action by public body; declared void or voidable by district court; when; duty to enforce open meeting laws; citizen's suit; procedure; violations; penalties.

(1) Any motion, resolution, rule, regulation, ordinance, or formal action of a public body made or taken in violation of the Open Meetings Act shall be declared void by the district court if the suit is commenced within one hundred twenty days of the meeting of the public body at which the alleged violation occurred. Any motion, resolution, rule, regulation, ordinance, or formal action of a public body made or taken in substantial violation of the Open Meetings Act shall be voidable by the district court if the suit is commenced more than one hundred twenty days after but within one year of the meeting of the public body in which the alleged violation occurred. A suit to void any final action shall be commenced within one year of the action.

(2) The Attorney General and the county attorney of the county in which the public body ordinarily meets shall enforce the Open Meetings Act.

(3) Any citizen of this state may commence a suit in the district court of the county in which the public body ordinarily meets or in which the plaintiff resides for the purpose of requiring compliance with or preventing violations of the Open Meetings Act, for the purpose of declaring an action of a public body void, or for the purpose of determining the applicability of the act to discussions or decisions of the public body. It shall not be a defense that the citizen attended the meeting and failed to object at such time. The court may order payment of reasonable attorney's fees and court costs to a successful plaintiff in a suit brought under this section.

(4) Any member of a public body who knowingly violates or conspires to violate or who attends or remains at a meeting knowing that the public body is in violation of any provision of the Open Meetings Act shall be guilty of a Class IV misdemeanor for a first offense and a Class III misdemeanor for a second or subsequent offense.

Operative
4/17/24



Nebraska Council
of School Administrators

455 South 11th Street, Suite A
Lincoln, NE 68508
(402) 476-8055
ncsa.org



Perry, Gutierrez, Haase & Cressford, P.C., L.L.O.
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Lincoln, NE 68508
(402) 476-9200
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District OR-1 Schools Project Summary as of 9-9-2024

Bennet Elementary School

Progress to Date:

- All areas occupied-including new multipurpose room
- Started owner training

Upcoming Activities:

- Wall pad installation in existing gym by of September
- Finish caulking/sealants
- Finish owner training
- Punchlist scheduled for 9-25-24

Pay Application Approval

Palmyra Jr./Sr. High School

Progress to Date:

- Elevator completed
- Lower level able to occupy
- Upper level able to occupy
- New music completed & in use
- Started new training room work
- CTE equipment installation underway
- Started owner training

Upcoming Activities

- Finish CTE equipment connections
- Flooring in upper level of CTE area
- Finish caulking/sealants
- Install flagpole
- Finish new training room by end of month
- Finish seeding this week
- Finish owner training
- Punchlist scheduled 9-25-24

Pay Application Approval

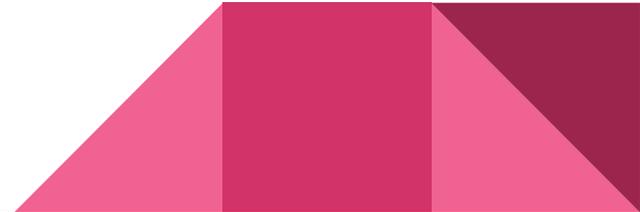


District OR-1 Dual Credit Program

2024-2025

Dual Credit Purpose

- Offer college-credit courses that also count toward high school graduation
- Provide credit at reduced tuition that transfers to college and reduces overall college cost
- Provide college-credit courses in a variety of formats (online, distance learning & face-to-face)



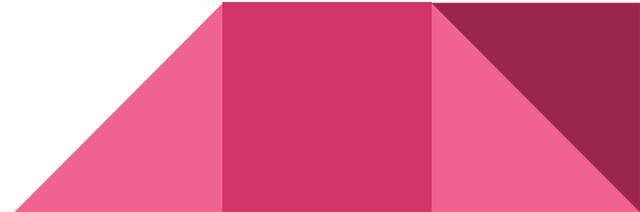
Dual Credit Cooperating Institutions

- Nebraska Wesleyan University
 - Currently offers courses face-to-face with qualified District OR-1 instructor
- Southeast Community College
 - Currently offers courses online, through distance learning and face-to-face with a qualified District OR-1 instructor



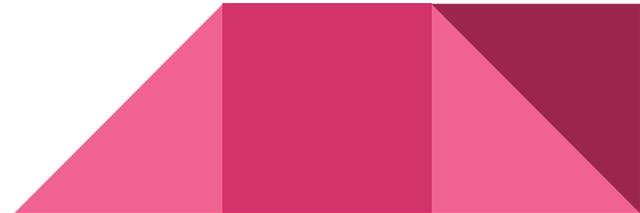
PHS Educators Teaching Dual Credit

- Southeast Community College
 - Mr. Taylor Baumer
 - American Government (POLS 1000)
 - Mrs. Jonna Pester
 - Applied Statistics (MATH 2170)
 - Calculus I & Analytic Geometry (MATH 1600)
 - College Algebra (MATH 1150)
- Nebraska Wesleyan University
 - Mr. Mark James
 - Physics (PHYS 1700)



Why two colleges?

- ❖ Instructor requirements vary depending on the accrediting institution. While one college may require an advanced degree in a subject area in order to certify an instructor, the other may allow a teacher to leverage his or her experience in a subject in substitution of a master's degree.
- ❖ In order to offer the most in-person opportunities to our students, we have expanded our offerings to include both SCC and NWU.



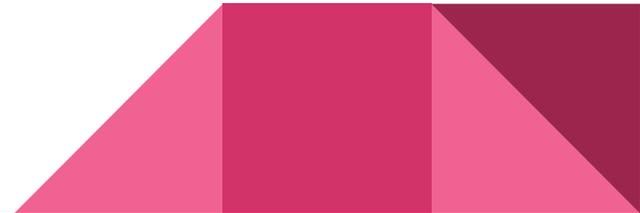
Current Online Courses

- Composition I (ENGL 1010)
- Energy Industry Fundamentals (ENER 1100)
- Introduction to Psychology (PSYC 1810)
- Personal Finance (ECON 1200)
- Public Speaking (COMM 1110)



Student Impact

- Fall 2024 Dual-Credit Course Enrollments
 - 103
- Fall 2024 Student Enrollments
 - 47
- Potential College Credits
 - 323
- Impact by Grade
 - 10th grade = 8% of students enrolled in at least one dual credit course
 - 11th grade = 42%
 - 12th grade = 66%



Board of Education Special Meeting: District Budget Hearing

Monday, September 9, 2024 6:45 PM

Media Center at the Palmyra District OR-1 Public Schools

425 F Street

Palmyra, NE 68418

1. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

Agenda Item Type: Procedural Item

Speaker(s): Board President

Rationale:

- The board will call the meeting to order at the designated time or as soon thereafter as may be necessary.
- The board generally follows the sequence of the items on the agenda; however, it is not obligated to discuss or act upon any item, and it may change the order of the items when it deems it appropriate to do so.
- Patrons are encouraged to attend the board meetings from the beginning so as not to miss the discussion or action on any issue.

NASB Board Member "Code of Conduct":

The Board of Education is committed to ensuring the public, staff, and students that school board members will govern through policy. In accordance with this belief, each board member commits to following the "Code of Conduct".

- *We will listen to each opinion, and act as a board.*
- *We will speak candidly and courteously to each other and listen to dissenting or different viewpoints with an open mind.*
- *We will help each other to focus our discussion on the issue, not an individual. Once the board has collectively arrived at a decision, we will each support the will of the board.*
- *The board president (or designee) will speak as the official voice of the board. A single board member will not represent the board without the consent of the board, and board members making personal statements (in any format, including speeches, articles, social media posts, etc.) should clearly state these statements are their opinion and not the position of the board.*
- *We will be mindful of the different roles and responsibilities throughout the school district and maintain a focus on policy and governance.*
- *We will be aware of the different roles that we play as individuals (board member, patron, parent, etc.).*

Discussion:

- Board President Desh called the Public Hearing to order at **6:49 p.m.**

2. Announcement of the Open Meetings Act Posting

Agenda Item Type: Procedural Item

Speaker(s): Board President

Rationale:

- A copy of the Open Meetings Act is posted on the wall of the meeting room.
- The board may discuss and may take such action as it deems appropriate on any item listed on the agenda.
- Changes include public comment being allowed at every meeting.
- ***Please note:*** *The Open Meetings Act information has been updated as of April 17, 2024, to accommodate current changes approved by the Legislature.*

Discussion:

- Board President Dosh identified the location of the Open Meetings Act Poster on the wall in the meeting room.
 - ***Please note:*** *An updated copy of the Open Meetings Act poster will be distributed to public entities for public distribution sometime during the summer of 2024.*
 - *Until the posters arrive, the attached document will be displayed in the meeting room to accommodate the current changes.*
 - ***The changes are reflected in the currently posted materials: revised April 2024.***

3. 2024-2024 District OR-1: Budget Public Hearing

Agenda Item Type: Procedural Item

Speaker(s): Board President

Rationale:

- Board President Dosh will open the public hearing.
 - ***Hearing Purpose:*** *The purpose of the budget hearing is to give taxpayers the opportunity to provide support, opposition, and/or suggestions regarding our proposed budget.*
 - This hearing is for the budget only; other items will not be discussed.
 - ***Please note:*** *A separate Tax Request Hearing will commence at the conclusion of this Budget Hearing.*

3.1. In compliance with the current provisions of state requirements, the Board of Education provides this time for the purpose of hearing support, opposition, criticism, suggestions, or observations regarding the proposed district budget for the **2024-2025** school year.

Agenda Item Type: Procedural Item

Speaker(s): Board President

Rationale:

- The board will allow time for public comment specific to the proposed **2024-2025** district budget.
- No action will be taken on this agenda item.

4. Close Public Hearing on District Budget

Agenda Item Type: Procedural Item

Speaker(s): Board President

Rationale:

- Board President Desh will close the hearing after allowing time for public comment specific to the proposed **2024-2025** district budget.

Discussion:

- The public hearing was closed at **7:23 p.m.**

5. Next Regular Meeting

Agenda Item Type: Procedural Item

Speaker(s): Board President

Rationale:

- The next regular board meeting will be **Monday, September 9th, 2024, beginning at 7:00 p.m.**(or immediately following the Tax Request Public Hearing) at Palmyra High School in the media center.

Discussion:

- No further discussion.

6. Adjournment

Agenda Item Type: Procedural Item

Speaker(s): Board President

Discussion:

- The public hearing was adjourned at **7:23 p.m.**

Chairperson

Superintendent

Board of Education Regular Meeting

Monday, September 9, 2024 7:00 PM

Media Center at the Palmyra District OR-1 Public Schools

425 F Street

Palmyra, NE 68418

District Mission:

“Together we prepare our students to successfully meet the challenges of the future.”

Strategic Goal 1: District OR-1 Public Schools will provide the facilities needed to be competitive with other area schools in athletics and fine arts programs.

Strategic Goal 2: District OR-1 Public Schools will foster a unified community.

Strategic Goal 3: District OR-1 Public Schools will continuously implement (academic) programs and the curriculum needed to remain competitive with other area schools.

Attendance Taken at 7:25 PM.

Dean Busch: Present

Jaimi Calfee: Absent

Tim Cheney: Present

Brandon Desh: Present

Dee Moore: Absent

Josh Penterman: Present

This information was posted in the following public formats:

- The Voice News (weekly area newspaper)
- Farmers' Merchants Bank - Palmyra
- Palmyra Post Office
- Palmyra High School
- Bennet Post Office
- Bennet Elementary School
- District OR-1 Website - <https://www.districtor1.org/>

1. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

- Board President Desh called meeting to order at **7:23 p.m.** (immediately following the district tax request public hearing).
- Board President Desh led the board members and patrons in attendance at the meeting in the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Announcement of the Open Meetings Act Posting

- Board President Desh identified the location of the Open Meetings Act Poster on the wall in the meeting room.
 - *The changes are reflected in the currently posted materials: revised April 2024.*

3. Construction Manager Progress Report

- Construction Manager At Risk (CMAR) representatives from BIC provided a progress report on the current building expansion and improvement projects.
- The CMAR summary report for **September 9th, 2024** is now attached to this agenda item.

4. Staff and Student Presentations **The following topics were presented during this section of the meeting.**

- **Patriot Day Reminder:** Mr. Hart
- **Technology / Student Personal Devices Update:** Mr. Hart/ Mr. Johnson
- **Social Media Parent Presentation Summary:** Mr. Hart/ Mr. Johnson
- **Student Services Update:** Ms. Walter
 - Math Curriculum, and District Assessments

5. Consent Agenda Motion to approve the consent agenda as presented. This motion, made by Josh Penterman and seconded by Tim Cheney, Passed.

Dean Busch: Yea, Tim Cheney: Yea, Brandon Desh: Yea, Josh Penterman: Yea

- No further discussion.

5.1. Approval of Board Agenda

5.2. Approval of minutes of previous meetings

5.3. Approval of construction project invoices at Bennet Elementary and Palmyra Junior/Senior High School, including change orders, construction change directives, payment applications from contractors, and reports, information, and other recommendations by the Project Architect and Owner's Representative (CMAR).

- Board President Desh will abstain from voting on the Benesch invoice.
- No further discussion.

5.4. Approval of Claims/Payment of Bills and Payroll

5.5. Certificated/Classified Hire(s)/Reassignment(s)/Resignation(s)

5.6. Financial Report

6. Public Comment

- Patrons in attendance at the Tax Request and Budget Hearings had opportunities to provide comments and ask questions.

7. Administrative Reports

7.1. Superintendent's Report **Superintendent Hart Highlighted the topics listed below:**

Activities Kudos: The following activities were recognized for outstanding student participation and staff sponsorship.

- Cross Country Boys and Girls
- Volleyball
- Football
- Golf
- One Act
- Panther Paw Tickets
- Aspire Academy
- Bennet Bites:
- Workplace Experiences and "Internships"
- Heston Shelton from Eagle provided information about his project for Scouts.

Legislative Session Summary and Update:

- Superintendent Hart presented information relative to the latest Legislative Special Session.
 - Please see the attached document.

Education Quest:

- Education Quest will be at the high school on **Wednesday, October 16th at 6:00 p.m.** to do a financial aid presentation for seniors/parents.

Seniors and Board Meeting Idea:

- A summary of the proposal to have current seniors come to board meetings as community engagement experiences was discussed.

Budget Presentation:

- Recommended Budget Summary
- Tax Request Overview

Open Houses:

- **Bennet Elementary School:**
 - **Wednesday, October 2nd: 5:00 - 6:30 p.m.**
- **Palmyra Junior/ Senior High School:**

- **Friday, October 4th: 5:00-6:30 p.m.**
 - *This is also Homecoming week.*

Safety Audit with Mr. Bruce Lang:

- Our annual safety audit as required by the Nebraska Department of Education is scheduled for **Monday, October 7, 2024.**
- Superintendent Hart and Mr. Johnson will share the results of the audit at the **Monday, October 14th** regular board meeting.

NDE School Safety Newsletter:

- Please see the attached document.

Student Enrollment Update:

Parent-Teacher Conferences:

- Parent/Teacher conferences will be held on **Tuesday, September 24th from 2-8 p.m.**

Social Media Presentation Summary for Wednesday, August 28th at Bennet

- Please see the attached documents.

Staff Spotlights:

- Karis King
- Deb Wood
- Please see the attached documents for more information.

Superintendent Evaluation Timeline

- **Friday, November 1st - Thursday, November 7th**
 - Superintendent completes the self-evaluation
- **Monday, November, 11th**
 - NASB sends board self-evaluation results
- **Monday, November 11th - Wednesday, November 20th**
 - Board members complete their evaluations
- **Monday, December, 2nd**
 - The final report & Executive Summary will be emailed and mailed to the board president.

7.2. Administrative Team Report

The Student Services Board Report was shared by Ms. Walter: Highlights of designed topics are listed below.

- **Student Assessment:**
 - Bennet and PHS have completed MAPS/NSCAS assessments for students KDG-10th grade.
 - MAPS/NSCAS will occur in the spring again. This data is what the state uses for reporting.
 - NSCAS results from the spring of 2024 will be provided to parents at September parent-teacher conferences.
- **Special Education:**
 - Professional development for Ms. Walter has included attending meetings and workshops with the state department to ensure we comply with all areas of special education.
 - The district is currently making changes to documentation standards and IEP writing.
- **High Ability Learners:**
 - We have added two quiz bowls in our district for 5th and 6th grades.
 - Planning learning opportunities for our students each quarter who qualify for HAL
- **Curriculum:**
 - The new math curriculum has been implemented in K-12.
 - Math training will occur on the teacher-in-service day (Wednesday, September 25th.)
 - The Reading Curriculum (Journeys) will expire at the end of this school year. Buildings have started the process of adopting a new K-12 reading curriculum.

The admin report was shared by Mr. Johnson and Mr. Haag. Highlights of the report are listed below:

- **PT Conferences:**
 - Parent-teacher conferences are scheduled for Tuesday, September 24th, from 2-8 PM. We will have an early dismissal at 1:00 that day.
- **Teacher In-Service:**
 - Wednesday, September 25th will be a Teacher Workday.
 - Staff will focus on reviewing student data from MAPS/NSCAS/DIBELS and curriculum.
- **Construction**
 - Construction processes continue to go well in both buildings. Furniture is being delivered, PE is utilizing the garden level, and Palmyra expects to be in all classrooms fully by Thursday, September 12th.
 - "Area B" in Bennet will be in use starting Monday, Sept. 9th.
- **Bus Traffic:**
 - Bus pickup/drop off at Palmyra has gone extremely well. Kudos to Mr. Hoeft and all his hard work and planning. The bus lane is fantastic!
 - Seniors and other students will move to the east lots upon completion of the construction.

8. Discussion Items- Committee Reports

8.1. Transportation and Facilities Committee Meeting

- The next Transportation Committee Meeting is scheduled for **Wednesday, September 11th, 2024 at 8:30 a.m.** at Palmyra High School in the west conference room.
- Please note: this meeting was originally scheduled for **Wednesday, September 18th at 9:00 a.m.**
- A summary of the meeting will be shared at the **Monday, October 14th** regular board meeting.

8.2. Strategic Overview Committee Meeting

- A Strategic Overview Committee meeting has been scheduled for **Monday, September 23rd, 2024** at Palmyra.
 - *Please note: If that date doesn't work for the majority of SOC team members, an alternate date will be rescheduled and communicated as soon as possible.*

8.3. American Civics Committee Meeting Update:

- The next meeting of this committee is scheduled for **Wednesday, October 9th, 2024 at noon at Palmyra High School.**
 - *Please note that this will be a public meeting. as required by NDE.*

8.4. Negotiations Committee

- The Negotiations Committee met last year to finalize the certified Negotiated Agreement for **2024-2025** and **2025-2026.**
 - We are now in Year One of the current two-year contract.
- In alignment with the contents of the CIR agreement currently posted on our district website under the Negotiated Agreement section, the Board of Education continues to officially affirm the ***District OR-1 Public Education Association*** as the designated collective bargaining unit for the school district.
- The CIR document is also attached to this agenda item

9. Policy Review

- The current policy review schedule is attached.

10. Action Items

10.1. Discuss action to adopt a resolution increasing the school district's base growth percentage used to determine the school district's property tax request authority by up to 6%.

- This action item was "tabled" due to the board not having the required number of members present (70%) at the meeting to officially vote on this issue.
- This agenda item has been rescheduled for discussion at the Special Board Meeting scheduled for **Tuesday, September 24th, 2024**

- Public notice of the rescheduled special meeting will be posted prior to the meeting on Tuesday, September 24th, 2024.

10.2. Presentation, discussion, and or official action to consider, take action, or approve a switch to Alicap Insurance. Motion to approve an insurance change to Alicap Insurance effective September 15th, 2024. This motion, made by Tim Cheney and seconded by Josh Penterman, Passed.

Dean Busch: Yea, Tim Cheney: Yea, Brandon Desh: Yea, Josh Penterman: Yea

- This recommendation is based on current rates, available services, and discussions with other districts about the best current coverage options for school districts.
- This switch will also save the district money in annual insurance premiums.
- No further discussion.

10.3. Presentation, discussion, and or official action to consider, take action, or approve the **2024-2025 District Budget** Motion to table the 2024-2025 District Budget as discussed. This motion, made by Tim Cheney and seconded by Dean Busch, Passed.

Dean Busch: Yea, Tim Cheney: Yea, Brandon Desh: Yea, Josh Penterman: Yea

- This action item was "tabled" until the special meeting on **Tuesday, September 24th, 2024** to allow board members to consider additional tax request and budget options.
- This agenda item has been rescheduled for discussion at the Special Board Meeting scheduled for **Tuesday, September 24th, 2024.**
- Public notice of the rescheduled special meeting will be posted prior to the meeting on **Tuesday, September 24th, 2024.**

10.4. Presentation, discussion, and or official action to consider, discuss, or approve the **2024-2025 Tax Request** Motion to table the 2024-2025 Tax Request as discussed. This motion, made by Tim Cheney and seconded by Dean Busch, Passed.

Dean Busch: Yea, Tim Cheney: Yea, Brandon Desh: Yea, Josh Penterman: Yea

- This action item was "tabled" until the special meeting on **Tuesday, September 24th, 2024** to allow board members to consider additional budget and tax request options.
- This agenda item has been rescheduled for discussion at the Special Board Meeting scheduled for **Tuesday, September 24th, 2024.**
- Public notice of the rescheduled special meeting will be posted before the meeting on **Tuesday, September 24th, 2024.**

11. Board of Education Development Opportunities

- Board President Desh, Board members Busch, and Moore will attend the Area membership meeting in Nebraska City on **Wednesday, September 11th.**
- No further discussion.

12. Closed Session

- There is no closed session scheduled for this meeting.

13. Topics for Next Month's Agenda **Topics for next month:**

- District Assurance Statement
- Board Election Results and Summary
- School District Audit
- Fall Membership Report
- Review Superintendent Evaluation Timeline
- Legislative Update
- Curriculum reports
- Option Enrollment
- Committee Meeting Summaries

14. Adjournment

- The meeting was adjourned at: **8:29 p.m.**

Chairperson

Superintendent



District OR-1 Schools Project Summary as of 9-9-2024

Bennet Elementary School

Progress to Date:

- All areas occupied-including new multipurpose room
- Started owner training

Upcoming Activities:

- Wall pad installation in existing gym by of September
- Finish caulking/sealants
- Finish owner training
- Punchlist scheduled for 9-25-24

Pay Application Approval

Palmyra Jr./Sr. High School

Progress to Date:

- Elevator completed
- Lower level able to occupy
- Upper level able to occupy
- New music completed & in use
- Started new training room work
- CTE equipment installation underway
- Started owner training

Upcoming Activities

- Finish CTE equipment connections
- Flooring in upper level of CTE area
- Finish caulking/sealants
- Install flagpole
- Finish new training room by end of month
- Finish seeding this week
- Finish owner training
- Punchlist scheduled 9-25-24

Pay Application Approval

Board of Education Special Meeting

Tuesday, September 24, 2024 5:15 PM

Media Center at the Palmyra District OR-1 Public Schools

425 F Street

Palmyra, NE 68418

District Mission:

“Together we prepare our students to successfully meet the challenges of the future.”

Strategic Goal 1: District OR-1 Public Schools will provide the facilities needed to be competitive with other area schools in athletics and fine arts programs.

Strategic Goal 2: District OR-1 Public Schools will foster a unified community.

Strategic Goal 3: District OR-1 Public Schools will continuously implement (academic) programs and the curriculum needed to remain competitive with other area schools.

Attendance Taken at 5:17 PM.

Dean Busch: Present

Jaimi Calfee: Present

Tim Cheney: Present

Brandon Desh: Present

Dee Moore: Present

Josh Penterman: Present

This information was posted in the following public formats:

The Voice News (weekly area newspaper)

Farmers' Merchants Bank - Palmyra

Palmyra Post Office

Palmyra High School

Bennet Post Office

Bennet Elementary School

District OR-1 Website - <https://www.districtor1.org>

1. Call to Order

- Board President Desh called the special meeting to order at **5:15 p.m.**
 - *FYI: The location of the meeting was moved to the west commons area near the main gym to accommodate other activities (parent/ teacher conferences and staff presentations) in the building.*
- **Please note:** At the **September 9th, 2024** Regular Board of Education meeting, board members present approved a motion to "table" the vote on the District Tax Request, District Budget, and a resolution regarding a possible vote on the taxing authority until the September 24th meeting.

2. Announcement of the Open Meetings Act Posting

- Board President Dersh identified the location of the Open Meetings Act Poster in the meeting area.
 - ***The changes are reflected in the currently posted materials: revised April 2024.***

3. Consent Agenda

- Please refer to the attached documents for a more detailed summary of current expenditures.

3.1. Approval of construction project invoices at Bennet Elementary and Palmyra Junior/Senior High School, including change orders, construction change directives, payment applications from contractors, and reports, information, and other recommendations by the Project Architect and Owner's Representative (CMAR). Consent Agenda Item Passed with a motion by Dee Moore and a second by Jaimi Calfee.

Dean Busch: Yea, Jaimi Calfee: Yea, Tim Cheney: Yea, Brandon Dersh: Yea, Dee Moore: Yea, Josh Penterman: Yea

- No further discussion

4. Public Comment

- Craig Bolz of Palmyra provided Public Comment.

5. Discussion Items: Discussion included the difference between the two budget and tax request options listed below.

- **Option # 1:**
 - This is the original tax request and budget posted before the September 9th board meeting. This option does include additional taxing authority of \$305,450.
 - This option reduces the overall tax levy to **0.962440** which is a decrease of **15%** or **\$743,033.00**.
- **Option # 2:**
 - This option does not include additional taxing authority. In this option, the General Fund tax request has been lowered and the Special Building Fund tax request has been lowered.
 - This option reduces the overall tax levy to **0.925382** which is a decrease of **18%** or **\$1,048,997**.

6. Action Items

6.1. Discuss action to adopt a resolution increasing the school district's base growth percentage used to determine the school district's property tax request authority by up to 6%. Motion to approve. Passed with a motion by Josh Penterman and a second by Tim Cheney. Jaimi Calfee: Nay, Dean Busch: Yea, Tim Cheney: Yea, Brandon Dersh: Yea, Dee Moore: Yea, Josh Penterman: Yea

- No further discussion.

6.2. Presentation, discussion, and or official action to consider, take action, or approve the **2024-2025** District Budget Motion to approve the 2024-2025 District Budget as discussed without the additional tax authority. Option # 2 Passed with a motion by Dean Busch and a second by Dee Moore.

Dean Busch: Yea, Jaimi Calfee: Yea, Tim Cheney: Yea, Brandon Dersh: Yea, Dee Moore: Yea, Josh Penterman: Yea

- **Option # 2** was recommended for approval by the board.
- **Option # 2:**
 - This option does not include additional taxing authority. In this option, the General Fund tax request has been lowered and the Special Building Fund tax request has been lowered.
 - This option reduces the overall tax levy to **0.925382** which is a decrease of **18%** or **\$1,048,997**.

6.3. Presentation, discussion, and or official action to consider, discuss, or approve the **2024-2025** Tax Request Motion to approve the 2024-2025 Tax Request as discussed without additional taxing authority. Option # 2 Passed with a motion by Josh Penterman and a

second by Tim Cheney.

Dean Busch: Yea, Jaimi Calfee: Yea, Tim Cheney: Yea, Brandon Desh: Yea, Dee Moore: Yea, Josh Penterman: Yea

- **Option # 2** was recommended for approval by the board.
- **Option # 2:**
 - This option does not include additional taxing authority. In this option, the General Fund tax request has been lowered and the Special Building Fund tax request has been lowered.
 - This option reduces the overall tax levy to **0.925382** which is a decrease of **18%** or **\$1,048,997**.

7. Closed Session

- No closed session occurred during this meeting.

8. Next Regular Meeting

- The next Regular Meeting of the Board of Education is scheduled for **Monday, October 14, 2024, beginning at 7:00 p.m.** at Palmyra High School in the media center.

9. Adjournment

- The meeting was adjourned at: **5:30 p.m.**

Chairperson

Superintendent

NEBRASKA OPEN MEETINGS ACT

84-1407. Act, how cited. Sections 84-1407 to 84-1414 shall be known and may be cited as the Open Meetings Act.

84-1408. Declaration of intent; meetings open to public. It is hereby declared to be the policy of this state that the formation of public policy is public business and may not be conducted in secret. Every meeting of a public body shall be open to the public in order that citizens may exercise their democratic privilege of attending and speaking at meetings of public bodies, except as otherwise provided by the Constitution of Nebraska, federal statutes, and the Open Meetings Act.

84-1409. Terms, defined. For purposes of the Open Meetings Act, unless the context otherwise requires:

(1)(a) Public body means (i) governing bodies of all political subdivisions of the State of Nebraska, (ii) governing bodies of all agencies, created by the Constitution of Nebraska, statute, or otherwise pursuant to law, of the executive department of the State of Nebraska, (iii) all independent boards, commissions, bureaus, committees, councils, subunits, or any other bodies created by the Constitution of Nebraska, statute, or otherwise pursuant to law, (iv) all study or advisory committees of the executive department of the State of Nebraska whether having continuing existence or appointed as special committees with limited existence, (v) advisory committees of the bodies referred to in subdivisions (i), (ii), and (iii) of this subdivision, and (vi) instrumentalities exercising essentially public functions; and

(b) Public body does not include (i) subcommittees of such bodies unless a quorum of the public body attends a subcommittee meeting or unless such subcommittees are holding hearings, making policy, or taking formal action on behalf of their parent body, except that all meetings of any subcommittee established under section 81-15,175 are subject to the Open Meetings Act, (ii) entities conducting judicial proceedings unless a court or other judicial body is exercising rulemaking authority, deliberating, or deciding upon the issuance of administrative orders, and (iii) the Judicial Resources Commission or subcommittees or subgroups of the commission;

(2) Meeting means all regular, special, or called meetings, formal or informal, of any public body for the purposes of briefing, discussion of public business, formation of tentative policy, or the taking of any action of the public body; and

(3) Virtual conferencing means conducting or participating in a meeting electronically or telephonically with interaction among the participants subject to subsection (2) of section 84-1412.

84-1410. Closed session; when; purpose; reasons listed; procedure; right to challenge; prohibited acts; chance meetings, conventions, or workshops.

(1) Any public body may hold a closed session by the affirmative vote of a majority of its voting members if a closed session is clearly necessary for the protection of the public interest or for the prevention of needless injury to the reputation of an individual and if such individual has not requested a public meeting. The subject matter and the reason necessitating the closed session shall be identified in the motion to close. Closed sessions may be held for, but shall not be limited to, such reasons as:

(a) Strategy sessions with respect to collective bargaining, real estate purchases, pending litigation, or litigation which is imminent as evidenced by communication of a claim or threat of litigation to or by the public body;

(b) Discussion regarding deployment of security personnel or devices;

(c) Investigative proceedings regarding allegations of criminal misconduct;

(d) Evaluation of the job performance of a person when necessary to prevent needless injury to the reputation of a person and if such person has not requested a public meeting;

(e) For the Community Trust created under section 81-1801.02, discussion regarding the amounts to be paid to individuals who have suffered from a tragedy of violence or natural disaster; or

(f) For public hospitals, governing board peer review activities, professional review activities, review and discussion of medical staff investigations or disciplinary actions, and any strategy session concerning transactional negotiations with any referral source that is required by federal law to be conducted at arms length.

Nothing in this section shall permit a closed meeting for discussion of the appointment or election of a new member to any public body.

(2) The vote to hold a closed session shall be taken in open session. The entire motion, the vote of each member on the question of holding a closed session, and the time when the closed session commenced and concluded shall be recorded in the minutes. If the motion to close passes, then the presiding officer immediately prior to the closed session shall restate on the record the limitation of the subject matter of the closed session. The public body holding such a closed session shall restrict its consideration of matters during the closed portions to only those purposes set forth in the motion to close as the reason for the closed session. The meeting shall be reconvened in open session before any formal action may be taken. For purposes of this section, formal action shall mean a collective decision or a collective commitment or promise to make a decision on any question, motion, proposal, resolution, order, or ordinance or formation of a position or policy but shall not include negotiating guidance given by members of the public body to legal counsel or other negotiators in closed sessions authorized under subdivision (1)(a) of this section.

(3) Any member of any public body shall have the right to challenge the continuation of a closed session if the member determines that the session has exceeded the reason stated in the original motion to hold a closed session or if the member contends that the closed session is neither clearly necessary for (a) the protection of the public interest or (b) the prevention of needless injury to the reputation of an individual. Such challenge shall be overruled only by a majority vote of the members of the public body. Such challenge and its disposition shall be recorded in the minutes.

(4) Nothing in this section shall be construed to require that any meeting be closed to the public. No person or public body shall fail to invite a portion of its members to a meeting, and no public body shall designate itself a subcommittee of the whole body for the purpose of circumventing the Open Meetings Act. No closed session, informal meeting, chance meeting, social gathering, email, fax, or other electronic communication shall be used for the purpose of circumventing the requirements of the act.

(5) The act does not apply to chance meetings or to attendance at or travel to conventions or workshops of members of a public body at which there is no meeting of the body then intentionally convened, if there is no vote or other action taken regarding any matter over which the public body has supervision, control, jurisdiction, or advisory power.

84-1411. Meetings of public body; notice; method; contents; when available; right to modify; duties concerning notice; videoconferencing or telephone conferencing authorized; emergency meeting without notice; appearance before public body.

(1) Until January 1, 2025:

(a) Each public body shall give reasonable advance publicized notice of the time and place of each meeting as provided in this subsection. Such notice shall be transmitted to all members of the public body and to the public.

(b)(i) Except as provided in subdivision (1)(b)(ii) of this section, in the case of a public body described in subdivision (1)(a)(i) of section 84-1409 or such body's advisory committee, such notice shall be published in a newspaper of general circulation within the public body's jurisdiction and, if available, on such newspaper's website.

(ii) In the case of the governing body of a city of the second class or village or such body's advisory committee or the governing body of a rural or suburban fire protection district, such notice shall be published by:

(A) Publication in a newspaper of general circulation within the public body's jurisdiction and, if available, on such newspaper's website; or

(B) Posting written notice in three conspicuous public places in such city, village, or district. Such notice shall be posted in the same three places for each meeting.

(iii) In the case of a public body not described in subdivision (1)(b)(i) or (ii) of this section, such notice shall be given by a method designated by the public body.

(iv) In case of refusal, neglect, or inability of the newspaper to timely publish the notice, the public body shall (A) post such notice on its website, if available, and (B) post such notice in a conspicuous public place in such public body's jurisdiction. The public body shall keep a written record of such posting. The record of such posting shall be evidence that such posting was done as required and shall be sufficient to fulfill the requirement of publication.

(c) In addition to a method of notice required by subdivision (1)(b)(i) or (ii) of this section, such notice may also be provided by any other appropriate method designated by such public body or such advisory committee.

(d) Each public body shall record the methods and dates of such notice in its minutes.

(e) Such notice shall contain an agenda of subjects known at the time of the publicized notice or a statement that the agenda, which shall be kept continually current, shall be readily available for public inspection at the principal office of the public body during normal business hours.

Agenda items shall be sufficiently descriptive to give the public reasonable notice of the matters to be considered at the meeting. Except for items of an emergency nature, the agenda shall not be altered later than (i) twenty-four hours before the scheduled commencement of the meeting or (ii) forty-eight hours before the scheduled commencement of a meeting of a city council or village board scheduled outside the corporate limits of the municipality. The public body shall have the right to modify the agenda to include items of an emergency nature only at such public meeting.

(2) Beginning January 1, 2025:

(a) Each public body shall give reasonable advance publicized notice of the time and place of each meeting as provided in this subsection. Such notice shall be transmitted to all members of the public body and to the public.

(b)(i) Except as provided in subdivision (2)(b)(ii) of this section, in the case of a public body described in subdivision (1)(a)(i) of section 84-1409 or such body's advisory committees, such notice shall be given by:

(A)(I) Publication in a newspaper of general circulation within the public body's jurisdiction that is finalized for printing prior to the time and date of the meeting, (II) posting on such newspaper's website, if available, and (III) posting on a statewide website established and maintained as a repository for such notices by a majority of Nebraska newspapers. Such notice shall be placed in the newspaper and on the websites by the newspaper; or

(B)(I) Posting to the newspaper's website, if available, and (II) posting to a statewide website established and maintained as a repository for such notices by a majority of Nebraska newspapers if no edition of a newspaper of general circulation within the public body's jurisdiction is to be finalized for printing prior to the time and date of the meeting. Such notice shall be placed in the newspaper and on the websites by the newspaper.

(ii) In the case of the governing body of a city of the second class or village, any advisory committee of such governing body, or the governing body of a rural or suburban fire protection district, such notice shall be given by:

(A)(I) Publication in a newspaper of general circulation within the public body's jurisdiction that is finalized for printing prior to the time and date of the meeting, (II) posting on such newspaper's website, if available, and (III) posting on a statewide website established and maintained as a repository for such notices by a majority of Nebraska newspapers. Such notice shall be placed in the newspaper and on the websites by the newspaper;

(B)(I) Posting to the newspaper's website, if available, and (II) posting on a statewide website established and maintained as a repository for such notices by a majority of Nebraska newspapers if no edition of a newspaper of general circulation within the public body's jurisdiction is to be finalized for printing prior to the time and date of the meeting. Such notice shall be placed in the newspaper and on the websites by the newspaper; or

(C)(III) Posting written notice in three conspicuous public places in such city, village, or district. Such notice shall be posted by the public body in the same three places for each meeting.

(iii) In the case of a public body not described in subdivision (2)(b)(i) or (ii) of this section, such notice shall be given by a method designated by the public body.

(iv) In case of refusal, neglect, or inability of the newspaper to publish the notice, the public body shall (A) post such notice on its website, if available, (B) submit a post on a statewide website established and maintained as a repository for such notices by a majority of Nebraska newspapers, and (C) post such notice in a conspicuous public place in such public body's jurisdiction. The public body shall keep a written record of such posting. The record of such posting shall be evidence that such posting was done as required and shall be sufficient to fulfill the requirement of publication.

(3)(a) The following entities may hold a meeting by means of virtual conferencing if the requirements of subdivision (3)(b) of this section are met:

(i) A state agency, state board, state commission, state council, or state committee, or an advisory committee of any such state entity;

(ii) An organization, including the governing body, created under the Interlocal Cooperation Act, the Joint Public Agency Act, or the Municipal Cooperative Financing Act;

(iii) The governing body of a public power district having a chartered territory of more than one county in this state;

(iv) The governing body of a public power and irrigation district having a chartered territory of more than one county in this state;

(v) An educational service unit;

- (vi) The Educational Service Unit Coordinating Council;
- (vii) An organization, including the governing body, of a risk management pool or its advisory committees organized in accordance with the Intergovernmental Risk Management Act;
- (viii) A community college board of governors;
- (ix) The Nebraska Brand Committee;
- (x) A local public health department;
- (xi) A metropolitan utilities district;
- (xii) A regional metropolitan transit authority; and
- (xiii) A natural resources district.

(b) The requirements for holding a meeting by means of virtual conferencing are as follows:

(i) Reasonable advance publicized notice is given as provided in subsections (1) and (2) of this section, including providing access to a dial-in number or link to the virtual conference;

(ii) In addition to the public's right to participate by virtual conferencing, reasonable arrangements are made to accommodate the public's right to attend at a physical site and participate as provided in section 84-1412, including reasonable seating, in at least one designated site in a building open to the public and identified in the notice, with: At least one member of the entity holding such meeting, or his or her designee, present at each site; a recording of the hearing by audio or visual recording devices; and a reasonable opportunity for input, such as public comment or questions, is provided to at least the same extent as would be provided if virtual conferencing was not used;

(iii) At least one copy of all documents being considered at the meeting is available at any physical site open to the public where individuals may attend the virtual conference. The public body shall also provide links to an electronic copy of the agenda, all documents being considered at the meeting, and the current version of the Open Meetings Act; and

(iv) Except as otherwise provided in this subdivision or subsection (4) of section 79-2204, no more than one-half of the meetings of the state entities, advisory committees, boards, councils, organizations, or governing bodies are held by virtual conferencing in a calendar year. In the case of (A) an organization created under the Interlocal Cooperation Act that sells electricity or natural gas, (B) an organization created under the Municipal Cooperative Financing Act, (C) a governing body of a risk management pool and any advisory committee of such governing body, or (D) any advisory committee of any state entity created in response to the Opioid Prevention and Treatment Act, such the organization, governing body, or committee may hold more than one-half of its meetings by virtual conferencing if such organization holds at least one meeting each calendar year that is not by virtual conferencing.

(4) Virtual conferencing, emails, faxes, or other electronic communication shall not be used to circumvent any of the public government purposes established in the Open Meetings Act.

(5) The secretary or other designee of each public body shall maintain a list of the news media requesting notification of meetings and shall make reasonable efforts to provide advance notification to them of the time and place of each meeting and the subjects to be discussed at that meeting.

(6) When it is necessary to hold an emergency meeting without reasonable advance public notice, the nature of the emergency shall be stated in the minutes and any formal action taken in such meeting shall pertain only to the emergency. Such emergency meetings may be held by virtual conferencing. The provisions of subsection (5) of this section shall be complied with in conducting emergency meetings. Complete minutes of such emergency meetings specifying the nature of the emergency and any formal action taken at the meeting shall be made available to the public by no later than the end of the next regular business day.

(7) A public body may allow a member of the public or any other witness to appear before the public body by means of virtual conferencing.

(8)(a) Notwithstanding subsections (3) and (6) of this section, if an emergency is declared by the Governor pursuant to the Emergency Management Act as defined in section 81-829.39, a public body the territorial jurisdiction of which is included in the emergency declaration, in whole or in part, may hold a meeting by virtual conferencing during such emergency if the public body gives reasonable advance publicized notice as described in subsections (1) and (2) of this section. The notice shall include information regarding access for the public and news media. In addition to any formal action taken pertaining to the emergency, the public body may hold such meeting for the purpose of briefing, discussion of public business, formation of tentative policy, or the taking of any action by the public body.

(b) The public body shall provide access by providing a dial-in number or a link to the virtual conference. The public body shall also provide links to an electronic copy of the agenda, all documents being considered at the meeting, and the current version of the Open Meetings Act. Reasonable arrangements shall be made to accommodate the public's right to hear and speak at the meeting and record the meeting. Subsection (5) of this section shall be complied with in conducting such meetings.

(c) The nature of the emergency shall be stated in the minutes. Complete minutes of such meeting specifying the nature of the emergency and any formal action taken at the meeting shall be made available for inspection as provided in subsection (5) of section 84-1413.

(9) In addition to any other statutory authorization for virtual conferencing, any public body not listed in subdivision (3)(a) of this section may hold a meeting by virtual conferencing if:

(a) The purpose of the virtual meeting is to discuss items that are scheduled to be discussed or acted upon at a subsequent non-virtual open meeting of the public body;

(b) No action is taken by the public body at the virtual meeting; and

(c) The public body complies with subdivisions (3)(b)(i) and (ii) of this section.

84-1412. Meetings of public body; rights of public; public body; powers and duties.

(1) Subject to the Open Meetings Act, the public has the right to attend and the right to speak at meetings of public bodies, and all or any part of a meeting of a public body, except for closed sessions called pursuant to section 84-1410, may be videotaped, televised, photographed, broadcast, or recorded by any person in attendance by means of a tape recorder, a camera, video equipment, or any other means of pictorial or sonic reproduction or in writing.

(2) It shall not be a violation of subsection (1) of this section for any public body to make and enforce reasonable rules and regulations regarding the conduct of persons attending, speaking at, videotaping, televising, photographing, broadcasting, or recording its meetings, including meetings held by virtual conferencing. A body may not be required to allow citizens to speak at each meeting, but it may not forbid public participation at all meetings.

(3) No public body shall require members of the public to identify themselves as a condition for admission to the meeting nor shall such body require that the name of any member of the public be placed on the agenda prior to such meeting in order to speak about items on the agenda. The body shall require any member of the public desiring to address the body to identify himself or herself, including an address and the name of any organization represented by such person unless

the address requirement is waived to protect the security of the individual.

(4) No public body shall, for the purpose of circumventing the Open Meetings Act, hold a meeting in a place known by the body to be too small to accommodate the anticipated audience.

(5) No public body shall be deemed in violation of this section if it holds its meeting in its traditional meeting place which is located in this state.

(6) No public body shall be deemed in violation of this section if it holds a meeting outside of this state if, but only if:

(a) A member entity of the public body is located outside of this state and the meeting is in that member's jurisdiction;

(b) All out-of-state locations identified in the notice are located within public buildings used by members of the entity or at a place which will accommodate the anticipated audience;

(c) Reasonable arrangements are made to accommodate the public's right to attend, hear, and speak at the meeting, including making virtual conferencing available at an in-state location to members, the public, or the press, if requested twenty-four hours in advance;

(d) No more than twenty-five percent of the public body's meetings in a calendar year are held out-of-state;

(e) Out-of-state meetings are not used to circumvent any of the public government purposes established in the Open Meetings Act; and

(f) The public body publishes notice of the out-of-state meeting at least twenty-one days before the date of the meeting in a legal newspaper of statewide circulation.

(7) Each public body shall, upon request, make a reasonable effort to accommodate the public's right to hear the discussion and testimony presented at a meeting.

(8) Public bodies shall make available at the meeting or the in-state location for virtual conferencing as required by subdivision (6)(c) of this section, for examination and copying by members of the public, at least one copy of all reproducible written material to be discussed at an open meeting, either in paper or electronic form. Public bodies shall make available at least one current copy of the Open Meetings Act posted in the meeting room at a location accessible to members of the public. At the beginning of the meeting, the public shall be informed about the location of the posted information.

84-1413. Meetings; minutes; roll call vote; secret ballot; when.

(1) Each public body shall keep minutes of all meetings showing the time, place, members present and absent, and the substance of all matters discussed.

(2) Any action taken on any question or motion duly moved and seconded shall be by roll call vote of the public body in open session, and the record shall state how each member voted or if the member was absent or not voting. The requirements of a roll call or viva voce vote shall be satisfied by a public body which utilizes an electronic voting device which allows the yeas and nays of each member of such public body to be readily seen by the public.

(3) The vote to elect leadership within a public body may be taken by secret ballot, but the total number of votes for each candidate shall be recorded in the minutes.

(4) The minutes of all meetings and evidence and documentation received or disclosed in open session shall be public records and open to public inspection during normal business hours.

(5) Minutes shall be written or kept as an electronic record and shall be available for inspection within ten working days or prior to the next convened meeting, whichever occurs earlier, except that cities of the second class and villages may have an additional ten working days if the employee responsible for writing or keeping the minutes is absent due to a serious illness or emergency.

(6) Beginning July 31, 2022, the governing body of a natural resources district, the city council of a city of the metropolitan class, the city council of a city of the primary class, the city council of a city of the first class, the county board of a county with a population greater than twenty-five thousand inhabitants, and the school board of a school district shall make available on such entity's public website the agenda and minutes of any meeting of the governing body. The agenda shall be placed on the website at least twenty-four hours before the meeting of the governing body. Minutes shall be placed on the website at such time as the minutes are available for inspection as provided in subsection (5) of this section. This information shall be available on the public website for at least six months.

84-1414. Unlawful action by public body; declared void or voidable by district court; when; duty to enforce open meeting laws; citizen's suit; procedure; violations; penalties.

(1) Any motion, resolution, rule, regulation, ordinance, or formal action of a public body made or taken in violation of the Open Meetings Act shall be declared void by the district court if the suit is commenced within one hundred twenty days of the meeting of the public body at which the alleged violation occurred. Any motion, resolution, rule, regulation, ordinance, or formal action of a public body made or taken in substantial violation of the Open Meetings Act shall be voidable by the district court if the suit is commenced more than one hundred twenty days after but within one year of the meeting of the public body in which the alleged violation occurred. A suit to void any final action shall be commenced within one year of the action.

(2) The Attorney General and the county attorney of the county in which the public body ordinarily meets shall enforce the Open Meetings Act.

(3) Any citizen of this state may commence a suit in the district court of the county in which the public body ordinarily meets or in which the plaintiff resides for the purpose of requiring compliance with or preventing violations of the Open Meetings Act, for the purpose of declaring an action of a public body void, or for the purpose of determining the applicability of the act to discussions or decisions of the public body. It shall not be a defense that the citizen attended the meeting and failed to object at such time. The court may order payment of reasonable attorney's fees and court costs to a successful plaintiff in a suit brought under this section.

(4) Any member of a public body who knowingly violates or conspires to violate or who attends or remains at a meeting knowing that the public body is in violation of any provision of the Open Meetings Act shall be guilty of a Class IV misdemeanor for a first offense and a Class III misdemeanor for a second or subsequent offense.

Operative
4/17/24



Nebraska Council
of School Administrators

455 South 11th Street, Suite A
Lincoln, NE 68508
(402) 476-8055
ncsa.org



PERRY, GUTTHERY, HAASE & CRESSFORD, P.C., L.L.O.

233 South 13th Street, Suite 1400,
Lincoln, NE 68508
(402) 476-9200
perrylawfirm.com

Designated Bill Summary
Superintendent Report: Special Board Meeting:
Date: Tuesday, September 24, 2024

From: Michael Hart

Re: Designated Bill Summary Report for BOE meeting

- Next month's *regular* board meeting is scheduled for **Monday, October 14, 2024, at 7:00 p.m.** at Palmyra High School in the media center.

A. Consent Agenda Expenditures

Construction Account Claims:

- **\$600.00**
 - *Please note: These claims are now included in the Consent Agenda of the regular board meeting due to the discontinuation of the CMAR special monthly meetings effective September 9, 2024.*
 - *Please see the itemized list below.*

2022 Construction Account Claims:

- **Matt's Masonry: \$600.00**

Depreciation Fund Claims:

- None this month.

Bond Fund Claims:

- None this month.

Special Building Claims:

Total Claims: None

-

General Fund Claims:

- **Bulldog Garage Doors & Operations: \$1,650.00**
- **Mike Donahue - Value Up: \$4,000 - Keynote speaker paid by the Mental Health Grant. Needs to be paid by September 29 to be refunded from the Grant.**

Original Posted 2024-2025 Budget

NOTICE OF BUDGET HEARING AND BUDGET SUMMARY

District OR 1 Bennet/Palmyra Public Schools (66-0501) in Otoe County, Nebraska

PUBLIC NOTICE is hereby given, in compliance with the provisions of State Statute Sections 13-501 to 13-513, that the governing body will meet on the 9th day of September , 2024 at 6:45 o'clock, P.M., at Palmyra High School: Media center for the purpose of hearing support, opposition, criticism, suggestions or observations of taxpayers relating to the following proposed budget and to consider amendments relative thereto. The budget detail is available at the office of the Clerk/Secretary during regular business hours. For more information on statewide receipts and expenditures, and to compare cost per pupil and performance to other school districts, go to: <https://nep.education.ne.gov>

FUNDS	Actual Disbursements & Transfers	Actual/Estimated Disbursements & Transfers	Budgeted Disbursements & Transfers	Necessary Cash Reserve (4)	Total Available Resources Before Property Taxes (5)	Total Personal and Real Property Tax Requirement (7)
	2022-2023 (1)	2023-2024 (2)	2024-2025 (3)			
General	\$ 8,285,759.00	\$ 9,205,442.00	\$ 14,401,620.00	\$ 6,724.00	\$ 9,368,707.00	\$ 5,090,542.00
Depreciation	\$ 65,500.00	\$ 182,173.00	\$ 510,246.00		\$ 510,246.00	
Employee Benefit	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 40,724.00	\$ -	\$ 40,724.00	
Contingency	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -		\$ -	
Activities	\$ 308,922.00	\$ 300,000.00	\$ 734,424.36	\$ -	\$ 734,424.36	
School Nutrition	\$ 406,470.00	\$ 569,000.00	\$ 727,538.00	\$ -	\$ 727,538.00	
Bond	\$ 960,858.00	\$ 2,031,462.00	\$ 2,141,832.00	\$ 1,926,497.00	\$ 1,818,329.00	\$ 2,272,727.00
Special Building	\$ 1,855,499.00	\$ 8,560,542.00	\$ 14,395,100.00		\$ 14,143,100.00	\$ 254,545.00
Qualified Capital Purpose Undertaking	\$ 146,006.00	\$ 148,900.00	\$ 303,014.00	\$ 140,000.00	\$ 298,014.00	\$ 146,465.00
Cooperative	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
Student Fee	\$ 5,635.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
TOTALS	\$ 12,034,649.00	\$ 20,997,519.00	\$ 33,254,498.36	\$ 2,073,221.00	\$ 27,641,082.36	\$ 7,764,279.00

	Bond Purposes	Non-Bond Purposes	Total
Breakdown of Property Tax	\$ 2,419,192.00	\$ 5,345,087.00	\$ 7,764,279.00

Original Posted 2024-2025 Tax Request

Notice of Special Hearing To Set Final Tax Request

District OR 1 Bennet/Palmyra Public Schools (66-0501) in Otoe County, Nebraska

PUBLIC NOTICE is hereby given, in compliance with the provisions of State Statute Section 77-1632, that the governing body will meet on the 9th day of, September 2024 at 6:55 o'clock P.M., at Palmyra High School: Media center for the purpose of hearing support, opposition, criticism, suggestions or observations of taxpayers relating to setting the final tax request.

	2023-2024	2024-2025	Change
Property Valuations	781,532,706	825,641,555	6%

2023-2024 Budget Information

2024-2025 Budget Information

Fund	2023-2024 Operating Budget	2023-2024 Property Tax Request	2023 Tax Rate	Property Tax Rate (2023-2024 Request Divided By 2023 Valuation)	2024-2025 Operating Budget	2024-2025 Proposed Property Tax Request	Proposed 2024 Tax Rate	Change in Tax Rate	Change in Operating Budget
General Fund	10,304,703.00	5,915,306.00	0.756885	0.716450	14,401,620.00	5,090,542.00	0.616556	-19%	40%
Bond Fund(s) 2016 (2019R)	662,737.00	660,737.00	0.084544	0.080027	666,750.00	700,000.00	0.084783	0%	1%
Bond Fund 2022	1,607,373.00	1,527,955.00	0.233121	0.185063	1,469,282.00	1,572,727.00	0.212531	-9%	-9%
Special Building Fund	21,743,147.00	252,525.00	0.032312	0.030585	14,395,100.00	254,545.00	0.030830	-5%	-34%
Qualified Capital Purpose Undertaking Fund K - 12	440,802.00	150,789.00	0.019294	0.018263	303,014.00	146,465.00	0.017740	-8%	-31%
Total	34,758,762.00	8,507,312.00	1.126156	1.030388	31,235,766.00	7,764,279.00	0.962440	-15%	-10%

Budget Information without Additional Tax Authority

NOTICE OF BUDGET HEARING AND BUDGET SUMMARY

District OR 1 Bennet/Palmyra Public Schools (66-0501) in Otoe County, Nebraska

PUBLIC NOTICE is hereby given, in compliance with the provisions of State Statute Sections 13-501 to 13-513, that the governing body will meet on the 9th day of September, 2024 at 6:45 o'clock, P.M., at Palmyra High School: Media center for the purpose of hearing support, opposition, criticism, suggestions or observations of taxpayers relating to the following proposed budget and to consider amendments relative thereto. The budget detail is available at the office of the Clerk/Secretary during regular business hours. For more information on statewide receipts and expenditures, and to compare cost per pupil and performance to other school districts, go to: <https://nep.education.ne.gov>

FUNDS	Actual Disbursements & Transfers	Actual/Estimated Disbursements & Transfers	Budgeted Disbursements & Transfers	Necessary Cash Reserve (4)	Total Available Resources Before Property Taxes (5)	Total Personal and Real Property Tax Requirement (7)
	2022-2023 (1)	2023-2024 (2)	2024-2025 (3)			
General	\$ 8,285,759.00	\$ 9,205,442.00	\$ 14,151,620.00	\$ 6,724.00	\$ 9,368,707.00	\$ 4,838,017.00
Depreciation	\$ 65,500.00	\$ 182,173.00	\$ 510,246.00		\$ 510,246.00	
Employee Benefit	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 40,724.00	\$ -	\$ 40,724.00	
Contingency	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -		\$ -	
Activities	\$ 308,922.00	\$ 300,000.00	\$ 734,424.36	\$ -	\$ 734,424.36	
School Nutrition	\$ 406,470.00	\$ 569,000.00	\$ 727,538.00	\$ -	\$ 727,538.00	
Bond	\$ 960,858.00	\$ 2,031,462.00	\$ 2,141,832.00	\$ 1,926,497.00	\$ 1,818,329.00	\$ 2,272,727.00
Special Building	\$ 1,855,499.00	\$ 8,560,542.00	\$ 14,342,195.00		\$ 14,143,100.00	\$ 201,106.00
Qualified Capital Purpose Undertaking	\$ 146,006.00	\$ 148,900.00	\$ 303,014.00	\$ 140,000.00	\$ 298,014.00	\$ 146,465.00
Cooperative	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
Student Fee	\$ 5,635.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
TOTALS	\$ 12,034,649.00	\$ 20,997,519.00	\$ 32,951,593.36	\$ 2,073,221.00	\$ 27,641,082.36	\$ 7,458,315.00

	Bond Purposes	Non-Bond Purposes	Total
Breakdown of Property Tax	\$ 2,419,192.00	\$ 5,039,123.00	\$ 7,458,315.00

Tax Request without Additional Tax Authority

Notice of Special Hearing To Set Final Tax Request

District OR 1 Bennet/Palmyra Public Schools (66-0501) in Otoe County, Nebraska

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	2023-2024	2024-2025	Change
Property Valuations	781,532,706	825,641,555	6%

2023-2024 Budget Information

2024-2025 Budget Information

Fund	2023-2024 Operating Budget	2023-2024 Property Tax Request	2023 Tax Rate	Property Tax Rate (2023-2024 Request Divided By 2023 Valuation)	2024-2025 Operating Budget	2024-2025 Proposed Property Tax Request	Proposed 2024 Tax Rate	Change in Tax Rate	Change in Operating Budget
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Bond Fund(s) 2016 (2019R)	662,737.00	660,737.00	0.084544	0.080027	666,750.00	700,000.00	0.084783	0%	1%
Bond Fund 2022	1,607,373.00	1,527,955.00	0.233121	0.185063	1,469,282.00	1,572,727.00	0.212531	-9%	-9%
Special Building Fund	21,743,147.00	252,525.00	0.032312	0.030585	14,342,195.00	201,106.00	0.024358	-25%	-34%
Qualified Capital Purpose Undertaking Fund K - 12	440,802.00	150,789.00	0.019294	0.018263	303,014.00	146,465.00	0.017740	-8%	-31%
Total	34,758,762.00	8,507,312.00	1.126156	1.030388	30,932,861.00	7,458,315.00	0.925383	-18%	-11%

**RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION TO INCREASE BASE
GROWTH PERCENTAGE TO DETERMINE ITS PROPERTY TAX
REQUEST AUTHORITY**

- *WHEREAS, the Board of Education (“Board”) for District OR School District 66-0501, commonly known as District OR-1 Palmyra- Bennet Public Schools (the “School District”), is planning the School District’s annual budget for the 2024–2025 school year; and*
- *WHEREAS, the funding needed for the School District to meet its obligations to its students will require an increase in the base growth percentage used to determine the School District’s property tax request authority under NEB. REV. STAT. § 79-3403; and*
- *WHEREAS, Nebraska law authorizes the Board, upon an affirmative vote of at least seventy percent (70%) of the Board, to increase such base growth percentage by up to 6%.*
- *BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that, pursuant to NEB. REV. STAT. § 79-3405(2), the Board hereby increases the base growth percentage used to determine its property tax request authority for the 2024–2025 budget in an amount of 6%*
- *Said Resolution was adopted by the Board of Education by a vote of ___ to ___ on the 24th day of September 2024.*

ATTEST:

President of the Board of Education

Secretary of the Board of Education

Original Posted 2024-2025 Budget

NOTICE OF BUDGET HEARING AND BUDGET SUMMARY

District OR 1 Bennet/Palmyra Public Schools (66-0501) in Otoe County, Nebraska

PUBLIC NOTICE is hereby given, in compliance with the provisions of State Statute Sections 13-501 to 13-513, that the governing body will meet on the 9th day of September , 2024 at 6:45 o'clock, P.M., at Palmyra High School: Media center for the purpose of hearing support, opposition, criticism, suggestions or observations of taxpayers relating to the following proposed budget and to consider amendments relative thereto. The budget detail is available at the office of the Clerk/Secretary during regular business hours. For more information on statewide receipts and expenditures, and to compare cost per pupil and performance to other school districts, go to: <https://nep.education.ne.gov>

FUNDS	Actual Disbursements & Transfers	Actual/Estimated Disbursements & Transfers	Budgeted Disbursements & Transfers	Necessary Cash Reserve (4)	Total Available Resources Before Property Taxes (5)	Total Personal and Real Property Tax Requirement (7)
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Depreciation	\$ 65,500.00	\$ 182,173.00	\$ 510,246.00		\$ 510,246.00	
Employee Benefit	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 40,724.00	\$ -	\$ 40,724.00	
Contingency	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -		\$ -	
Activities	\$ 308,922.00	\$ 300,000.00	\$ 734,424.36	\$ -	\$ 734,424.36	
School Nutrition	\$ 406,470.00	\$ 569,000.00	\$ 727,538.00	\$ -	\$ 727,538.00	
Bond	\$ 960,858.00	\$ 2,031,462.00	\$ 2,141,832.00	\$ 1,926,497.00	\$ 1,818,329.00	\$ 2,272,727.00
Special Building	\$ 1,855,499.00	\$ 8,560,542.00	\$ 14,395,100.00		\$ 14,143,100.00	\$ 254,545.00
Qualified Capital Purpose Undertaking	\$ 146,006.00	\$ 148,900.00	\$ 303,014.00	\$ 140,000.00	\$ 298,014.00	\$ 146,465.00
Cooperative	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
Student Fee	\$ 5,635.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
TOTALS	\$ 12,034,649.00	\$ 20,997,519.00	\$ 33,254,498.36	\$ 2,073,221.00	\$ 27,641,082.36	\$ 7,764,279.00

	Bond Purposes	Non-Bond Purposes	Total
Breakdown of Property Tax	\$ 2,419,192.00	\$ 5,345,087.00	\$ 7,764,279.00

Original Posted 2024-2025 Tax Request

Notice of Special Hearing To Set Final Tax Request

District OR 1 Bennet/Palmyra Public Schools (66-0501) in Otoe County, Nebraska

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	2023-2024	2024-2025	Change
Property Valuations	781,532,706	825,641,555	6%

2023-2024 Budget Information

2024-2025 Budget Information

Fund	2023-2024 Operating Budget	2023-2024 Property Tax Request	2023 Tax Rate	Property Tax Rate (2023-2024 Request Divided By 2023 Valuation)	2024-2025 Operating Budget	2024-2025 Proposed Property Tax Request	Proposed 2024 Tax Rate	Change in Tax Rate	Change in Operating Budget
General Fund	10,304,703.00	5,915,306.00	0.756885	0.716450	14,401,620.00	5,090,542.00	0.616556	-19%	40%
Bond Fund(s) 2016 (2019R)	662,737.00	660,737.00	0.084544	0.080027	666,750.00	700,000.00	0.084783	0%	1%
Bond Fund 2022	1,607,373.00	1,527,955.00	0.233121	0.185063	1,469,282.00	1,572,727.00	0.212531	-9%	-9%
Special Building Fund	21,743,147.00	252,525.00	0.032312	0.030585	14,395,100.00	254,545.00	0.030830	-5%	-34%
Qualified Capital Purpose Undertaking Fund K - 12	440,802.00	150,789.00	0.019294	0.018263	303,014.00	146,465.00	0.017740	-8%	-31%
Total	34,758,762.00	8,507,312.00	1.126156	1.030388	31,235,766.00	7,764,279.00	0.962440	-15%	-10%

Budget Information without Additional Tax Authority

NOTICE OF BUDGET HEARING AND BUDGET SUMMARY

District OR 1 Bennet/Palmyra Public Schools (66-0501) in Otoe County, Nebraska

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	2022-2023 (1)	2023-2024 (2)	2024-2025 (3)			
General	\$ 8,285,759.00	\$ 9,205,442.00	\$ 14,151,620.00	\$ 6,724.00	\$ 9,368,707.00	\$ 4,838,017.00
Depreciation	\$ 65,500.00	\$ 182,173.00	\$ 510,246.00		\$ 510,246.00	
Employee Benefit	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 40,724.00	\$ -	\$ 40,724.00	
Contingency	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -		\$ -	
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	Bond Purposes	Non-Bond Purposes	Total
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Total	34,758,762.00	8,507,312.00	1.126156	1.030388	30,932,861.00	7,458,315.00	0.925383	-18%	-11%

Original Posted 2024-2025 Budget

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Special Meeting: 2024-2025 Tax Request Hearing

Monday, September 9, 2024 6:55 PM

Media Center at the Palmyra District OR-1 Public Schools

425 F Street

Palmyra, NE 68418

District Mission:

“Together we prepare our students to successfully meet the challenges of the future.”

Strategic Goal 1: District OR-1 Public Schools will provide the facilities needed to be competitive with other area schools in athletics and fine arts programs.

Strategic Goal 2: District OR-1 Public Schools will foster a unified community.

Strategic Goal 3: District OR-1 Public Schools will continuously implement (academic) programs and the curriculum needed to remain competitive with other area schools.

This information was posted in the following public formats:

- The Voice News (weekly area newspaper)
- Farmers' Merchants Bank - Palmyra
- Palmyra Post Office
- Palmyra High School
- Bennet Post Office
- Bennet Elementary School
- District OR-1 Website - <https://www.districtor1.org/>

1. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

- Board President Desh will call the public hearing meeting to **order at 6:55 p.m. or immediately following** the district budget public hearing meeting.
- The hearing was opened at **7:23 p.m.**

2. Announcement of the Open Meetings Act Posting

- Board President Desh identified the location of the Open Meetings Act Poster on the wall in the meeting room.
 - ***Please note:*** *An updated copy of the Open Meetings Act poster will be distributed to public entities for public distribution sometime during the summer of 2024.*
 - ***Until the posters arrive, the attached document will be displayed in the meeting room to accommodate the current changes.***
 - ***The changes are reflected in the currently posted materials: revised April 2024.***

3. 2024-2025 District Tax Request Public Hearing

3.1. In compliance with the current provisions of state requirements, the Board of Education provides this time for the purpose of hearing support, opposition, criticism, suggestions, or observations regarding the proposed District Tax Request for the **2024-2025** school year.

4. Close Public Hearing on District Tax Request

- The hearing was closed at **7:23 p.m.**

5. Next Regular Meeting

- The next regular board meeting will be **Monday, September 9th, 2024, beginning at 7:00 p.m.** (or immediately following the Tax Request Public Hearing) at Palmyra High School in the media center.

6. Adjournment

- The public hearing was adjourned at **7:23 p.m.**

Chairperson

Superintendent

BOARD OF EDUCATION UPDATE

SUMMARY OF SEPTEMBER 9 & 24, 2024 MEETINGS

- Approved current pay application from BIC Construction and additional invoices related to services completed to date on school facility projects. A BIC representative provided a construction project update.
- Conducted public hearings to allow for support, opposition, suggestions, and observations regarding both the budget and property tax request for the 2024-2025 school year.
- Approved the budget for the 2024-2025 school year with a general fund increase of 9% from 2023-2024. This increase is for personnel costs to address our student enrollment, specialized student needs, expanded facilities and additional legislative mandates.
- Approved the property tax request for the 2024-2025 school year with an overall decrease of 12% from 2023-2024. This decrease is due additional resources from non-property tax sources mainly additional state funding.
- Approved a resolution to allow for an increase, by up to 6%, in the school district's base growth percentage used to determine property tax request authority.
- Approved ALICAP to provide insurance coverage for the district due to better rates and service.
- More information is available at <HTTPS://MEETING.SPARQDATA.COM/PUBLIC/ORGANIZATION/174>

Michael Hart
 District OR-1 Public Schools
 PO Box 130
 Palmyra, NE 68418

September 18, 2024
 Project No: 845-004-22
 Invoice No: 25

Project 845-004-22 District OR-1 Additions & Renovations
 7% of Construction Cost

For professional services rendered for the period August 3, 2024 to August 30, 2024 for the referenced project.

Phase	01	Basic Services			
Fee Earned:					
Total Fee		1,155,000.00			
Percent Complete		96.9697	Total Earned		1,120,000.00
			Previous Fee Billing		1,107,500.00
			Current Fee Billing		12,500.00
			Total Fee		12,500.00
Billing Limits			Current	Prior	To-Date
Fees			12,500.00	1,107,500.00	1,120,000.00
Limit					1,155,000.00
Remaining					35,000.00
Total this Phase					\$12,500.00
<hr/>					
Phase	60	Furniture Design			
Billing Limits			Current	Prior	To-Date
Labor			0.00	10,000.00	10,000.00
Limit					10,000.00
Total this Phase					0.00
<hr/>					
Phase	70	Reimbursable Expenses			
Reimbursable Expenses					
Printing					1.70
		Total Reimbursable Expenses			1.70
Total this Phase					\$1.70
Total this Invoice					\$12,501.70

Melanie D. Stover *Melanie D Stover*
Director of Business Administration

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When you provide a check as payment, you authorize us either to use information from your check to make a one-time electronic fund transfer from your account or to process the payment as a check transaction.

CLARK & ENERSEN

Application and Certificate for Payment

TO OWNER: OR-1 School District 425 F Street Palmyra NE 68418	PROJECT: OR-1 School District (Bennet/Palmyra) 50 Dogwood Bennet, NE 426 F Street Palmyra, NE	APPLICATION NO: 015 PERIOD TO: September 30, 2024	Distribution to: <input type="checkbox"/> OWNER: <input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECT: <input type="checkbox"/> CONTRACTOR: <input type="checkbox"/> FIELD: <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:
FROM CONTRACTOR: BIC Construction LLC 245 South 84th Street #316 Lincoln, NE 68510	VIA ARCHITECT: Clark & Enersen 1010 Lincoln Mall #200 Lincoln, NE 68508	CONTRACT FOR: General Construction CONTRACT DATE: December 12, 2022 PROJECT NOS: Clark & Enersen / 2224 / OR-1 School District	

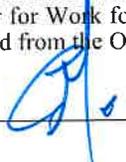
CONTRACTOR'S APPLICATION FOR PAYMENT

Application is made for payment, as shown below, in connection with the Contract. AIA Document G703®, Continuation Sheet, is attached.

1. ORIGINAL CONTRACT SUM	\$17,971,480.00
2. NET CHANGE BY CHANGE ORDERS	\$0.00
3. CONTRACT SUM TO DATE (Line 1 ± 2)	\$17,971,480.00
4. TOTAL COMPLETED & STORED TO DATE (Column G on G703)	\$17,931,622.95
5. RETAINAGE:	
a. <u>100.00</u> % of <u>Lump Sum</u> Completed Work (Column D + E on G703)	\$180,000.00
b. <u>0</u> % of Stored Material (Column F on G703)	\$0.00
Total Retainage (Lines 5a + 5b or Total in Column I of G703)	\$180,000.00
6. TOTAL EARNED LESS RETAINAGE	\$17,751,622.95
(Line 4 Less Line 5 Total)	
7. LESS PREVIOUS CERTIFICATES FOR PAYMENT	\$17,347,271.31
(Line 6 from prior Certificate)	
8. CURRENT PAYMENT DUE	\$404,351.64
9. BALANCE TO FINISH, INCLUDING RETAINAGE (Line 3 less Line 6)	\$219,857.05

CHANGE ORDER SUMMARY	ADDITIONS	DEDUCTIONS
Total changes approved in previous months by Owner	\$0.00	\$0.00
Total approved this Month	\$0.00	\$0.00
TOTALS	\$0.00	\$0.00
NET CHANGES by Change Order		\$0.00

The undersigned Contractor certifies that to the best of the Contractor's knowledge, information and belief the Work covered by this Application for Payment has been completed in accordance with the Contract Documents, that all amounts have been paid by the Contractor for Work for which previous Certificates for Payment were issued and payments received from the Owner, and that current payment shown herein is now due.

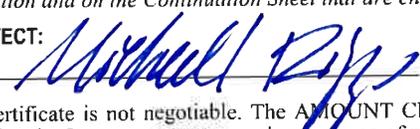
CONTRACTOR: _____
By:  _____ Date: September 30, 2024
State of: Nebraska
County of: Lancaster
Subscribed and sworn to before
me this 30th day of September 2024
Notary Public: Brenda K. Chambers
My Commission expires: 2/19/2025



ARCHITECT'S CERTIFICATE FOR PAYMENT

In accordance with the Contract Documents, based on on-site observations and the data comprising this application, the Architect certifies to the Owner that to the best of the Architect's knowledge, information and belief the Work has progressed as indicated, the quality of the Work is in accordance with the Contract Documents, and the Contractor is entitled to payment of the AMOUNT CERTIFIED.

AMOUNT CERTIFIED \$404,351.64
(Attach explanation if amount certified differs from the amount applied. Initial all figures on this Application and on the Continuation Sheet that are changed to conform with the amount certified.)

ARCHITECT:  _____ Date: 10/3/2024

This Certificate is not negotiable. The AMOUNT CERTIFIED is payable only to the Contractor named herein. Issuance, payment and acceptance of payment are without prejudice to any rights of the Owner or Contractor under this Contract.



AIA® Document G703® – 1992

Continuation Sheet

AIA Document G702®, Application and Certification for Payment, or G732™, Application and Certificate for Payment, Construction Manager as Adviser Edition, containing Contractor's signed certification is attached.
Use Column I on Contracts where variable retainage for line items may apply.

APPLICATION NO:
APPLICATION DATE:
PERIOD TO:
ARCHITECT'S PROJECT NO:

015
September 30, 2024
September 30, 2024
Clark & Enersen

A ITEM NO.	B DESCRIPTION OF WORK	C SCHEDULED VALUE	D WORK COMPLETED		F MATERIALS PRESENTLY STORED (NOT IN D OR E)	G TOTAL COMPLETED AND STORED TO DATE (D + E + F)		H BALANCE TO FINISH (C - G)	I RETAINAGE (IF VARIABLE RATE)
			FROM PREVIOUS APPLICATION (D + E)	THIS PERIOD		% (G÷C)			
01	Grading	238,565.00	238,565.00	0.00	0.00	238,565.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
02	Playground Allowance	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00%	0.00	0.00
02a	COR #B-003R	25,248.00	25,248.00	0.00	0.00	25,248.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
02b	COR #B-11R3	74,752.00	74,752.00	0.00	0.00	74,752.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
03	Seeding	20,000.00	20,000.00	0.00	0.00	20,000.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
04	Interior Demo	100,000.00	100,000.00	0.00	0.00	100,000.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
05	Fencing	32,000.00	32,000.00	0.00	0.00	32,000.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
06	Paving & Sidewalks	320,000.00	320,000.00	0.00	0.00	320,000.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
07	Footings	350,000.00	350,000.00	0.00	0.00	350,000.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
08	Slabs	130,000.00	130,000.00	0.00	0.00	130,000.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
09	Precast Material	208,000.00	208,000.00	0.00	0.00	208,000.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
10	Masonry	152,410.00	152,410.00	0.00	0.00	152,410.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
11	Steel Material	310,300.00	310,300.00	0.00	0.00	310,300.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
12	Steel/precast Erection	151,500.00	151,500.00	0.00	0.00	151,500.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
13	Grouting Baseplates/Precast	8,000.00	8,000.00	0.00	0.00	8,000.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
14	Rough Carpentry	30,000.00	30,000.00	0.00	0.00	30,000.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
15	Finish Carpentry	45,000.00	45,000.00	0.00	0.00	45,000.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
16	Millwork/Countertops	55,600.00	55,600.00	0.00	0.00	55,600.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
17	Waterproofing	22,000.00	22,000.00	0.00	0.00	22,000.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
18	Air Barrier	22,780.00	22,780.00	0.00	0.00	22,780.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
19	Expansion Joints	35,000.00	35,000.00	0.00	0.00	35,000.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
20	Sealants	17,515.00	17,515.00	0.00	0.00	17,515.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
21	Roofing	314,743.00	314,743.00	0.00	0.00	314,743.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
22	Metal Panels	26,143.00	20,000.00	6,143.00	0.00	26,143.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
23	Doors/Frames/Hardware	188,000.00	188,000.00	0.00	0.00	188,000.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00

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			FROM PREVIOUS APPLICATION (D + E)	THIS PERIOD		% (G÷C)			
24	Overhead Doors/Shutters	33,543.00	33,543.00	0.00	0.00	33,543.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
25	Alum & Glass	174,500.00	174,500.00	0.00	0.00	174,500.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
26	Studs & Drywall	401,645.00	401,645.00	0.00	0.00	401,645.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
27	ACT	78,835.00	78,835.00	0.00	0.00	78,835.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
28	Gym Floor Allowance	2,381.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00%	2,381.00	0.00
28a	COR B-025R	185,977.00	185,977.00	0.00	0.00	185,977.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
28b	COR B-028	12,695.00	12,695.00	0.00	0.00	12,695.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
28c	COR B-035	9,837.00	9,837.00	0.00	0.00	9,837.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
28d	COR P-028R	17,110.00	17,110.00	0.00	0.00	17,110.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
29	CPT/Resilient	140,000.00	134,067.00	5,933.00	0.00	140,000.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
30	Tile	180,000.00	180,000.00	0.00	0.00	180,000.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
31	Paint	67,018.00	61,000.00	6,018.00	0.00	67,018.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
32	Specialties	90,000.00	90,000.00	0.00	0.00	90,000.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
33	Bleachers	47,832.00	47,832.00	0.00	0.00	47,832.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
34	Window Covering	8,000.00	8,000.00	0.00	0.00	8,000.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
35	Food Service	230,525.00	230,525.00	0.00	0.00	230,525.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
36	Fire Sprinkler	80,500.00	80,500.00	0.00	0.00	80,500.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
37	Utilities	190,000.00	190,000.00	0.00	0.00	190,000.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
38	Piping	495,000.00	495,000.00	0.00	0.00	495,000.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
39	Pumps/Values/Equipme nt	40,000.00	40,000.00	0.00	0.00	40,000.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
40	HVAC - Equipment	340,000.00	340,000.00	0.00	0.00	340,000.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
41	HVAC - Ductwork	260,000.00	260,000.00	0.00	0.00	260,000.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
42	Insulation	55,000.00	55,000.00	0.00	0.00	55,000.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
43	Temp Controls	180,000.00	165,000.00	15,000.00	0.00	180,000.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
44	Electric Gear	50,000.00	50,000.00	0.00	0.00	50,000.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
45	Electrical Conduit/Wire	274,947.00	274,947.00	0.00	0.00	274,947.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
46	Lighting	185,000.00	185,000.00	0.00	0.00	185,000.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
47	Fire Alarm	50,000.00	50,000.00	0.00	0.00	50,000.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
48	Data/Clock/Intercom	140,000.00	130,000.00	10,000.00	0.00	140,000.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
	PALMYRA	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00%	0.00	0.00

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			FROM PREVIOUS APPLICATION (D + E)	THIS PERIOD		% (G÷C)			
49	Grading	181,072.00	181,072.00	0.00	0.00	181,072.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
50	Seeding	15,000.00	10,000.00	5,000.00	0.00	15,000.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
51	Interior Demo	65,000.00	65,000.00	0.00	0.00	65,000.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
52	Fencing	15,000.00	15,000.00	0.00	0.00	15,000.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
53	Paving & Sidewalks	90,000.00	90,000.00	0.00	0.00	90,000.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
54	Footings	660,000.00	660,000.00	0.00	0.00	660,000.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
55	Slabs	320,000.00	320,000.00	0.00	0.00	320,000.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
56	Precast Material	322,655.00	322,655.00	0.00	0.00	322,655.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
57	Masonry	311,385.00	311,385.00	0.00	0.00	311,385.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
58	Steel Material	758,000.00	758,000.00	0.00	0.00	758,000.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
59	Steel/Precast Erection	353,500.00	353,500.00	0.00	0.00	353,500.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
60	Grouting Baseplates/Precast	10,450.00	10,450.00	0.00	0.00	10,450.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
61	Rough Carpentry	59,000.00	59,000.00	0.00	0.00	59,000.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
62	Finish Carpentry	65,000.00	60,000.00	5,000.00	0.00	65,000.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
63	Millwork/Countertops	54,400.00	54,400.00	0.00	0.00	54,400.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
64	Waterproofing	37,655.00	37,655.00	0.00	0.00	37,655.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
65	Air Barrier	21,000.00	21,000.00	0.00	0.00	21,000.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
66	Expansion Joints	36,300.00	36,300.00	0.00	0.00	36,300.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
67	Sealants	26,000.00	26,000.00	0.00	0.00	26,000.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
68	Roofing	344,485.00	344,485.00	0.00	0.00	344,485.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
69	Metal Panels	22,720.00	22,720.00	0.00	0.00	22,720.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
70	Doors/Frames/Hardware	214,323.00	214,323.00	0.00	0.00	214,323.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
71	Overhead Doors/Shutters	14,000.00	14,000.00	0.00	0.00	14,000.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
72	Alum & Glass	308,350.00	308,350.00	0.00	0.00	308,350.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
73	Studs & Drywall	822,150.00	810,000.00	12,150.00	0.00	822,150.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
74	ACT	137,025.00	125,000.00	12,025.00	0.00	137,025.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
75	CPT/Resilient	196,500.00	185,000.00	11,500.00	0.00	196,500.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
76	Tile	240,000.00	240,000.00	0.00	0.00	240,000.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
77	Paint	80,000.00	70,000.00	10,000.00	0.00	80,000.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
78	Specialties	135,000.00	135,000.00	0.00	0.00	135,000.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00

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79	Gym Equipment	29,467.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00%	29,467.00	0.00
80	Window Covering	12,222.00	0.00	12,222.00	0.00	12,222.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
81	Elevator	138,700.00	138,700.00	0.00	0.00	138,700.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
82	Fire Sprinkler	120,000.00	120,000.00	0.00	0.00	120,000.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
83	Utilities	140,000.00	140,000.00	0.00	0.00	140,000.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
84	Piping	463,511.00	463,511.00	0.00	0.00	463,511.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
85	Pumps/Valves/Equipme nt	75,000.00	75,000.00	0.00	0.00	75,000.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
86	HVAC - Equipment	620,000.00	620,000.00	0.00	0.00	620,000.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
87	HVAC - Ductwork	510,000.00	510,000.00	0.00	0.00	510,000.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
88	Insulation	95,000.00	95,000.00	0.00	0.00	95,000.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
89	Temp Controls	210,000.00	200,000.00	10,000.00	0.00	210,000.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
90	Electrical Gear	111,000.00	111,000.00	0.00	0.00	111,000.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
91	Electrical Conduit/Wire	501,516.00	501,516.00	0.00	0.00	501,516.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
92	Lighting	210,000.00	210,000.00	0.00	0.00	210,000.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
93	Fire Alarm	71,000.00	71,000.00	0.00	0.00	71,000.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
94	Data/Clock/Intercom	260,000.00	245,000.00	15,000.00	0.00	260,000.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
	GENERAL CONDITIONS	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00%	0.00	0.00
95	General Requirements	329,768.00	329,768.00	0.00	0.00	329,768.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
96	Maximum Personal Expense	337,950.00	337,950.00	0.00	0.00	337,950.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
97	CM Fee	373,757.00	289,317.91	83,562.04	0.00	372,879.95	99.77%	877.05	0.00
98	Deferred Maintenance Allowance	94.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00%	94.00	0.00
98a	COR B-0002	13,120.00	13,120.00	0.00	0.00	13,120.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
98b	COR B 13R	30,685.00	30,685.00	0.00	0.00	30,685.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
98c	COR P-008	5,587.00	5,587.00	0.00	0.00	5,587.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
98d	COR B-011R3	33,332.00	33,332.00	0.00	0.00	33,332.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
98e	COR B-016R2	14,180.00	14,180.00	0.00	0.00	14,180.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
98f	COR P-005R	4,273.00	4,273.00	0.00	0.00	4,273.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
98g	COR B-017	1,941.00	1,941.00	0.00	0.00	1,941.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00

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98h	COR P-009	8,932.00	8,932.00	0.00	0.00	8,932.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
98i	COR B-008R3	15,525.00	15,525.00	0.00	0.00	15,525.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
98j	COR P-004R2	8,312.00	8,312.00	0.00	0.00	8,312.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
98k	COR P-018R2	4,954.00	4,954.00	0.00	0.00	4,954.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
98l	COR P-021	2,958.00	2,958.00	0.00	0.00	2,958.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
98m	COR B-032	1,713.00	1,713.00	0.00	0.00	1,713.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
98n	COR P-024R	1,536.00	1,536.00	0.00	0.00	1,536.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
98o	COR B-037	2,858.00	2,858.00	0.00	0.00	2,858.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
99	Contingency	7,038.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00%	7,038.00	0.00
99a	COR B-001	2,980.00	2,980.00	0.00	0.00	2,980.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
99b	COR B-004	-900.00	-900.00	0.00	0.00	-900.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
99c	COR B-007	780.00	780.00	0.00	0.00	780.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
99d	COR B-009R	3,625.00	3,625.00	0.00	0.00	3,625.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
99e	COR B-010R	260.00	260.00	0.00	0.00	260.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
99f	COR B-014	-3,758.00	-3,758.00	0.00	0.00	-3,758.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
99g	COR B-015	11,541.00	11,541.00	0.00	0.00	11,541.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
99h	COR P-002	896.00	896.00	0.00	0.00	896.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
99i	COR P-007	-9,685.00	-9,685.00	0.00	0.00	-9,685.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
99j	COR B-018	3,897.00	3,897.00	0.00	0.00	3,897.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
99k	COR P-001	14,310.00	14,310.00	0.00	0.00	14,310.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
99l	COR-P003R3	26,337.00	26,337.00	0.00	0.00	26,337.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
99m	COR P-012R	-1,977.00	-1,977.00	0.00	0.00	-1,977.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
99n	COR P-013	4,300.00	4,300.00	0.00	0.00	4,300.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
99o	COR B-019	-47,832.00	-47,832.00	0.00	0.00	-47,832.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
99p	COR B-022	6,636.00	6,636.00	0.00	0.00	6,636.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
99q	COR P-016	1,487.00	1,487.00	0.00	0.00	1,487.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
99r	COR P-011	241,233.00	241,233.00	0.00	0.00	241,233.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
99s	COR-B-012R	9,660.00	9,660.00	0.00	0.00	9,660.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
99t	COR B005	1,912.00	1,912.00	0.00	0.00	1,912.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
99u	COR B023	2,275.00	2,275.00	0.00	0.00	2,275.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
99v	COR B024	1,770.00	1,770.00	0.00	0.00	1,770.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
99w	COR P-017	-426.00	-426.00	0.00	0.00	-426.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00

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			FROM PREVIOUS APPLICATION (D + E)	THIS PERIOD					
99x	COR P018R	47,832.00	47,832.00	0.00	0.00	47,832.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
99y	COR B021R2	4,020.00	4,020.00	0.00	0.00	4,020.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
99z	COR B029	-592.00	-592.00	0.00	0.00	-592.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
99aa	COR B0321	3,273.00	3,273.00	0.00	0.00	3,273.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
99ab	COR P014R2	39,630.00	39,630.00	0.00	0.00	39,630.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
99ac	COR P023	6,839.00	6,839.00	0.00	0.00	6,839.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
99ad	COR P025	1,591.00	1,591.00	0.00	0.00	1,591.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
99ae	COR P-022	12,513.00	12,513.00	0.00	0.00	12,513.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
99af	COR P-026	1,884.00	1,884.00	0.00	0.00	1,884.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
99ag	COR P-030	5,369.00	0.00	5,369.00	0.00	5,369.00	100.00%	0.00	0.00
	GRAND TOTAL	\$17,971,480.00	\$17,706,700.91	\$224,922.04	\$0.00	\$17,931,622.95	99.78%	\$39,857.05	\$0.00



Value Focused. Community Minded. Quality Driven.

Michael Hart
Superintendent
District OR-1 Public Schools
425 F Street
Palmyra, NE 68418

September 10, 2024
Project No: 0000-112324.01
Invoice No: 294022

Construction Observation and Testing Services
Bennet & Palmyra Additions

Professional Services from August 05, 2024 to September 01, 2024

Unit Billing

Compression Test - Cylinder Inc Mold			
9/1/2024	8.0 Tests @ 33.00	264.00	
9/1/2024	8.0 Tests @ 33.00	264.00	
Handling Charge - Reserve Cylinder			
9/1/2024	2.0 Each @ 33.00	66.00	
9/1/2024	1.0 Each @ 33.00	33.00	
	Total Units	627.00	627.00

Billing Limits	Current	Prior	To-Date
Total Billings	627.00	98,518.38	99,145.38
Limit			99,940.00
Remaining			794.62
		Total this Invoice	<u>\$627.00</u>

Outstanding Invoices

Number	Date	Balance
288795	7/16/2024	466.25
291660	8/18/2024	3,118.75
Total		3,585.00

Construction Bills October 14, 2024

Vendor	Invoice Number	Amount
Al's Johns	93052	\$105.00
Al's Johns	93051	\$165.00
Al's Johns	92715	\$105.00
Al's Johns	93651	\$105.00
Al's Johns	93943	\$105.00
Benesch	294022	\$627.00
BIC	015	\$404,351.64
Blue Collar Contracting	1314	\$1,800.00
Byrne & Jones	71425	\$23,540.40
Clark & Enersen	25	\$12,501.70
Egan Supply	390570	\$14,659.89
Gana Trucking	82671	\$5,051.74
Menards	40527	\$17.03
Menards	41596	\$138.61
Midwest Door & Hardware	109045	\$231.00
Office Interiors & Design	12333	\$153,015.49
Push-Pedal-Pull	389900	\$120,251.00
Schaefer's	4R6989	\$2,494.00
Security Equipment, Inc	886414	\$2,520.00
Spray Equipment	788459	\$1,245.12
Spray Equipment	788457	\$676.00
Spray Equipment	788456	\$12,233.20
Spray Equipment	788455	\$12,233.20
	Total:	\$768,172.02

Construction Bills October 14, 2024

Vendor	Invoice Number	Amount
Al's Johns	93052	\$105.00
Al's Johns	93051	\$165.00
Al's Johns	92715	\$105.00
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Spray Equipment	788457	\$676.00
Spray Equipment	788456	\$12,233.20
Spray Equipment	788455	\$12,233.20
	Total:	\$768,172.02

Designated Bill Summary
Superintendent Report: Regular Board Meeting:
Date: Monday, October 14, 2024

TO: Palmyra District OR-1 BOE

From: Michael Hart

Re: Designated Bill Summary Report for BOE meeting

- Next month's *regular* board meeting is scheduled for **Monday, November 11, 2024 at 7:00 p.m.** at Palmyra High School in the media center.

A. Consent Agenda Expenditures

Construction Account Claims:

- **\$768,172.02**
 - *Please note: These claims are now included in the Consent Agenda of the regular board meeting due to the discontinuation of the CMAR special monthly meetings effective September 9, 2024.*
 - *Please see the itemized list below.*

Depreciation Fund Claims:

- None for this month

Bond Fund Claims:

- None for this month

Special Building Claims:

- None for this month

2022 Construction Account Claims:

Construction Bills October 14, 2024		
Vendor	Invoice Number	Amount
Al's Johns	93052	\$105.00
Al's Johns	93051	\$165.00
Al's Johns	92715	\$105.00
Al's Johns	93651	\$105.00
Al's Johns	93943	\$105.00
Benesh	294022	\$627.00
BIC	Pay Application # 015	\$404,351.64
Blue Collar Contracting	1314	\$1,800.00
Byrne & Jones	71425	\$23,540.40
Clark & Enersen	# 25	\$12,501.70
Egan Supply	390570	\$14,659.89

Gana Trucking	82671	\$5,051.74
Menards	40527	\$17.03
Menards	41596	\$138.61
Midwest Door & Hardware	109045	\$231.00
Office Interiors & Design	12333	\$153,015.49
Push-Pedal-Pull	389900	\$120,251.00
Schaefer's	4R6989	\$2,494.00
Security Equipment, Inc	886414	\$2,520.00
Spray Equipment	788459	\$1,245.12
Spray Equipment	788457	\$676.00
Spray Equipment	788456	\$12,233.20
Spray Equipment	788455	\$12,233.20
Total:		\$768,172.02

General Fund Claims:

Total claims: \$173,908.33 with an additional credit card payment of \$1,264.38, this expense was for supplies = \$175,172.71 total claims.

- **Access Systems Leasing: \$3,495.30** - Copiers at the elementary and high school
- **Amazon Capital Services: \$4,936.29** - Elem & HS supplies
- **Apple Store: \$2,699.00** - New laptop for HS Principal
- **Casey's: \$2,980.95** – Bus and vehicle fuel expenses / misc.
- **Craig Resources: \$12,342.20** - Nursing contracted services
- **Egan Supply Co: \$1,152.88** - HS Supplies
- **ESU#4: \$2,701.28** - Professional development, contracted services and tech support
- **Facility Advocates: \$2,017.00** - Elem and High school HVAC repairs
- **J.W. Pepper & Sons: \$1,190.06** - Music supplies
- **Menards: \$2,283.14** - Elem and HS Supplies
- **Midwest Bus Repairs: \$14,771.08** - Bus Repairs (This is for several months of repairs including from the summer).
- **Nebraska City Utilities: \$23,061.39** - Utilities.
- **Palmyra Activity Fund: \$2,336.72** - HS Supplies
- **Pioneer Cleaning: \$21,872.00** - Elem and HS Cleaning
- **Shaffer Communication: \$395.55** - Bus repairs
- **Village of Bennet: \$2,066.63** - Water, electricity, and sewer bill
- **Village of Palmyra: \$4,045.02** – Water and sewer bill
- **Whitehead Oil: \$2,287.59** - Diesel fuel

Gym

Self
Care

Play
ground



Come see what we've been up to!



COMMUNITY OPEN HOUSE

Bennet Elementary

Wednesday, October 2
5:00pm-6:30pm

Palmyra High School

Friday, October 4
4:00pm-5:30pm



After you check out the updates at Palmyra High School, be sure to head over to support your panthers at the Homecoming Football Game!

Palmyra Junior / Senior High School Open House Information

Friday, October 4, 2024

PHS Tour Areas of Interest

Main Entrance North:

- The main entrance to the school building is now on the north side of the building. This covered entrance allows students and families a clear and efficient way to enter the building accommodates better traffic flow and effective student pick-up and drop-off. The east student parking lot has also been resurfaced and restriped.

Career Technical Education (CTE) Shop Areas:

- **FFA:** This shop area is now able to provide space to expand learning in the areas of animal care, aquaponics, botany, and agronomy. More comprehensive food science labs can be conducted and additional space is now available to store things like flowers, eggs, animal feed, and bedding, and facilitate and host FFA activities.
- **FCS:** Family consumer science classes will be able to use these spaces for expanded FCCLA activities, student and community presentations, conferences, and collaborative student learning activities
- **Welding, Construction, Finish Room:** This shop area will be able to facilitate expanded welding instruction, enhanced construction projects, more diverse plasma cutting, and product “finishing” in the paint booth.
 - These areas also have overhead door access to accommodate various vehicles and larger projects and supplies can be brought in for repair, instruction, and improvement.

Student Commons:

- This expanded student area eliminates the need for our students to have to eat in the auxiliary gym. This area also allows for various classrooms to come together for presentations and the space can accommodate larger groups for team activities, luncheons, award nights, etc..
 - Please note: The area with the gray tiles nearest the main office will include highlights of the communities of Bennet, Douglas, and Palmyra. This section will be finished in the near future.

East Classroom Additions

- Five classrooms were added on the first floor of the building. On the first floor are three social studies rooms, a science room, and a community classroom (more information about the community classroom is listed below). On the second floor of the east addition are five classrooms. The classrooms contain a special education classroom, a foreign language classroom, and three English classrooms.

Community Classroom

- This area near the CTE shops on the first floor can be used to host adult education activities, accommodate large group student testing events, and provide space for local community organizations to use as requested.

Expanded Office Area

- The office now has added space for student interventions and family support, a conference room, staff restrooms, a staff work area, and a nurse’s office to better serve student and family needs. This area also has a secure entrance to maximize student and staff safety.

Digital Media Room

- This area, located in the old music room, allows our students to create digital content and produce student-centered presentations for community information and distribution.

Student Music Areas:

- The expanded music areas (located in the old shop area) allow our vocal and instrumental students their own space to hold classes and prepare for events. These areas allow vocal and instrumental classes to be held simultaneously, adding flexibility to student schedules.

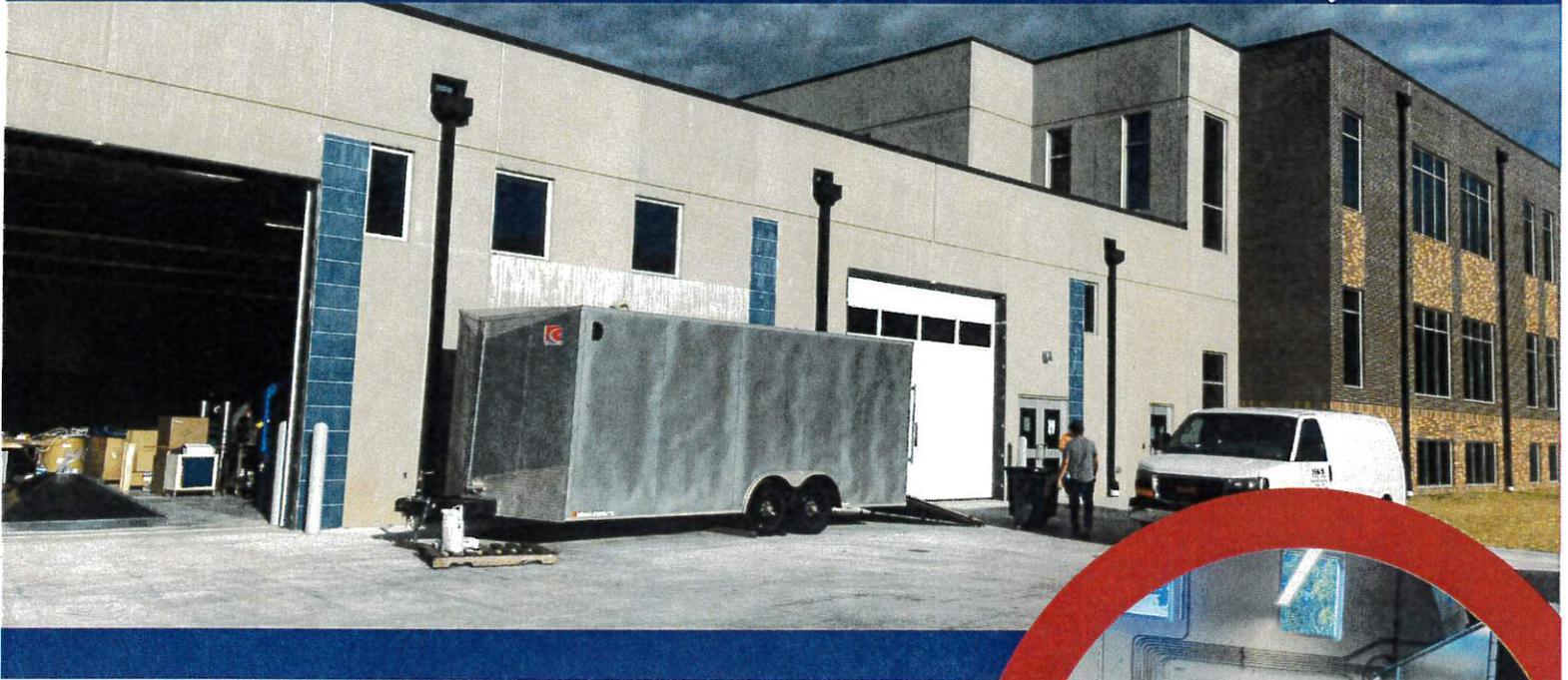
Student Training Room:

- Located near the old band room, this area allows student-athletes a space for injury treatment, prevention, and recovery. Students will now be able to get taped or provided physical therapy in room designed for that purpose.

Fitness Center with Future Community Access:

- This area, located on the garden level on the east side of the new addition, includes enhanced fitness equipment for students and extra space for activities and classes. Community access to this space will also be added sometime soon. The addition of this space also allows activities like high school wrestling and cheerleading to not have to travel to Bennet. This benefit enhances student safety by reducing the amount of students traveling before or after school to the Bennet gym. Because of this reduced traffic, the Bennet gym is now more accessible to elementary before and after-school programs and community activities.

Come see what we've been up to!



You're invited to a special showing of our new and improved CTE classrooms at Palmyra High School!

CTE TOUR

Palmyra High School

**Monday, September 30
6:30pm-7:30pm**



Please enter thru the main entrance on the north side of the building.



Business Leader CTE Area Tour
Monday, September 30th 2024
6:30 - 7:30 p.m.
Palmyra Junior / Senior High School
Agenda for Tonight:

- **Welcome and Introductions:**
- **Kudos:**
 - Contractors
 - Staff
 - Students
 - BOE
 - Community
- **Purpose of Tonight's Meeting:**
 - **Goals:**
 - Focus on Student Needs
 - Acknowledge our Challenges and Current Realities
 - Embrace Opportunities
 - Foster Economic Development
 - Maximize Resources
 - Facilitate Solutions
 - Practice Proactive Planning
 - Engage Stakeholders
 - Balance Community Interests
 - Clear and Consistent Communication
- **District Information:**
 - **District Mission Statement:**
 - Together, we prepare our students to successfully meet the challenges of the future.
 - **District Goals:**
 - [Strategic Goal 1:](#) District OR-1 Public Schools will provide the facilities needed to be competitive with other area schools in athletics and fine arts programs.
 - [Strategic Goal 2:](#) District OR-1 Public Schools will foster a unified community.
 - [Strategic Goal 3:](#) The District OR-1 Schools District will continuously implement (academic) programs and the curriculum needed to remain competitive with other area schools.
- **Business Questions and Answers Review:**



Business Leader CTE Area Tour
Monday, September 30th 2024
6:30 - 7:30 p.m.

Palmyra Junior / Senior High School

- See the questions and responses listed below
- **Construction Update**
 - Added additional classrooms on the northeast side of the building.
 - Expanded the current “commons area” space near the main office, added extra restrooms, and expanded the main office area.
 - Built and expanded Career Technical Education (CTE) areas to the southeast side of the building.
 - Relocated the current music area into the old shop area.
 - Relocated the old weight room /fitness center and added increased community access to this area.
 - Repurposed the current weight deck area in the auxiliary gym
 - Improved the northeast parking and north-side traffic flow
- **Open House Information:**
 - **Friday, October 4th from 5:00 - 6:30 p.m.**
- **Moving Forward:**
 - Community Involvement and Engagement
 - Collaboration
 - Shared Learning
 - Advisory Meeting
 - Best practices
 - Career and Workplace Readiness

CTE Area Tour:

- FFA Shop Area
- Welding, Construction, and Finishing Area

Questions:

Next Meeting:

Thanks for coming tonight!



Business Leader CTE Area Tour

Monday, September 30th 2024

6:30 - 7:30 p.m.

Palmyra Junior / Senior High School

What we heard from our Local Business Leaders:

What employee work skills and interpersonal characteristics bring the most positive impact to an organization or business?

- Showing up and being “present” at the job / work site.
- “People” skills and the ability to positively connect and serve others with a positive attitude and strong work ethic.
- Soft skills and intangible things like friendliness, respect for others, property, and self.
- Exposure to different problems/ challenges/ and possible solutions
- Problem solving skills
- Have some passion and care about the job and company
- Simple mechanics about how things work.
- Time management
- Knowing that it takes a lot of work “behind the scenes” to make things run smoothly and efficiently.
- Learning how things work together / collaboration
- Order of operations and understanding “cause and effect”
- The fine art of customer service.

What are some of the biggest current and future challenges of local businesses and our workforces?

- Not wanting to start at the bottom (competition and unrealistic expectations for initial starting wages)
- Need for constant affirmation for basic expectations (“participation trophy” mentality)
- Sense of entitlement for some workers. “It’s all about me” mentality.
- Lack of accountability and professionalism
- Lack of situational awareness (language, dress code, dress code, etc.)
- Lack of flexibility (I don’t/ can’t/ won’t work weekend or evenings)
- Not willing to “get dirty” and do what it takes to get the job done.
- Not my job! Unwillingness to be a team player.
- Distractions from social media and constant need for attention
- Turnover of employees and employees not even showing up for job interviews or sticking with a position long enough to know if it might work out.
- Want to push the “easy” button.



Business Leader CTE Area Tour

Monday, September 30th 2024

6:30 - 7:30 p.m.

Palmyra Junior / Senior High School

- Lack of initiative and lack of problem solving skills and applicability to other tasks and projects.
- This is just a job... not a career.
- Not asking for help or assistance if needed
- Dependability and not showing up for work or on time.
- Willingness to work / initial expenses for training and then employees leave

How can we get local businesses and industry leaders more involved in creating sustainable partnerships with our schools?

- More “work based” learning opportunities
- More opportunities for public speaking and public connections and interactions
- Being bilingual.. Learning another language
- Learning money skills and basic personal finance
- Workplace safety
- Conflict resolution
- Could create a greenhouse
- Learn to work with power tools
- Learn preventative maintenance
- Learn CAD and fabrication methods
- Learn to fix equipment by yourself applied math skills
- Develop comprehensive and collaborative plans on how to effectively replace business owners / leaders who are leaving their workplace and what to do if no one replaces these leaders.

What types of equipment and training (and base academic skills) are needed for your specific business?

- Opportunities to try and explore different career and work place opportunities
- Give students real life experiences
- Don't be afraid to ask questions
- This is a process. Let's look at a short term and long term planning.
- Help students learn to dream and allow them to take risks. Failure will happen from time to time... how do we learn from it?
- Help kids understand that “there is more out there”



Robert Louis Kempkes
(1/26/1946 - 09/04/1967)

Corporal Robert Louis Kempkes:

- Cpl. Bob L. Kempkes graduated from Palmyra High School in 1964.
- Bob joined the Marines after graduation and was killed in action in Vietnam on **September 4, 1967**.
- Cpl. Kempkes served with Company M, 3rd Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment, 3rd Marine Division, Third Marine Amphibious Force
- 3rd Battalion, 4th Marines (3/4) is a United States Marine Corps infantry battalion. This unit is nicknamed the "Thundering Third".
- The unit is based at the Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center, Twentynine Palms, California.



HONORED ON PANEL 25E, LINE 103 OF THE WALL

ROBERT LOUIS KEMPKEs

WALL NAME: **ROBERT L KEMPKEs** RANK: **CPL**

PANEL / LINE: **25E/103**

DATE OF BIRTH: **01/26/1946**

CASUALTY PROVINCE: **QUANG TRI**

DATE OF CASUALTY: **09/04/1967**

HOME OF RECORD: **PALMYRA**

COUNTY OF RECORD: **Otoe County**

STATE: **NE**

BRANCH OF SERVICE: **MARINE CORPS**

[VIEW ALL PHOTOS \(2\)](#)





Honoring the Past and Connecting to the Present:

Below are pictures of one of our Career Technical Education (CTE) classes removing the Cpl. Robert L. Kempkes plaque from under the west football field flagpole at Palmyra High School on **September 16th, 2022**. This plaque was initially put in place many years ago to honor **Marine Cpl. Bob L. Kempkes** for his service and bravery.

This plaque, which had been on display near the flagpole on the football field west of the high school, was recently moved (with permission from the family) to the Olson Sports Complex for others to enjoy and honor. The relocation of this plaque is not only a tribute to Cpl. Kempkes, but it also serves as a visual reminder of the selfless service, courage, and sacrifices of all of our service men and women.

This honorary act of carefully removing the plaque from its original location demonstrates our students' appreciation and respect for those who faithfully served our country and paid the ultimate price for freedom. A better understanding of the story and person behind the plaque helps to reinforce the importance of family connections, community engagement, and civic service.

The pictures below show PHS students carefully removing the Cpl. Bob L. Kempkes plaque on Friday, September 16th, 2022.



The picture below shows our students proudly holding the plaque that was removed for relocation to the Olson Complex. **This picture was taken September 16th, 2022.**



The removal of the Kempkes Plaque provided a strong intergenerational community connection and an incredible learning opportunity for our students. As a follow-up to the relocation project, Robert and Charleen (sister of Cpl. Bob L. Kempkes) Volker came to school to talk with our CTE students at PHS about the life and stories of Cpl. Kempkes. The picture shown below was taken on **Tuesday, September 20th, 2022.**



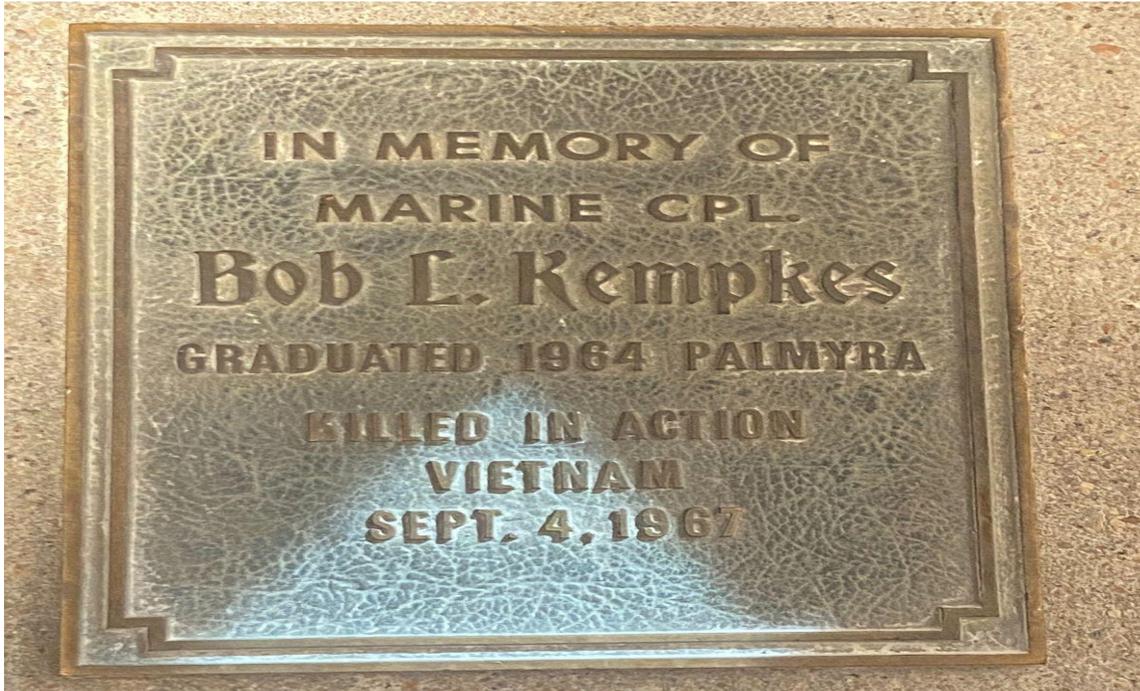
During the visit to the high school on **Tuesday, September 20th, 2022**, Charleen was able to locate the graduation photo of her brother in the “gallery of graduates” archives located on the second-floor hallway at PHS. In the picture shown below, Charleen is standing near the graduation picture of her brother Bobby: Class of 1964! Go Panthers!



In the picture below: Charleen Volker stands with the Kempkes memorial plaque, a picture of Cpl. Bobby Kempkes, and the PHS students who helped preserve the plaque for future placement at the Olson Sports Complex. This picture was taken on **Tuesday, September 20th, 2022**.



The photo below is a close-up picture of the plaque after it was removed from the west football field on **September 16th, 2022.**



The two pictures below show the new location of the Kempkes plaque. In one photo, Charleen Volker, (sister of Cpl. Robert Kempkes) is pictured standing next to the relocated plaque and the other picture is the Olson Sports Complex commons area facing east. These pictures were taken on **Wednesday, October 2nd, 2024.**



District OR-1 Option Enrollment Appendix for 2025.2026. Updated 10.14.2024

PROGRAM / GRADE LEVEL	PROGRAM CAPACITY	PROJECTED ENROLLMENT	NO. OF OPTION STUDENTS
Kindergarten	60	56	4
First	60	50	10
Second	66	50	16
Third	66	54	12
Fourth	66	60	6
Fifth	66	62	4
Building Capacity (K-5) Bennet Elementary	384	332	52
Level I Elementary Special Education (Resource)	35	35	0 - *Program at capacity
Level II and Level III Elementary Special Education (Life Skills, Autism, BD)	5	6	0 - *Program at capacity
Sixth	75	70	5
Seventh	75	61	14
Eighth	75	50	25
Level Middle School Special Education Program	28	28	0 - *Program at capacity
Level II and Level III Middle School Special Education (Life Skills, Autism, BD, etc.)	3	3	0 - *Program at capacity
Building Capacity, Middle School Attendance Center	225	181	44
Ninth	75	50	25
Tenth	75	50	25
Eleventh	75	50	25
Twelfth	75	45	30
Level I High School Special Education Program	23	23	0 - *Program at capacity
Level II and Level III Middle School Special Education (Life Skills, Autism, BD, Aspire Academy)	5	5	0 - *Program at capacity
Building Capacity, Sr. High School Attendance Center	300	195	105



NEBRASKA SCHOOL SAFETY & SECURITY 2024 FALL NEWS



BADGE RECOGNITION

Let your school community know how you keep schools safe and secure by earning a badge certifying your efforts to "Place School Safety First"!

FINISH READING ON PG. 2



WELCOME

The School Safety & Security Team is here to provide guidance and support to all Nebraska schools in prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery efforts to keep educational communities safe and secure.

Digital Parent Academy



Preparing Parents to Be More Digitally Wise with Their Children

SUBSCRIBE TO OUR YouTube CHANNEL

The Digital Parent Academy is available in a four-part series to view on our channel. Play the introduction video on your digital billboards to strike parents' interests to become digitally wise!

FINISH READING ON PG. 3

COMING SOON

School Safety Summit October 17, in Kearney. See panel discussions, breakouts, and the first Awardee of the Nebraska School Safety & Security Award.

Check out all the other new training opportunities coming from the NDE Safety Team!

SEE THE OFFERINGS ON PGS. 4, 5, 6





BADGE CERTIFICATION OPPORTUNITY

Letting School Communities Know...

...your school or school district is identified and recognized by the Nebraska Department of Education for meeting the highest standards in school safety and security. Schools across Nebraska are putting in the hard work to complete an Emergency Operations Plan, required trainings, drills, and all the other best practices to "Place School Safety First". The NDE School Safety Team wants to highlight this commitment to ensure the safety and security of students, staff, and visitors with the ability to earn a Diamond, Gold, or Silver badge.

A Diamond badge, earned by scoring 95% or better, certifies a school or district is fulfilling the requirements or best practices supporting the four pillars of school safety: prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery. A Gold badge recognizes schools in the 80 to 94 percentiles, and a Silver badge is identified in the 70 to 79 percentiles. Simply use the QR code or URL below to fill out the badge certification checklist to be recognized today!

We would like to congratulate the first three school districts to earn their Diamond Badge status by completing the form right after Administration Days when the recognition system was announced at NDE Day. **Scribner-Snyder, Lawrence-Nelson, and Kearney Public schools earned the Diamond Certification Badge to "Place School Safety First" reassuring their communities that they have the highest possible safety standards being practiced in their districts.**

The Diamond Badges will be delivered to display on their schools' windows, digital websites, and social media platforms to continually remind any guests to their buildings or digital media sites that they are doing all they can to protect citizens at their school. Learning can only happen in schools when we are in safe environments. Fill out the Badge Certification Checklist today to honor your school community's commitment to safety!

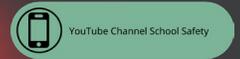
Click the URL for the Badge Certification Checklist to recognize your schools hard work in school safety and security: <https://forms.gle/wvBKpjM4NqjS8uk6A>

Or scan the QR code to quickly answer the yes/no questions on your mobile device:



Place School Safety First

Subscribe



Join to get the best school safety content!

Newest Content: Four-Part Digital Parent Academy & Webinar Series After a Suicide.

The NDE School Safety YouTube Channel contains a variety of content that is available for everyone at: <https://www.youtube.com/@ndeschoolsafety9410>.

Parents can watch the four-part Digital Parent Academy in small bites to become more aware of how digital media platforms are designed to manipulate, misinform, and emotionally exploit us. Ultimately, it is about teaching parents how to be more digitally fit to help with their child's virtual and overall well-being! Digital platforms are impacting the social, mental, and emotional well-being of youth. It is up to the parents to harness digital nuances and make those tough decisions on how to influence their child's digital life. The Parent Academy series will aide them with some tools to improve digital practices at home. Another series is Anne Moss Rogers

webinars "*After a Suicide*" which she created for us at the end of last school year. For anyone who missed the three different webinars they are now available on our safety channel.

A great group of videos to build student relationships and character is Steve Hartman's Kindness 101 series. The videos on compassion, empathy, friendship, inclusion, and much more are great three-to-five-minute videos to get conversations started for adults to use with students around the respective character-building topics.

Additional videos on Swatting, Safe2Help Nebraska, Narcan, Substance Use, PFA-S, and EOP's are also here to help school communities. If we are missing something on our channel, please let us know or contact me directly at jay.martin@nebraska.gov.

Get Ready There is New School Safety Material

The Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) online Learning Management System (LMS) in Canvas will be done this fall. School Safety Teams will have access to the EOP template and the 12 modules to complete a high-quality product. The LMS will give teams the flexibility to train and work on their EOP when they have the time. This is a huge step in helping schools have better outcomes when a real situation happens.

Another Option for School Safety Infrastructure Funding: Qualified Capital Purpose Undertaking Fund (QCPUF).

Ten million was distributed in the School Safety-Related Infrastructure Grant. However, if you need additional funds or did not get some of these funds, another alternative is QCPUF. A district would need to include any tax asking in their budget for the year, which is required to be approved on or before September 30th each year.

School safety infrastructure has been added as an allowable use under the QCPUF:

The QCPUF Fund is a taxing fund and not part of the \$1.05 cap. Effective April 19, 2016, the tax levy for this fund is restricted to 3¢. The tax levy for QCPUF projects in place prior to April 19, 2016, remains at 5.2¢. The levy may exceed the 3¢ levy limit if valuation has decreased from the previous year bond(s) were issued, and the bond principal and interest obligation cannot be met.

School Safety & Security Summit October 17th in Kearney.

Keynote Lisa Hamp Virginia Tech shooting survivor will provide lessons learned and the need for resiliency. Summit theme is *Response* where we will have panel discussions on Swatting and Tornado incidents. There will be breakout sessions around a variety of topics. School Safety Teams, first responders, and any other school personnel are welcome!



First School Safety & Security Award will be handed out at the School Safety Summit in Kearney on October 17, 2024. The Safety Summit Committee received several nominee's and had the difficult task of selecting a recipient. We want to thank all the nominees for their sacrifice in the safety and security of others. We have many people doing great things in school safety across Nebraska. The NDE, School Safety Team appreciates all the hard work being done to protect school communities!

A blue rectangular graphic with a white QR code on the left. To the right of the QR code, the text reads "SCHOOL SAFETY & SECURITY SUMMIT INFO" in white. Below the QR code, it says "School Safety Summit". To the right of the QR code, it says "REGISTRATION OPENS IN SEPTEMBER" in white.

The logo for "SAFE2HELP NEBRASKA" in green and blue. To the right is a QR code. Below the logo and QR code, the phone number "833-980-SAFE (7233)" is displayed in green.

SAFE2HELPNE.ORG





Training Coming

Digital Presentations for Students, Staff, and/or Parents

- 📺 August 8th Johnson County Central – Digital Parenting
- 📺 August 12th Sargent - School Safety/Digital with Staff
- 📺 August 13th Cambridge Schools & Parents – Digital Day
- 📺 April 14th Scribner-Snyder- Digital Parenting
- 📺 August 15th Johnson Brock Schools & Parents – Digital Day
- 📺 August 19th Homer Schools - Staff & Digital Parenting
- 📺 August 20th Winnebago – Student/Staff/Parents -Digital
- 📺 September 12th Neligh-Oakdale School/Parents-Digital Day
- 📺 September 13th Dorchester – Student/Staff/Parents Digital
- 📺 September 18th Wasua School & Parents – Digital Day
- 📺 September 19th St. Bernard Catholic – Digital Parenting
- 📺 September 26th & 27th MTSS Conference in Kearney
- 📺 September 27th Afterschool Conference in Kearney
- 📺 September 30th Educational Planning Conference, LaVista
- 📺 October 2nd Thayer Central School/Parents – Digital Day
- 📺 October 9th Bruning Meridian School/Parents -Digital Day
- 📺 October 17th SCHOOL SAFETY SUMMIT, KEARNEY
- 📺 November 4th Pawnee City School & Parent – Digital Day
- 📺 November 20th to 22nd State Education Conference, Omaha

Psychological First Aid for Schools

- 📺 September 16th 17th – ESU 13 Melissa Brymer
- 📺 September 18th – Virtual Refresher – Sally Carlson
- 📺 September 19th 20th – ESU 9 Melissa Brymer
- 📺 November 6th - Virtual Refresher – Sally Carlson

Suicide Prevention

- 📺 August 28th 12:30 to 2:00 CT School Procedures for Suicide Risk Assessment -Zoom
- 📺 August 29th 9:00 to 10:30 CT School Procedures for Suicide Risk Assessment - Zoom

Threat Assessment – Hybrid Sessions

- 📺 October 24th 25th – Basic ESU 4 or Zoom
- 📺 November 7th – Level 2 ESU 5 or Zoom

Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) LMS Training

- 📺 October the Learning Management System self-paced online learning will be available in Canvas.

Tuning-In to Better Mental Health with Music

- 📺 September 23rd 4pm to 5:30pm CT. Dr. Barbara Minton virtual training and a free flash drive with Calum Graham’s music and her research booklet.





NDE, School Safety & Security and Mental Health Teams Bring You...

Tuning-In to Better Mental Health with Music

Dr. Barbara Minton will present a live virtual training via zoom on Monday,

23 SEPTEMBER 2024
4 PM - 5:30 PM CT

This program aims to enhance students' capacity for calm, focused attention, and better self-regulation through the power of music. By utilizing brain responses to tempo, frequency, timbre, and tonality, along with neuroscience research, music has been composed to improve the cognitive and emotional well-being of students, ultimately creating better student outcomes.



Register here

<https://forms.office.com/r/yvXSnf1Btk>



After the training listen how to receive a **FREE** flash drive with the composed song files and Dr. Minton's research booklet to begin using with your students to optimize their functioning in school!

Register with the QR Code or link. Registered individuals will receive an emailed ZOOM link



Dr. Barbara Minton

Psychologist, Board Certified in Neurofeedback



Calum Graham

International Acoustic Guitar Musician



2024-2025

Psychological First Aid for Schools (PFA-S) Team Remote Refresher Training



The goal of utilizing PFA-S is to help strengthen the team response and recovery process for dealing with hazards, threats, and incidents. The PFA-S response can assist students and staff in recovering from distressful reactions to a crisis and in building adaptive coping skills. PFA-S training is provided remotely through ZOOM and at no cost to schools and ESUs.

Training Components



Examine the role of PFA-S in the Nebraska School Safety Model



Review the 8 Core Actions of PFA-S



Complete Tabletop Exercises Tied to Standard Response Protocols



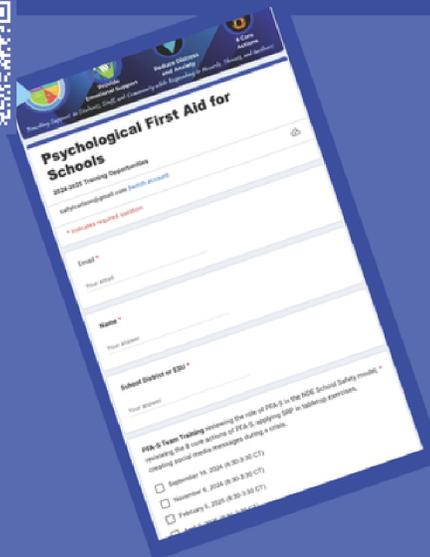
Develop Social Media Messages for Your Team

Training Schedule - Register for one date:

- **September 18, 2024** (8:30-3:30 CT)
- **November 6, 2024** (8:30-3:30 CT)
- **February 5, 2025** (8:30-3:30 CT)
- **April 9, 2025** (8:30-3:30 CT)



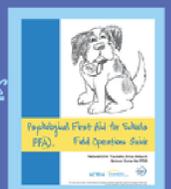
[Click here to Register for Training:](#)



Want to learn more about PFA-S? [Click here](#)



[Manual for all PFA-S Trainings](#)



For more information, please visit us online at <https://www.education.ne.gov/safety/psychological-first-aid-for-school>



Email us at PFA @ Nebraska.gov



NDE School Safety Suicide Prevention



*Back to School Zoom Training
for School Mental Health Professionals*

School Procedures for Suicide Risk Assessment

**"One of the most important things you can do on
this earth is let people know they are not alone."
Shannon L. Alder**

Participants will gain an understanding of:

- current suicide concerns for youth
- suicide risk factors and warning signs
- steps for developing suicide risk assessment procedures
- two evidence-based risk assessment tools for schools (SBQ-R & Columbia-SSRS)
- resources to support suicide prevention in schools

Remote/Zoom Training Opportunities



**Wednesday
August 28, 2024
12:30-2:00 PM CT**

OR



**Thursday
August 29, 2024
9:00-10:30 AM CT**

All training is provided at no charge...

**Register here for either
of the Zoom trainings:**



[Registration Link](#)

or copy this link into your browser:
<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeNrll3bxe7iKqIXVZICJ8pWPVx6PBAB7FZZwNQ-6YwUGsUEg/viewform>

Training Offered by NDE School
Safety Suicide Prevention Team:



SuicidePrevention@Nebraska.gov
OV

Nebraska Suicide Awareness/Prevention

Approved Training for School Personnel



Nebraska LB 705 - §79-2 146, Effective for 2023-2024 school year

- School districts must provide at least one hour of behavioral and mental health training with a focus on suicide awareness and prevention each year for **any** school staff member who has contact with students.
 - The school district superintendent is responsible for the selection of the annual training.
- * indicates there may be a fee with training. All Trainings are approved by NSSPC, NAMI, and AFSP.*

Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST)

- Intensive 2 day, in-person interactive, and practice-dominated course.
- Designed to help recognize and review risk, and intervene to prevent the immediate risk of suicide.
- *A fee may be charged for the training.



Building a Suicide-Safe School Community

- Offers free online interactive training designed for faculty and staff at all levels within schools.
- Equips staff for proactive prevention, intervention, and postvention.
- Allows choice of 3 different training module options.



Hazelden Lifelines Prevention Staff Training

- This staff training component is part of the Hazelden Lifelines Prevention program, along with student curriculum and parent training modules.
- Training is presented in-person by the school's designated staff.
- Manual includes slides for the presentation, with NDE PowerPoint available.



Kognito

- Interactive online one-hour role-play simulation training. Participants may choose from three simulations: At-Risk for Elementary, Middle, or High School Educators.
- Certificates are provided upon completion.
- *Districts responsible for the cost of training.



Making Educators Partners in Youth Suicide Prevention

- One-hour, free online training program designed in a series of modules with videos and interactive activities.
- Educators are taught their responsibilities for identifying and referring potentially suicidal youth.
- Includes links to extensive supplemental resources.



Question, Persuade, Refer (QPR)

- QPR is approved through in-person or online trainings.
- The training is a 1-2 hour education program designed to teach personnel the warning signs of a suicide crisis and how to respond. Free in-person training may be available through trained facilitators with your Behavioral Health Regions or ESU; contact them for details.
- Certificates of completion will be provided.



Youth Mental Health First Aid

- One day training through in-person or blended model.
- Focus on understanding and responding to mental health challenges including suicidal ideation among children and adolescents ages 12-18.
- *May require training fee depending on the training facilitator.



Youth Suicide: Awareness, Prevention and Postvention

- Jason Flatt Act - Nebraska through Safe Schools
- *Online training offered free for districts enrolled in Safe Schools (Vector Solutions), or districts can utilize direct bill for payment.
- Interactive training overviewing prevention, intervention and postvention procedures.





Anne Moss Rogers

National Suicide Prevention Specialist

Anne Moss Rogers presented three webinars in April and May of 2024 for NDE School Safety. These webinars are now available on the NDE School Safety YouTube channel. The links to the videos and the resource folders she provided are below. Each recording is about an hour long.

Anne Moss Rogers is a mental health and suicide prevention speaker, trainer, and consultant. After her 20-year-old son, Charles died by suicide in 2015, Anne Moss wrote her award-winning memoir, Diary of a Broken Mind and in 2020, she co-wrote the best seller, Emotionally Naked: A Teacher's Guide to Preventing Suicide and Recognizing Students at Risk with Dr. Kimberly O'Brien. Anne Moss currently lives in Richmond, VA.



Coping Strategies for Grief and Loss: Healing in a School Community After a Suicide Loss

 **Link:** <https://youtu.be/soOSyu2V9W8>

Webinar Description:

This presentation included Anne Moss's practical steps on managing the pain of suicide loss facilitated by a mother who lost a son and others to suicide. It includes case studies and videos of how educators have managed grief from suicide while also fostering community healing.



Addiction and the Tragic Link to Suicide: Awareness and Prevention Strategies for Schools

 **Link:** <https://youtu.be/JURqUMXreSc>

Webinar Description:

This presentation dispels common myths about suicide and substance misuse while delivering a message of hope, and empowering regular humans with the skills to recognize and help prevent this threat to life.



Spotting Students at Risk of Suicide: Signs and Early Intervention Strategies for Grades PK-6

 **Link:** <https://youtu.be/VcuFaz3Qvhs>

Webinar Description:

Schools have something few other environments have and that's opportunity for early intervention and genuine human connection. This presentation focuses on how we can leverage these opportunities to bolster a culture of student wellness and build early resilience to prevent suicide.



Threat Assessment

BY: MARIO SCALARO & DENISE BULLING

BASIC THREAT ASSESSMENT

July 30/31, 2024

ESU 3 -6949 So 110th Street,
LaVista plus Zoom

[Registration Here](#)

October 24/25, 2024

ESU 4 - 2301 Dahlke Ave,
Auburn plus Zoom

[Registration Here](#)

January 29/30, 2025

ESU 8 -110 W 3rd St, Neligh plus
Zoom

[Registration Here](#)

CONTACT INFO

CONTACT Deb Hericks

EMAIL dhericks@esucc.org

PHONE 402-597-4843

[COST REIMBURSEMENT FORM](#)

LEVEL 2 - THREAT COMMUNICATION

November 7, 2024

ESU 5 - 900 W Court St,
Beatrice plus Zoom

[Registration Here](#)

February 12, 2025

ESU 16, 314 W 1st St, Ogallala
plus Zoom

[Registration Here](#)

LEVEL 3 - THREAT MANAGEMENT

December 3, 2024

ESU 16, 314 W 1st St, Ogallala
plus Zoom

[Registration Here](#)

March 21, 2025

ESU 6 -210 5th St, Milford plus
Zoom

[Registration Here](#)

Basic Threat Assessment

Threat assessment and management evolved from practices used to assess and manage potential risk of violence. This K-12 school team training will help your school form or enhance the team that will focus on identifying, assessing and managing the risk/threat of violence posed by students, staff, and community members toward the school community. Schools are encouraged to participate with a team of at least 4 members (e.g., administrators, faculty/staff, security or law enforcement partner, and mental health partner). The purpose of threat assessment teams is distinct from issues addressed by safety teams, student behavior teams, and crisis response teams, though all of these school teams may be implicated in strategies for monitoring and managing potential threats. Teams will leave the workshop with sample protocols to adapt for use in their school environment. The objectives for this two-day training include:

1. Identify and use the principles of threat assessment and management in school settings
2. Demonstrate effective strategies for assessing risk
3. Formulate strategies for monitoring and managing risk
4. Describe effective threat assessment and management protocols appropriate for school settings
5. Apply principles of threat assessment and management to case examples

Level 2 - Threat Communication

Prerequisite: Need to have taken Threat Assessment - Level I Training

- Dealing with assessment challenges
- Assessing emerging issues related to threat assessment (e.g., extremism, social media, mental illness)
- Managing cases over time
- Coordinating management strategies with community resources

Level 3 - Threat Management

*Prerequisite: Need to have taken Threat Assessment - Level I Training**

During this one-day training, participants will explore practical threat management strategies for use in school settings. Different interventions will be discussed that are appropriate for use with students or adults/staff.

Effective interventions are built on good information and feedback that can be difficult to obtain due to privacy or legal barriers. Training will include strategies for addressing these barriers.

Participants will enhance their ability to obtain good information via interactions with subjects, witnesses, and targets by enhanced elicitation skill building activities.



NO-COST CPR/AED TRAINING SIGN-UP

FUNDING FOR THE THE NO-COST TRAINING EXPIRES 9/30/24!



Training Partners:

- Children’s Nebraska- Coordinating Statewide On-line training, Matt Carper
- ESU 4- Felicia Martin: fmartin@esu4.net
- Northeast District Health Department- Peggy Triggs: peggy@nnphd.org
- Panhandle District Health Department- Nicole Berosek: nberosek@pphd.ne.gov
- South Heartland District Health Department- Brooke Wolfe: brooke.wolfe@shdhd.ne.gov

Contact Matt or agencies in your service area to set up a training at your building or access the no-cost on-line training by 9/30/2024!

Training Includes:

- Basic CPR skills
- Basic AED skills
- Real-life Demonstration
- Skills Test

CPR/AED Training Details

The NSAA now requires all certified **coaches and NSAA activity sponsors** to be CPR/AED certified once every two years, beginning with the **2024-25 school year**.

New coaches must take the certification, in addition to the three required classes (Head, Heart, Heat) prior to beginning coaching.

Per the NSAA each member school must keep a record of these certifications on file. The NSAA CPR/AED Certification Statement can be found at bit.ly/3Wwd1F3

Contact a training partner in your service area (list to the left) to find out about in-person trainings. Scan the QR code below to request an online training license. Note that an in-person skills check with a local trainer will also be required for certification.

Questions? Contact Matt mcarper@childrensnebraska.org



SCAN ME



REGISTER FOR ON-LINE TRAINING AT BIT.LY/3Y8CISV OR SCAN THE QR CODE

Space is limited so register today!



WHY 
rural
MATTERS

2023

Centering Equity and Opportunity

Daniel Showalter, PhD
*Eastern Mennonite
University*

Sara L. Hartman, PhD
*Ohio
University*

Karen Eppley, PhD
*Pennsylvania State
University*

Jerry Johnson, EdD
*East Carolina
University*

Bob Klein, PhD
*Eastern Illinois
University*



WHY rural MATTERS

2023

Centering Equity and Opportunity

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The National Rural Education Association offers its sincere appreciation to the Rural School and Community Trust, who conceptualized this project more than 20 years ago and nurtured it through its evolution across multiple versions. We are honored to take the baton and continue this important work. We also want to recognize and thank our national partner, Rural Schools Collaborative, for their continued support of our collective work on behalf of rural schools, educators, and students across the country.



NATIONAL RURAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

(NREA) is the voice of all rural schools and rural communities across the United States. 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 nea.net.



Showalter, D., Hartman, S.L., Eppley, K., Johnson, J., & Klein, R. (2023).

Why rural matters 2023: Centering equity and opportunity. National Rural Education Association.

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Executive Summary



While the entire United States is still reeling in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, the recovery process has not been even across communities. Many rural communities—especially certain pockets—are currently facing multiple crises in terms of educational loss, economic outcomes, unemployment, and mental health. Any issue that impacts rural families and communities extends inevitably to rural children, and so this larger picture signals the importance of including in educational discourse all aspects of a student’s mental, emotional, and physical well-being. Attentive to these realities, this report looks critically at how educational supports and resources for student well-being are being distributed, casting light on which of our rural children are most in need of additional support.

Why Rural Matters 2023, the latest in a series of 10 such reports, shows that roughly 7.3 million public school students are enrolled in rural school districts—more than one in every seven students across the United States. Nearly one in seven of those rural students experience poverty, one in 15 lacks health insurance, and one in ten has changed residence in the previous 12 months.

Significantly, the number of children attending rural schools is greater than the number of students in rural school districts because many children attend rural schools in districts that are not designated “rural” by the U.S. Census Bureau. Hence, a more representative measure of rural students in the United States is over 9.5 million—more than one in five students in the United States. This means that more students in the United States attend rural schools than attend the 100 largest U.S. school districts combined.

More Key Findings

from this Edition of *Why Rural Matters*



MORE ACCESS TO PSYCHOLOGISTS AND SCHOOL COUNSELORS IS NEEDED

In non-rural districts, an average of 295 students are given access to only a single school counselor or psychologist. This ratio is worse in rural districts, averaging 310:1, with seven states having ratios worse than 400:1 (Minnesota, California, Mississippi, Alaska, Louisiana, Indiana, and Michigan). Rural Michigan children bear the most critical ratio of an average of 574 students to every psychologist or school counselor.

MOST RURAL GIFTED AND TALENTED PROGRAMS DEMONSTRATE GENDER EQUITY IN GIFTED EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Across the United States, 50.4% of the students in gifted programs in rural districts were female.¹ This is a coarse measure of equity since giftedness manifests itself in different subject areas and in types of accommodations. Such variation may reveal more work yet needed to achieve equitable accommodation in gifted programs. For instance, females are heavily underrepresented in rural gifted math programs as well as in math competitions (globally). In three states, females' participation in rural school gifted programs is at least eight percentage points lower than that of males: Alaska (40.0% vs. 60.0%), New Hampshire (45.4% vs. 54.6%), and Wyoming (45.7% vs. 54.3%). Rural Rhode Island has the highest percent of females in their gifted and talented programs at 62.4%. More pressing than gender equity in rural placement was the absence of gifted and talented programs altogether. Of the 24,736 public rural schools in the United States, 10,071 (40.7%) appear not to offer any program specific to gifted students.



MORE GIFTED AND TALENTED PROGRAM ACCESS IS NEEDED FOR BLACK AND HISPANIC STUDENTS IN RURAL DISTRICTS

Despite 17.1% of students in rural schools identifying as Hispanic, only 9.1% of the students in the gifted programs at these same schools were Hispanic. Similarly, 10.6% of the rural school population identified as Black, but only 5.2% of the gifted student population in rural schools was Black. In contrast, 64.8% of rural students were White, but 77.4% of the rural students enrolled in gifted programs were White. Gifted enrollment rates for all other racial and ethnic categories were roughly proportionate to their numbers in the overall rural population.





RURAL AREAS APPEAR TO OFFSET SOME OF THE IMPACT OF POVERTY ON EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES

Although rural students experiencing poverty scored lower than their peers in every state with data on both math and reading tests, these differences were smaller among rural schools than among non-rural schools. Across all locales, students experiencing poverty scored 27 points lower than their peers on the grade 8 NAEP math assessment and 22 points lower on the reading assessment; in rural schools, these differences were 22 and 18, respectively. Socioeconomic equity in reading appeared to be highest within rural schools in Arizona, Idaho, Texas, and Oklahoma and most concerning in Illinois, Mississippi, and Virginia. For math, the most equitable states were Hawaii, Arizona, West Virginia, and Oklahoma; the least equitable states were Colorado and Louisiana.

MANY RURAL AREAS CONTINUE TO LACK BASIC INTERNET ACCESS

The COVID-19 pandemic made clear that adequate internet connectivity is an essential component of equitable education opportunities. This connectivity has remained essential even after most students have returned to in-person classrooms. However, 13.4% of rural households lack minimum broadband connection for streaming educational videos or virtual classrooms. In six states, more than one in six rural households lacks at least a basic broadband connection: New Mexico (21.4%), Mississippi (20.6%), Alabama (18.9%), West Virginia (17.5%), Arkansas (17.4%), and Louisiana (17.2%). While this is not a uniquely rural disparity, it is several percentage points higher than the percent of households without broadband access in rural and non-rural areas combined (9.9%).



STUDENTS IN RURAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS ARE MORE LIKELY TO GRADUATE HIGH SCHOOL THAN THEIR NON-RURAL COUNTERPARTS

In the majority of states with enough rural students to make data available, (34 of 46 states), rural students graduated at rates higher than their non-rural peers. Despite facing a range of spatial inequities, the unique strengths of rural communities combined to create graduation advantages of at least five percentage points in six states (Nebraska, Connecticut, Maryland, Massachusetts, New York, and Rhode Island). However, there were also exceptions—in two states, the rural graduation rate was more than 3 percentage points lower than the non-rural graduation rate—Arizona (7.7 percentage points lower) and Alaska (10.6 percentage points lower). To put this in perspective, if Alaska's rural students had graduated at the same rate as its non-rural students, an additional 200 to 250 rural students would have graduated in the past year instead of leaving the public school system without a diploma.

Many states provided a disproportionately larger share of school funding for rural districts because of the higher relative costs of running rural schools. Fourteen states, however, provided disproportionately less funding to rural districts: Nebraska had the greatest disparity, followed by Vermont, Rhode Island, Iowa, Delaware, South Dakota, Michigan, Indiana, Wisconsin, Connecticut, Idaho, Illinois, Massachusetts, and Minnesota. Although this disparity has been present in several of these states for years, it is a recent development for Delaware, South Dakota, Indiana, Idaho, and Illinois.

Rural school districts in Delaware, Oklahoma, North Carolina, and Nevada are the four most racially diverse in the United States, as per our Rural Diversity Index. In each of these states, two students chosen at random from a school in a rural district are more likely than not to be of a different race or ethnicity.

Across the United States, the communities surrounding schools in rural districts on average had a household income of 2.91 times the poverty line. Rates were lowest in New Mexico (1.85) and highest in Connecticut (5.32).



Rural Education in the 50 States

This report uses five gauges to describe the condition of rural education in each state:



1. Importance of rural education



2. Diversity of rural students and their families



3. Educational Policy Context impacting rural schools and communities



4. Educational Outcomes for rural students



5. Access to Supports for Learning and Development of students in rural schools

Each gauge includes five equally weighted indicators. The higher the ranking of a state, the more important or urgent rural education matters are for that state. We combine the five average gauge rankings to determine an overall average ranking, which is the Rural Education Priority ranking.

Our state rankings should not be interpreted to suggest that rural education in low-priority states does not deserve increased attention from policymakers. Every state faces challenges in providing a high-quality education for all children. Highest-priority states in this report are those states where key factors converge to present the most extreme challenges for rural schooling, suggesting the most urgent and comprehensive needs for policymakers' attention.

There are many faces of rural: from remote Indigenous reservations in the West, to small towns in the Great Plains and Midwest, to the Mississippi Delta and Southern "Black Belt," to Appalachia and New England. Rural can look different in each state: a town of a few thousand people, or tiny communities located several hours or even days from the nearest city, as is the case in parts of Alaska. This report looks at statewide averages, which sometimes mask important variations in rural contexts and conditions. No state should ignore the important issues facing rural students, their schools, and communities.

Meeting the needs of nearly 10 million children is a challenge and an obligation that demands and deserves collective attention across the United States. Fulfilling that obligation requires educators, policymakers, caregivers, students, citizens, and employers to deepen our understanding of rural education issues and to move beyond simplistic and often harmful notions about rural schools and their communities.

While *Why Rural Matters* uses data to draw attention to key areas of need in rural education, it is motivated by a strong sense of optimism that change is possible and that examples of creative and successful efforts to

address issues confronting rural education may serve as inspiration for paths forward.

After years of measuring racial diversity through the inadequate lens of "White and non-White," we continue our use of the rural diversity index begun in the previous *Why Rural Matters* report. This index shows that when randomly choosing two students from a school in a rural district in the United States, there would be about a one-in-three chance that the students would identify as being from different racial/ethnic backgrounds.ⁱⁱ The most recent statistics describing that likelihood is 33.4%, up from 31.9% in the 2019 report, underscoring the steadily diversifying landscape of the rural United States.

Defying traditional stereotypes that only densely populated, metropolitan areas of the United States are racially diverse, and that the rural United States is mostly White, the rural diversity index of 33.4% is not far below the U.S. all-locale diversity index of 45.9%. In fact, in 10 states, the rural diversity index is higher than the U.S. average for all locales:

- Delaware (61.3%)
- Oklahoma (55.5%)
- North Carolina (52.7%)
- Nevada (51.7%)
- Maryland (49.1%)
- Florida (48.8%)
- Georgia (48.5%)
- Arizona (47.6%)
- South Carolina (47.0%)
- Texas (46.7%)

The non-rural district of Idabel, Oklahoma boasts the most racially diverse district in the United States of any locale (78.2%), but the small rural district of Preston, Oklahoma less than 3 hours away has almost the same diversity level at 76.1%.

Key Changes

in This Edition of *Why Rural Matters*

In *Why Rural Matters 2023*, we maintain many of our yearly updates from the most recent edition of *Why Rural Matters* (such as the diversity index, adjusting teacher salaries to reflect local wages, and our updated two-fold method to measuring poverty). In addition, the *Educational Outcomes* gauge has been reworked to better reveal areas of strength and opportunities for pursuing equity. The spotlight on equity now includes physical, mental, and emotional health, as well as spatial equity, in our entirely new *Access to Supports for Learning and Development* gauge.

Why Rural Matters 2023 also includes sections investigating the impact of COVID-19 on rural areas and discussing the National Rural Education Association's (NREA) latest rural research agenda. These sections are intended to start conversations and agenda-setting around major challenges and initiatives. Rural areas were hit particularly hard by the COVID-19 pandemic, and it is up to educators, school leaders, researchers, and policymakers to respond proactively in these crucial next years. The NREA rural research agenda is one part of that response.

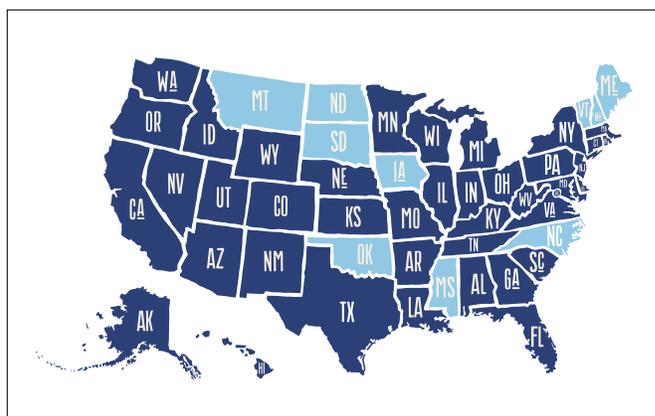


Highlights

from *Why Rural Matters*' Five Gauges



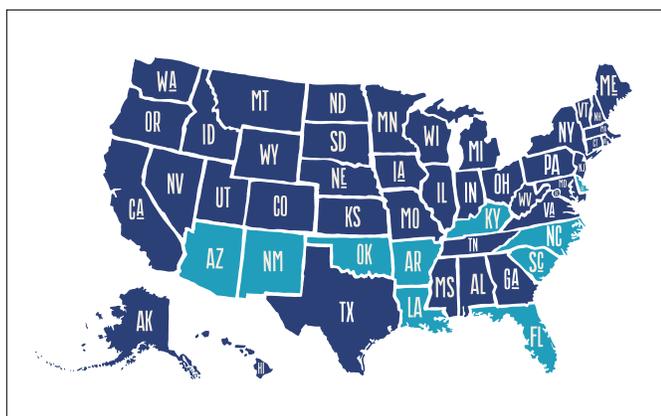
IMPORTANCE OF RURAL EDUCATION IN THE STATE



The 10 highest-priority states on this gauge that examines the prevalence of rural schools and districts in a state and related measures are **Maine, South Dakota, Oklahoma, Vermont, Montana, North Dakota, Mississippi, North Carolina, New Hampshire, and Iowa.** There are no major ranking changes for states since the last report. The two biggest increases in priority were Arkansas (from 16th to 12th) and West Virginia (from 19th to 14th). In Arkansas, the overall student enrollment increased, especially in rural districts. In West Virginia, the overall student enrollment decreased, but this decrease was more pronounced in non-rural districts than in rural districts. While Texas, Virginia, New York, Pennsylvania, and Michigan all rank at or below the median on this gauge, these states have sizeable numbers of rural students that are dwarfed by very large numbers of urban and suburban students, affecting the overall priority ranking of those states.



STUDENT AND FAMILY DIVERSITY



The highest-priority states on this gauge are **Arizona, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Delaware, Florida, Kentucky, North Carolina, Louisiana, New Mexico, and Arkansas.**

This list of highest-priority states looks similar to four years ago (on the same set of indicators), with exception that Delaware was not previously on the list. Already the most racially diverse state in the United States, Delaware grew even more diverse and saw its child poverty rate increase by 50%.

In West Virginia, the least diverse state, there is only a one in eight chance that two randomly-selected students who attend school together in a rural district are of a different race or ethnicity. Compare this to Delaware, Oklahoma, North Carolina, and Nevada where two such students are more likely than not to be of different races or ethnicities.

Across the United States, 141 public school districts enroll only students of a single racial or ethnic category (i.e., a diversity index of 0%). Of these, nine enroll only students of American Indian or Alaskan Native background and two enroll only students of Hispanic background. All but three of these districts are rural.

The communities around schools in rural U.S. districts have an average household income that's 2.91 times that of the poverty level, up from 2.68 four years earlier. The communities with the highest concentrations of people who live with incomes below the federal poverty line are in New Mexico (only 1.85 times the poverty level), while the wealthiest ones are in Connecticut (5.32 times the poverty level). There are 18 states with average rural-school community incomes less than half that of Connecticut's.

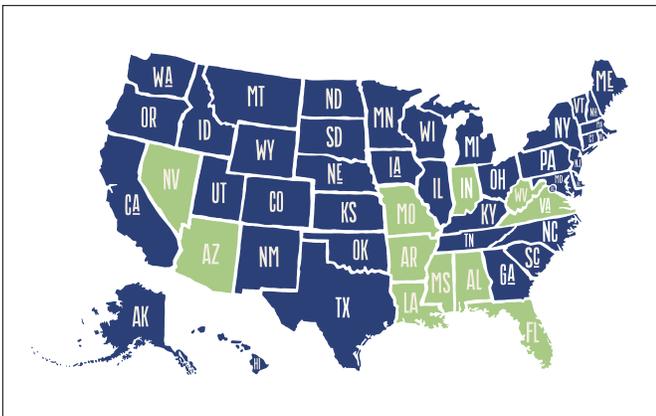
In a sizable jump from the past, every state now offers an Individualized Education Plan for at least one in nine of their rural students. In Pennsylvania and New Jersey, more than one in five rural students receive special education services.

Moving residences causes transitions that can be stressful and disruptive for students, teachers, and classmates. Of the 10 states with the highest rates of rural student mobility, four also rank among the most urgent on the *Educational Outcomes* gauge (Arizona, South Carolina, Nevada, and Alabama). With the fourth highest level of rural student mobility, Wyoming also ranks in the highest quartile for rural poverty difference in both math and reading. Florida experienced the highest rates of student mobility, with over one in seven rural students changing residences in the past year.

Because Hawaii is a single (non-rural) district, it is absent from most of our indicators. However, the fact that its rural child poverty rate is the third highest in the country (22.2%) suggests needed attention for students living in rural areas throughout the state. The only states with higher rural child poverty rates are Kentucky (22.6%) and New Mexico (24.4%).



EDUCATIONAL POLICY CONTEXT



The 11 states that most urgently need education policy changes to address rural schools' and students' needs are: **Indiana, Florida, Mississippi, Missouri, Arizona, Alabama, Louisiana, Virginia, West Virginia, and Nevada and Arkansas (tied for 10th).**

The lowest-priority states on this gauge are found in nearly all regions of the United States: three in the Great Plains (Wyoming, Nebraska, and Kansas), one in the Midwest (Minnesota), three in the Northeast (Vermont, New Hampshire, and New York), two Western states (Washington and California), one in the Southwest (New Mexico), and Delaware and Alaska. Many of these states are characterized by small schools and districts and have stronger investments in public education overall.

Though most states have stayed fairly consistent on this gauge, Nevada jumped in priority from 29th to 10th. Not only have their teacher salaries and instructional expenditures on student learning not kept pace

with average increases across the United States, but transportation costs also consume larger portions of their budgets. On the other hand, Ohio increased average investments in each rural pupil by over \$1,000 and saw their education policy rank shift from seventh to 21st.

Non-rural districts across the United States spend an average of \$7,685 on the teaching and learning of each student. This figure is over \$500 more than the amount spent on the instruction of each rural student. New York's rural students are supported at an average rate of \$14,731 per student, more than twice that of the average rural instructional expenditures in 27 states. The lowest averages are: \$4,908 in Idaho, \$5,278 in Mississippi, \$5,484 in Florida, \$5,566 in Alabama, and \$5,582 in Indiana.

Rural student transportation costs are high, with an average of \$11.09 spent on instruction for every dollar spent on transportation. Compare this with non-rural districts that spend \$14.93 on instruction for every dollar on transportation. States where the largest portion of the budget is consumed by transportation costs are West Virginia, Nevada, Indiana, and Louisiana. A low ratio indicates that transportation costs are disproportionately burdensome relative to instructional costs.

States supply \$1.18 on average to rural districts for every dollar allocated from local tax revenue. Rural districts in Nebraska receive only 28 cents of state funding for every dollar of local revenue they raise. States located near each other can have very different funding structures. For example, Rhode Island, Connecticut, and New Hampshire are the next three lowest after Nebraska, with none of them receiving more than 50 cents in state funding per local dollar. However, the rural districts of nearby Vermont receive over 30 times more at \$15.30 from the state for every local dollar—the highest rate in the United States.

Alarming, in the past four years since the last *Why Rural Matters* report, 27 states have decreased their

rural schools, creating more dependency on more inequitable local funding. New Mexico has seen the greatest drop (\$3.34, down from \$4.42 per local dollar). Other states with substantial decreases include North Carolina, North Dakota, Alaska, Kansas, and Wyoming.

The adjusted U.S. average salary for teachers in rural districts is \$76,374—a promising jump from the \$69,797 four years prior, but still substantially lower than the \$81,645 average for non-rural districts even after adjusting for local wage differences. Many rural districts cannot keep pace with larger districts on salaries, even though they sometimes serve high numbers of students experiencing poverty. These salary differences make it harder to recruit and retain highly qualified teachers in rural districts.

Even when adjusted for local wage differences in other occupations, average spending on educators' salaries in rural districts varies widely: Arkansas has the lowest U.S. average of \$50,848, and New York the highest at \$109,665. States with the lowest average salaries for rural educators: Arkansas, Missouri, Mississippi, Colorado, Oklahoma, North Dakota, Kansas, Illinois, South Carolina, South Dakota, Indiana, and Texas.

The states with the highest average rural educator salaries are New York, Alaska, Washington, California, and Massachusetts.



EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES



The 11 highest-priority states on this gauge: **New Mexico, South Carolina, Oregon, Louisiana, Virginia, Delaware, Alabama, Arizona, Hawaii, and Nevada and Mississippi (tied for 10th).**

Despite having the third highest rate of rural child poverty, on their eighth-grade math scores Hawaii's rural students who experience poverty scored the closest to their rural peers who do not experience poverty. Unfortunately, both groups scored low, giving Hawaii the second lowest math composite (fourth and eighth grade) scores, finishing only behind New Mexico.

Poverty levels in rural school communities and the percent of school-aged children experiencing poverty are both highly correlated with unfavorable NAEP outcomes in both math and reading (all four state-level correlations are between $r = .65$ and $r = .80$).

States with the largest rural poverty differences in

math scores were Louisiana, Colorado, South Carolina, Delaware, Tennessee, Kansas, Wyoming, Virginia, South Dakota, and Montana. These states all had a difference at least three times that of Hawaii's.

Interestingly, large math test score differences between rural students experiencing poverty and their wealthier rural peers did not necessarily coincide with large reading test score differences. In fact, only Virginia was in the top 10 largest differences in both math and reading. Arkansas, Oklahoma, and West Virginia were among the 10 smallest differences in both math and reading, although all three of these states also fell below the U.S. mean for all rural students in both math and reading test scores.

NAEP reading scores were especially sensitive to educational policy contexts. Six of the ten states with the largest reading differences received the highest-priority rating on the *Educational Policy Context* gauge: Illinois, Mississippi, Virginia, Nevada, Arizona, and Indiana. In math, the link was weaker. Only two of the ten states with the largest rural poverty differences had a crucial rating on the *Educational Policy Context* gauge (Louisiana and Virginia). These results, especially in reading, underscore the importance of attending to school/district size and equitable funding for students and teachers in rural areas.

Four of the lowest-performing five states in math were also among the lowest-performing five states in reading: New Mexico, Hawaii, West Virginia, and Alabama. Mississippi, our highest-priority state of the report and a state which often has some of the lowest educational outcomes, was not among the lowest-performing 10 states in either math or reading.

Rural students graduate high school at a higher rate (89.8%) than their non-rural peers (87.2%). At the state level, 35 of the 46 states on which data are available have a higher graduation rate for rural students than for non-rural students.

States with the highest rural graduation rate advantage tend to have fairly small rural student populations. In terms of percentage point differences, Nebraska has the largest at 6.4, followed by Connecticut (6.1), Maryland (5.9), and Massachusetts (5.8). Some large states, such as New York (5.6), Georgia (4.2), and Pennsylvania (3.9) also have relatively high percentage point differences.

In 11 states, rural students graduate at a lower rate than their non-rural peers. This difference is over 2 percentage points in five states: Alaska (10.6), Arizona (7.7), Nevada (3.0), South Carolina (2.2), and Utah (2.2).



Introduction

Why Rural Matters 2023 is the 10th in a series of reports analyzing the contexts and conditions of rural education in each of the 50 states and calling attention to the need for policymakers to address rural education issues in their respective states.

While it is the 10th in a series, this report is not simply an updating of data from earlier editions. This report comes in the wake of the recent COVID-19 pandemic, which has impacted the rural United States in many and varied ways that we are only beginning to understand. Where does rural education currently stand, and where should we focus efforts on improving it? What subpopulations in rural areas should policymakers and educators pay closer attention to? Considering questions such as these, *Why Rural Matters 2023* includes new indicators related to well-being and equity, and two special topic sections on the impact of COVID-19 on rural areas and alignment of the report with the rural research agenda recently released by the National Rural Education Association. The analyses and data presented can inform policy discussions on these and other important issues as they manifest in rural settings. The report also includes examples from states that have shown notable positive changes over time in terms of policy measures linked to desirable outcomes for rural students—i.e., states that demonstrate a marked improvement in specific elements of their policy contexts.

As in previous reports, we have deliberately altered the statistical indicators and gauges to call attention to the variability and complexity of rural education with an eye toward its most important issues. The intent is not to compare states in terms of their differing rates of progress toward an arbitrary goal. Rather, the intent is (1) to provide information and analyses that prioritize policy needs of rural public schools and the communities they serve, and (2) to describe the complexity of rural contexts to give policymakers a

more complete picture of challenges faced by their constituencies so that they might formulate policies that are responsive to those challenges.

In 2020–21, the school year corresponding to much of the data used in this report, 7,305,670 public school students were enrolled in rural school districts (the unit of analysis for most of the indicators used in the report). That is just over 15% of the total public-school enrollment in the United States. However, this number does not include students who attend a rural school within a district that is designated as non-rural. In the same school year, a total of 9,513,696 students (20.7%) attended a rural school (i.e., a school designated as rural, whether in a rural or non-rural district). Meeting the needs of nearly 10 million children is a collective challenge and a moral obligation deserving attention. Rural issues are complex issues requiring multiple perspectives to shape deep and accurate understandings to work together with rural schools and their communities to ensure all students succeed.

The Data

The data used for *Why Rural Matters 2023* were compiled from information collected and maintained by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), the U.S. Department of Education, and the U.S. Census Bureau. All data used here are available to the general public and may be downloaded directly from the sources above for further inspection and analysis. For this report, rural is defined using the 12-item, urban-centric NCES locale code system released in 2006. Rural schools and districts used in this report are those designated with locale codes 41 (rural fringe), 42 (rural distant), or 43 (rural remote). Versions of *Why Rural Matters* prior to the 2009 version used a combination of school-level and district-level data. Improvements in the urban-centric locale code system (specifically, assigning district-level locale based upon the locale where the plurality of students in the district attend

school) now make it possible for us to be consistent and use districts as the unit of analysis for the indicators derived from NCES data. This is particularly important because policy decisions impacting rural education (e.g., REAP funding) are made using district-level designations of rural status. Moreover, state funding is allocated at the district level and local policies to address many of the issues discussed in this report tend to be crafted at the district level. Finally, the United States has a long tradition of local control, meaning that policy implementation and resource allocation depends on legislators, local education agencies, school districts, and communities understanding these issues.

Why Rural Matters 2023 includes two feature sections that investigate timely topics as they pertain to rural areas: the impact of COVID-19 on rural education and an alignment of this report with the five-year rural research agenda of the National Rural Education Association (NREA). Although research on the impact of COVID-19 on the education of our children is only beginning to emerge, the first feature section summarizes some general trends and tentative findings. The impact of COVID-19 has not been equitable—certain groups of children, households, and educators have suffered disproportionately. Some of these inequities are also evident in the data presented in the current report. With the most recent data being used for every indicator, 18 of the 25 indicators include results related to at least some of the pandemic’s impact. The second feature section takes a gauge-by-gauge look at how the data presented in this report aligns with NREA’s Rural Research Agenda,ⁱⁱⁱ as well as providing some additional information pertaining to the agenda.

Why Rural Matters 2023 uses data reported only by regular public education agencies defined as local school districts and local school district components of supervisory unions. We exclude charter school-only districts and specialized state- and federally-directed education agencies focused primarily on vocational, special, or alternative education.

Gauging Rural Education

in the 50 States

The report uses five gauges to describe the condition of rural education in each state: (1) the Importance of rural education, (2) the Diversity of rural students and their families, (3) the Educational Policy Context impacting rural schools and facing rural communities across the United States, (4) the Educational Outcomes of rural students, and (5) the Access to Supports for Learning and Development of students in rural schools in each state. Each gauge includes five equally weighted indicators, for a total of 25 indicators. Instances where data were not available are denoted with “NA.”

The higher the ranking on a gauge, the more important or urgent rural education matters are for that particular state. The gauges and their component indicators are:



IMPORTANCE GAUGE

- Percent rural schools
- Percent small rural school districts
- Percent rural students
- Number of rural students
- Percent of state education funds to rural districts



STUDENT AND FAMILY DIVERSITY GAUGE

- Rural diversity index
- Poverty level in rural school communities
- Percent rural students with IEP (Individualized Education Plan)
- Percent of rural school-aged children experiencing poverty
- Percent rural household mobility



EDUCATIONAL POLICY CONTEXT GAUGE

- Rural instructional expenditures per pupil
- Ratio of instructional to transportation expenditures
- Median organizational scale
- State revenue to schools per local dollar
- Adjusted salary expenditures per instructional FTE (Full-Time Equivalent)



EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES GAUGE

- Rural NAEP poverty difference in math (Grade 8)
- Rural NAEP poverty difference in reading (Grade 8)
- Overall rural NAEP performance in math (Grades 4 and 8)
- Overall rural NAEP performance in reading (Grades 4 and 8)
- Rural advantage for high school graduation rate



ACCESS TO SUPPORTS FOR LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT GAUGE

- Students per psychologist or school counselor
- Percent of rural households without broadband access
- Percent of rural school-aged children without health insurance coverage
- Percent rural enrollment in public preschool
- Percent of rural students in gifted programs who are female

Some, but not all, of the indicators used in this report are the same as in previous versions. Because many of the indicators have changed or have been replaced completely, year-by-year comparisons of state rankings are potentially misleading. The possibilities for assembling indicators to describe the context, conditions, and outcomes of rural schools and communities are virtually unlimited. We acknowledge the complexity of the rural United States generally and of 50 individual state systems of public education, and we recognize that perspectives offered by the indicators used here represent only one of many good ways of understanding rural education in the United States.

For each of the five gauges, we added the state rankings on each indicator and then divided by the number of indicators to produce an average gauge ranking. Using that gauge ranking, we organized the states into quartiles that describe their relative position with regard to other states on that particular gauge. For the Importance and *Educational Policy Context* gauges, the four quartiles are labeled “Notable,” “Important,” “Very Important,” and “Crucial.” For the *Student and Family Diversity, Access to Supports for Learning and Development*, and *Educational Outcomes* gauges, the four quartiles are labeled “Fair,” “Serious,” “Critical,” and “Urgent.” To help identify and quantify relationships between and among indicators, we also conducted bivariate correlation analyses for the indicators within each gauge.

Finally, we combined the five average gauge rankings to determine an overall average ranking, which we term the *Rural Education Priority* ranking.

Certain states have retained a high rural education priority ranking from year to year despite the use of different indicators and gauges from one report to the next. For these states, rural education is clearly both important and in urgent need of attention no matter the gauges used.

One final caution from earlier reports is worth repeating. Because we report state-level data for most indicators, our analyses do not reveal the substantial variation in rural contexts and conditions within many states. Thus, while an indicator represents the average for a particular state, there may be rural regions within the state that differ considerably from the state average. This is especially true for indicators like diversity and poverty status, since demographic characteristics such as these tend to be distributed unevenly across a state and are often concentrated variously in specific communities within the state. In the case of such indicators, the statewide average may not reflect the reality in any one specific place, with far higher rates in some places and far lower rates in others.

Consider rural Ohio, for instance. With a diversity index of 16.8%, the state ranked 44th in terms of racial diversity. However, Ohio’s rural district of Licking Heights had a diversity index of 68.0%. Compare this to the state of Delaware – despite having the highest level of rural racial diversity among states, its index of 61.3% was still less than that of Licking Heights. Or take Arkansas, which had the lowest adjusted teacher salary among rural districts of any state in the United States at \$50,848. This was less than half the adjusted teacher salary of \$109,665 for rural districts in New York (the highest-paying state). This conceals the fact that Arkansas’s rural district of Lake Hamilton offered an adjusted average teacher salary of \$74,587 while New York’s rural district of Putnam Central paid only \$69,094. It is our hope in such cases that the presentation of state-averaged indicators will prompt more refined discussions and lead to better understandings of all rural areas. Moreover, we hope that the indicators and gauges used here can serve as a model for states, districts, and policymakers to examine the publicly-available data themselves and at a grain-size that allows for a more finely tuned understanding and approach to equitably addressing the true needs of all students in their state.

Changes to the Gauges

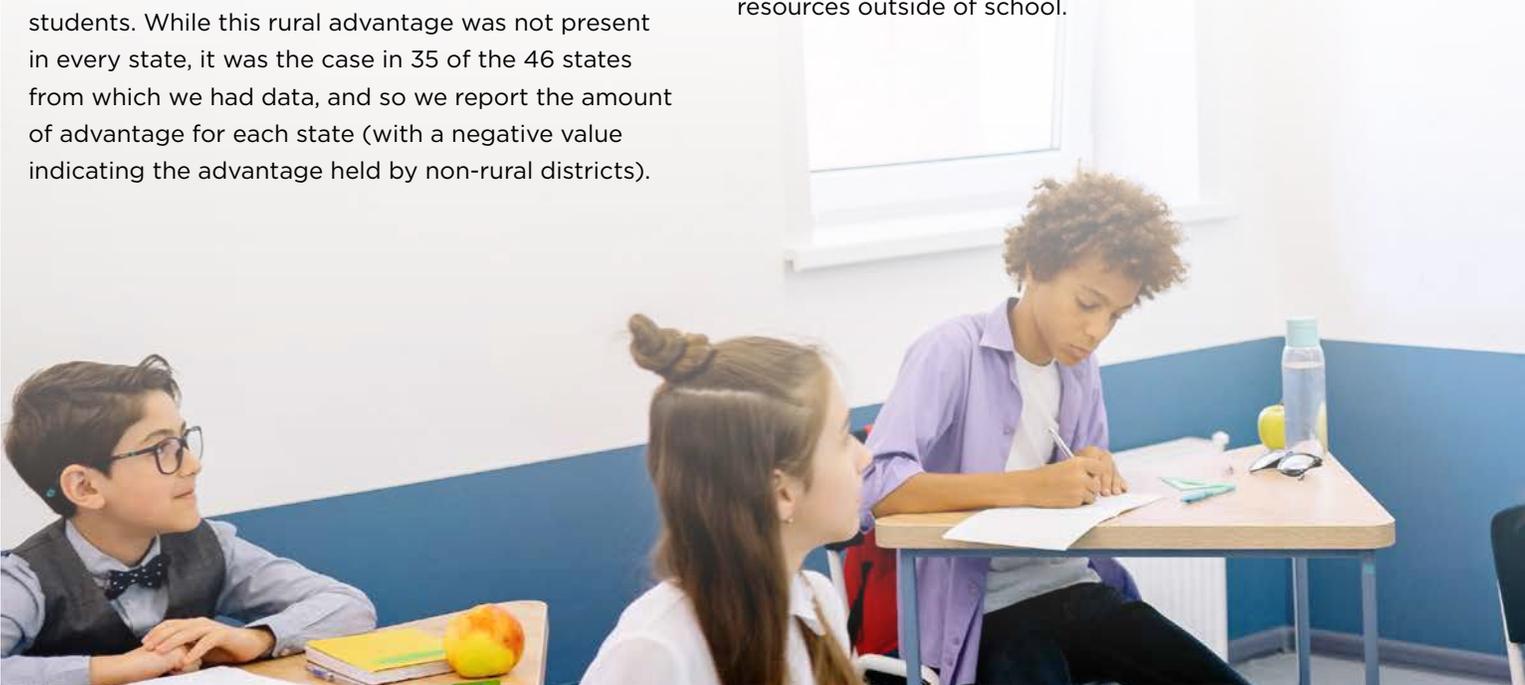
in This Edition

As in the last report, the current report includes 25 indicators organized into five gauges. To refine and better reflect our thinking about the contexts and characteristics of rural education, some indicators were changed and some were replaced with new indicators. The major differences from the previous report to this one are changes in how we measure educational outcomes and the addition of access to supports for learning and development.

The *Educational Outcomes* gauge looks much different from past reports. Recognizing the differential impacts of COVID-19 on math and reading, we separated the NAEP composite scores into separate indicators (the previous report had combined the two subjects), so that states can more precisely identify areas for growth. We also applied an equity lens based on wealth to evidence differences in educational outcomes between rural students who are experiencing poverty and those who are not. As in past reports, we highlight where rural strengths appear in the data on educational outcomes; one of these is the rural graduation rate. Across the United States, 89.8% of rural students graduated, compared to only 87.2% of non-rural students. While this rural advantage was not present in every state, it was the case in 35 of the 46 states from which we had data, and so we report the amount of advantage for each state (with a negative value indicating the advantage held by non-rural districts).

**Across the United States,
89.8% of rural students
graduated, compared to only
87.2% of non-rural students.**

The *Access to Supports for Learning and Development* gauge debuts out of a sense of need expressed by a variety of shareholders in rural education. While the physical, emotional, and mental well-being of rural students has always been important, the recent COVID-19 pandemic underscores just how critical well-being is. Reliable access to healthcare (physical and mental) and to broadband internet are requisites for students to thrive. Do students and communities have the necessary resources when a single psychologist or counselor may serve caseloads of 310 children? (This is only the average—several states have ratios less than 1:400.) Is it reasonable to expect all children to meet the same academic standards in kindergarten when two of three children lack access to a public preschool? Inequities are exacerbated by unequal access to resources outside of school.



Notes on Methodology

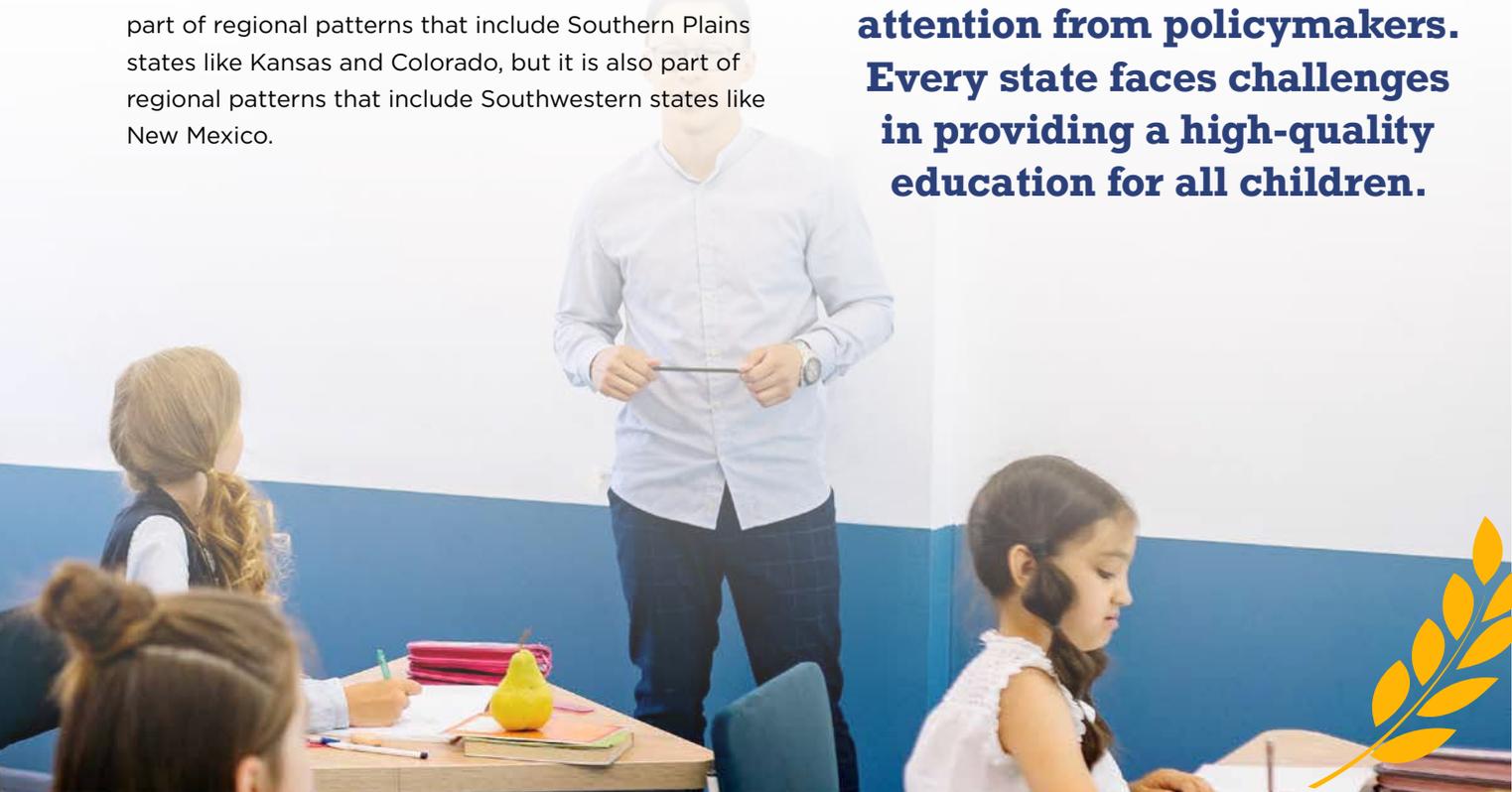
Readers of *Why Rural Matters* should consider the following points when reviewing this report.

First, the quartile categories used to describe a state’s position on the continuum from 1–50 are arbitrary and are used merely as a convenient way to group states into smaller units to facilitate discussion of patterns in the results. Thus, there is very little difference between the “Urgent” label assigned to Kansas based on its ranking of 13th on the *Educational Outcomes* gauge and the “Critical” label assigned to West Virginia based on its ranking of 14th on the same gauge.

Second, we use regional terms loosely with the intent of recognizing nuances in regional identities and representing more clearly the contexts within which we discuss specific relationships between individual states and shared geographic and cultural characteristics. For example, a state like Oklahoma may be referred to as a “Southern Plains state” in some contexts and as a “Southwestern state” in others because Oklahoma is part of regional patterns that include Southern Plains states like Kansas and Colorado, but it is also part of regional patterns that include Southwestern states like New Mexico.

Third, the ranking system should not be interpreted to suggest that rural education in low priority states does not deserve attention from policymakers. Every state faces challenges in providing a high-quality education for all children. Highest priority states are presented as such because they are states where a convergence of key factors impacting the schooling process result in extreme challenges to rural schooling, and therefore have the most comprehensive needs for policymakers’ attention. As mentioned previously, variation within state-level data signal the need for even states that do not appear on the high priority list to identify high-need situations—the urgent priorities hiding within the averages.

The ranking system should not be interpreted to suggest that rural education in low priority states does not deserve attention from policymakers. Every state faces challenges in providing a high-quality education for all children.



Top 10 Highest-Priority States in Rural Education



1. Mississippi

In the 10 *Why Rural Matters* reports to date, reaching back two decades, only once (in the 2009 report, when it ranked 3rd), was Mississippi not ranked as the highest-priority state for rural education across the United States. This is rather surprising given the constantly shifting scope of what has been measured, including indicators related to diversity, employment opportunities, academics, college preparation, transportation, gender, early childhood education, internet access, and mental health supports. From any perspective, the nearly 220,000 students attending school in Mississippi's rural districts deserve the highest priority attention of rural students anywhere in the United States. Over half of the public schools in Mississippi are in rural areas, and over half of the students in Mississippi attend schools in rural school districts. Equity is a serious issue, with the U.S. spending an average of \$2,000 less on instruction for a rural Mississippi student than is spent educating rural students on average across the United States. Teacher salaries are \$13,000 below the U.S. rural average and over \$17,000 below the average for all teachers across the United States, even after adjusting for local wage differences in other occupations. Over one in five rural Mississippi households lacks basic internet access, a further barrier to educational access. While all these conditions should be balanced by greater mental health support to Mississippi's rural children, there is only one psychologist or counselor for every 436 children, the fifth most concerning ratio in the states for which we have these data. For educators, funders, researchers, and policymakers looking to effect change where it is most needed in the rural United States, Mississippi is the clear starting place.



2. Arizona (tie)

Arizona's rural students are the most racially diverse on average when compared to other rural students in the United States.

The state ranks in the top 10 of all states for its racial and ethnic diversity. Rural school communities in Arizona are characterized by high poverty rates, high rates of medically uninsured children, and high student mobility. More than one in eight students change residences each year and only rural students in Alaska experience a higher disparity in graduation rates compared to their non-rural peers. Arizona has the seventh lowest per pupil spending on instruction in rural schools among all states—rural Arizona students receive about \$1,200 less per student on average than their peers in other states. Only four states spend proportionally more on transportation relative to instructional costs. Achievement in both math and reading is among the lowest in the United States.



2. Alabama (tie)

As the other second highest priority state, nearly half of the state's schools are rural, and only three states spend

less to educate rural students. Almost one in five of Alabama's children experience poverty and one in ten has changed residences in the past year. Nearly one in five lack access to broadband at home. Rural school districts in Alabama are particularly noteworthy for their large size: fewer than 2% are small. Accordingly, Alabama ranks among the top 10 of all states in transportation costs relative to instructional costs. Rural students in Alabama schools demonstrate low achievement relative to the median scores of rural test takers in other states on both reading and math.



4. West Virginia

Half of West Virginia's public schools and nearly one in four students are rural, with a student population characterized by high numbers of children experiencing poverty, high rates of participation in special education programs, and limited racial/ethnic diversity. West Virginia's history of large-scale consolidation has resulted in large schools, large districts, and burdensome transportation costs for rural districts. Average rural teacher salaries are nearly \$4,500 below the U.S. average, even after adjusting for comparable wages of other occupations in the rural areas. West Virginia's rural students score well below the U.S. average on both NAEP math and reading, and their rural high schools have lower graduation rates than the state's non-rural high schools. Access to learning resources is mixed, with two indicators (rural broadband access and rural female representation receiving gifted services) in the most urgent quartile and one other (access to public preschool) in the next quartile.



5. Missouri

Over 180,000 rural students attend public PK-12 schools in Missouri. This number is almost double the rural U.S. average. Exactly 44% of the state's schools are rural and they serve more than one in five of Missouri's students. Missouri spends less than \$6,000 per rural pupil, which is only 81% of the rural U.S. average. Rural Missouri students attend schools in communities with high poverty rates. Only seven states have higher rates of school community poverty. Even though school communities are likely to have high rates of poverty, schools are disproportionately funded by local sources of revenue. Rural teacher salaries are critically low. Missouri teachers make almost \$14,000 less (adjusted) than their rural peers in other states, and only Arkansas pays teachers less. Rural NAEP scores for fourth and eighth graders are low for reading (ranking 15) and middling for math (ranking 25).



6. Kentucky (tie)

A strength of rural education in Kentucky is its relative success at equitably identifying girls for gifted education.

This is not the case in some other states, where rural girls make up as few as 40% of the students on gifted education rosters. Another bright spot is Kentucky's success in graduating rural students from high school relative to non-rural students. However, given that Kentucky ranks "Crucial" and "Urgent" on two of five gauges, it's unsurprising that it ranks sixth in overall rural priority. The state has nearly double the U.S. average number of rural students, but these students receive just 35% of the state's education funding. Community poverty levels are dire and more than one in five students lives in homes where the household income is below the federal poverty line of \$30,000 for a family of four.



6. Louisiana (tie)

Louisiana's school population is characterized by high diversity and especially high poverty. Of all states with

available data, Louisiana has the lowest NAEP math scores among eighth-grade students who are eligible for free or reduced meals. Transportation costs are an outsized expense in rural districts in the state, with only three states having less favorable ratios than Louisiana. One of the state's most promising indicators is the high adjusted rural teacher salaries, but, rural children still lack equitable access to school counselors and school psychologists, with almost 500 students on average assigned to each mental health or school professional.



8. South Carolina (tie)

Four of every ten schools in South Carolina are located in a rural area, serving just under 17% of the state's public-school students.

More than one in five of the state's 120,000 rural students live below the federal poverty threshold, and households in the average rural school district neighborhood earn barely double the poverty threshold (third lowest in the 50 states). South Carolina's rural districts are some of the most racially diverse in the United States, and only six states have higher rural household mobility rates. Instructional spending and adjusted teacher salaries are well below U.S. averages, and rural South Carolina schools and districts are larger than nearly all other states. Academic outcomes are among the 10 most urgent across states on four of five indicators. Access to learning and development supports varies, with broadband access the indicator of greatest concern, with the seventh highest rate of rural households lacking broadband. Only four states have a higher representation of female students receiving gifted services.



10. North Carolina

Even with changes from our last report in the indicators measuring the health of its rural education system, North Carolina

continues to rank among the states most in need of attention. With over one in three students attending school in a rural district, North Carolina's total rural student enrollment is second only to Texas. Compared to their rural peers in other states, North Carolina's students are much more likely to live in a household with an income below the poverty line, attend a racially diverse school located in a community where many families live below the federal poverty line, and have moved residences within the last 12 months. Schools and districts are large, instructional spending on students is low, and the state is one of the few places where rural students graduate high school at a lower rate than their non-rural peers. Access to student supports is on par with peers in other states, except for low enrollment in public preschool access and inadequate internet connectivity.



8. Oklahoma (tie)

Oklahoma's rural districts are ranked as our eighth highest overall priority in the United States—down from fourth in *Why Rural Matters, 2018–2019*. More than half of all public schools serve rural communities, and its students are among the most diverse in the United States in terms of race, specialized education supports, poverty, and household mobility. Only five states rank below Oklahoma's \$5,614 instructional expenditure per rural pupil, and adjusted teacher salaries are nearly \$11,000 below the U.S. average. Academic performance is mixed, with rural NAEP grade 4 and 8 composites among the 10 most urgent states on math and reading. Access to learning and development supports is a critical concern, with among the highest state rates of rural families without broadband access (11th highest), uninsured rural children (12th highest), and ratio of students per psychologist/school counselor (17th).



Additional State Highlights

While nearly half (10 of 25) of the indicators in *Why Rural Matters 2023* are new or have changed substantially from previous reports, most of the same states still appear among the overall highest-priority states in the United States. In fact, Missouri is the only state in the top 10 highest-priority states that was not ranked in the Leading priority category in the previous report four years ago.

Except for Alaska and Maine, the 23 remaining states in the top two highest-priority categories (Leading and Major) form a contiguous block. This block stretches from the Southeast (where most of the highest-priority states are located), through the Southwest, and then through Oregon and into the northern Great Plains states. This same block is an almost identical match to the states with the highest rates of rural child poverty and the lowest instructional expenditures per pupil, underscoring the urgent need for greater equity of financial resources throughout the country.

While no state ranks among the highest-priority states on all five of our gauges, Mississippi and Arizona are among the highest-priority states on four of the five gauges. Six states—Alabama, Louisiana, Arkansas, New Mexico, Florida, and Nevada—are ranked as high priority on three gauges.

Importantly, 36 states are among the highest priority on at least one gauge, showing that nearly every state has rural education issues that need to be addressed.

Delaware, Indiana, and Missouri saw their priority rankings rise substantially for this report, showing new urgency for attention to rural education issues. South Dakota saw the biggest drop in priority rankings, although it still ranks in the second-highest overall priority category, underscoring the ongoing need for increased support of its rural students.

Indiana's overall priority ranking rose from 29th to 11th. In addition to not raising instructional expenditures for rural students over the past four years at the same pace as the rest of the United States, Indiana is one of only four states where rural teacher salaries *dropped* during that same time frame. The greatest reason behind Indiana's ranking among the highest-priority states is its poor access to student supports for learning and development. Only Arizona and Idaho rank lower than Indiana on these measures of physical health, mental health, and educational access.



Results

The data for each state and state rankings for each indicator are presented in the charts and maps on pages 67-91 and the state-by-state results on pages 93-142. The results for each indicator are summarized and discussed below. To provide some context and to aid in making comparisons, U.S.-level results are presented in Table 1.



Importance Gauge

IMPORTANCE GAUGE INDICATORS

This gauge uses a combination of absolute and relative measures of the size and scope of rural education to characterize the importance of rural education to the well-being of the state's overall public education system. We define each of the indicators in the *Importance* gauge and summarize state and regional patterns observed in the data.^{vii}

Percent rural schools is the percent of regular elementary and secondary public schools designated as rural by NCES, regardless of whether the school is part of a rural-designated school district. The higher the percent of schools, the higher the state ranks on the *Importance* gauge.

The U.S. average for the percent of rural schools across the states is 29.3%, but states vary considerably from a low of 8.5% in New Jersey to a high of 74.3% in South Dakota. Half or more of all public schools are rural in 13 states (in descending order: South Dakota, Montana, Vermont, North Dakota, Maine, Alaska, Oklahoma, Nebraska, Wyoming, New Hampshire, West Virginia, Mississippi, and Iowa) and at least one-third of all schools are rural in 15 other states. In general, states with a high percentage of rural schools are those where sparse populations or challenging terrain make it difficult to transport students to consolidated regional schools in non-rural areas, and those where there has been less push to consolidate or successful resistance to consolidation. Predominantly urban states on the east and west coasts have the smallest percentages of rural schools.

TABLE 1 U.S. Rural Statistics

IMPORTANCE GAUGE	
Percent rural schools	29.3%
Percent small rural districts (fewer than 493 students)	50.0%
Percent rural students	15.7%
Number of rural students (median 94,593)	7,305,670
Percent state education funds to rural districts	16.2%
STUDENT AND FAMILY DIVERSITY GAUGE	
Rural diversity index	33.4%
Poverty level in rural school communities	291%
Percent rural students with IEP (Individualized Education Plan)	15.0%
Percent of rural school-aged children experiencing poverty	13.6%
Percent rural household mobility	9.7%
EDUCATIONAL POLICY CONTEXT GAUGE	
Rural instructional expenditures per pupil	\$7,174
Ratio of instructional to transportation expenditures	\$11.09
Median organizational scale (divided by 100)	2,651
Ratio of state revenue to local revenue	\$1.18
Adjusted salary expenditures per instructional FTE	\$76,374
EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES GAUGE	
Rural poverty difference in math (grade 8)	22.0
Rural poverty difference in reading (grade 8)	18.2
Rural NAEP composite in math (grades 4 & 8)	255.9^{iv}
Rural NAEP composite in reading (grades 4 & 8)	238.3^v
Rural HS graduation rate advantage	2.6%^{vi}
ACCESS TO SUPPORTS FOR LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT GAUGE	
Number of rural students per school psychologist or counselor	310
Percent rural households without broadband	13.4%
Percent rural school-aged children who are uninsured	6.7%
Percent rural children enrolled in public preschool	34.1%
Percent of rural gifted and talented students who are female	50.4%

Percent small rural school districts

is the percent of rural school districts that are below the median enrollment size (493 students) for all rural school districts in the United States. The higher the percent of districts with enrollments below 493, the higher the state ranks on the Importance gauge.

At least half of all rural districts are smaller than the U.S. rural median in 22 states. In six states (Montana, North Dakota, Nebraska, Arizona, South Dakota, and California), at least 75% of the rural districts have fewer than 493 students. States with few or no small rural districts are located primarily in the Southeast and Mid-Atlantic, regions that are characterized by consolidated, county-wide school districts. West Virginia, where more than half of all public schools are located in rural communities, does not have a single small rural school district because all 55 of the state's school districts are countywide systems. Three other states (Florida, Maryland, and Delaware) also have no small rural school districts. Vermont's drop from 90% small rural districts in *Why Rural Matters 2018-2019* (a rank of third most crucial) to 69.8% in the current report (a rank of 12th) is particularly noteworthy and reflects the large-scale consolidation enacted under Act 46.^{viii}

Percent rural students is a measure of the relative size of the rural student population and is calculated as the number of public school students enrolled in rural school districts (whether they attend a rural school or not) divided by the total number of public school students in the state. It excludes students attending rural schools located in districts that NCES designates as urban, suburban, or town.^x The higher the percent of rural students, the higher the state ranks on the Importance gauge.

More than 15% of all public-school students were enrolled in districts classified as rural in the 2020–21 school year. Only two states enrolled more than half of all students in rural districts: Vermont (54.4%) and Mississippi (50.3%). In six other states (Maine, South Dakota, West Virginia, North Dakota, North Carolina, and Montana), one-third or more of all students were enrolled in a rural district. Students in rural districts make up less than 10% of the total student population in 13 states.

Number of rural students is an absolute, as opposed to relative, measure of the size of the rural student population. The figure given for each state represents the total number of students enrolled in public school districts designated as rural by NCES. The higher the enrollment number, the higher the state ranks on the Importance gauge.

More than half of all rural students in the United States attend school in just 11 states, including some of the most populous and urban states (in decreasing order of rural enrollment: Texas, North Carolina, Georgia, Ohio, Tennessee, New York, Pennsylvania, Indiana, Virginia, Michigan, and Alabama). Texas has more rural students than the combined total of the 18 states with the fewest rural students, and the combined states of Texas, North Carolina, and Georgia enroll nearly one in four of all rural students in the United States.

Percent state education funds going to rural schools represents the proportion of state public PK–12 funding that goes to school districts designated by NCES as rural. State funding as defined here includes all

state-derived revenues that are used for the day-to-day operations of schools (labeled current expenditures within the data and in school finance literature). Thus, capital construction, debt service, and other long-term outlays are excluded. The higher the percent of state funds going to rural education, the higher the state ranks on the Importance gauge.

Not surprisingly, states ranking high on percent rural schools and percent rural students also rank high on this indicator (i.e., the larger the proportion of rural schools and rural students, the larger the proportion of funding that goes to them). Some states provide a disproportionately larger amount of funding to rural districts to account for challenges such as teacher recruitment and retention, among other needs (e.g., New York, where 22% of state education funding goes to support rural school districts serving 11.6% of the state’s public-school students). Conversely, the following 14 states provide disproportionately less funding to rural districts (beginning with the most disadvantageous to rural districts): Nebraska, Vermont, Rhode Island, Iowa, Delaware, South Dakota, Michigan, Indiana, Wisconsin, Connecticut, Idaho, Illinois, Massachusetts, and Minnesota.

IMPORTANCE GAUGE RANKINGS

To gauge the importance of rural education to the overall educational system in each state, we averaged each state’s ranking on the individual indicators, giving equal weight to each (see Table 2).

With the exception of Alaska, all of the states classified as either *Crucial* or *Very Important* on this gauge are located in one of two contiguous blocks: Northern New England (Vermont, New Hampshire, and Maine) or a large chain of 21 states beginning with Idaho and stretching southeast through the Dakotas, the Midwest, the Midsouth, and ending with North Carolina and Georgia on the Atlantic coast (see the *Importance* gauge map on page 8 for a visualization of these regional patterns). Notable absences from this block (due to the dominating statistical impact of large urban centers) include Illinois and Louisiana.

TABLE 2 Importance Gauge Rankings

How important is it to the overall public education system of the state to address the particular needs of schools serving rural communities? These rankings represent the average of each state's score on five indicators. The higher the average ranking (i.e., the closer to ranking number 1), the more central it is to the health of the state's overall education system.

NOTABLE		IMPORTANT		VERY IMPORTANT		CRUCIAL	
CO	32.8	WI	25.4	WV	18.4	ME	9.2
CA	33.4	MN	25.6	KS	18.6	SD	9.6
CT	34.0	MI	26.0	MO	18.6	OK	11.4
AZ	34.4	PA	26.4	AL	19.2	VT	11.6
MA	37.0	VA	27.0	TN	19.4	MT	12.0
NJ	37.8	NY	27.8	GA	19.8	ND	12.2
FL	39.8	NM	29.0	AK	20.8	MS	14.4
DE	40.4	SC	29.6	ID	21.4	NC	15.0
MD	41.4	IL	31.6	IN	22.0	NH	15.6
UT	41.4	WA	32.0	OH	22.2	IA	16.0
NV	41.6	LA	31.8	WY	22.6	NE	18.0
RI	42.6	OR	32.2	TX	23.6	AR	18.2
HI	NA					KY	18.2

Note: Numbers are rounded to the nearest tenth.

The six Northern New England and Prairie/Plains states located within the top six most crucial positions generally score high on all the indicators except number of rural students, on which none of them ranks higher than 14th (Oklahoma). Of the others, all five rank below the U.S. median and three rank in the least concerning quartile. These are states with smaller overall student enrollments, so the total number of rural students is smaller even though the percent of rural students is high.

More than half of all rural students (4.03 million, or 55%) are in states ranked in the most concerning quartile for the number of rural students indicator but only two of those states (North Carolina and Mississippi) are among the most concerning quartile in the overall Importance gauge; six others (Texas, Georgia, Ohio, Tennessee, Indiana, and Alabama) are in the second quartile.

Four of the 12 states with the largest rural student populations rank below the median on the overall *Importance* gauge. These four states—New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and Michigan—have large urban populations that dwarf even a relatively sizable rural population. They rank low on the Importance gauge despite ranking high on the number of rural students indicator simply because they rank low on almost every other indicator in the gauge. For example, they average a ranking of 30th on the percent rural students indicator and none of them ranks higher than 27th on that indicator (Virginia and Michigan, tied).

See page 8 for a map showing regional patterns.



Student and Family Diversity Gauge

STUDENT AND FAMILY DIVERSITY

GAUGE INDICATORS

Each *Why Rural Matters* report has examined student diversity in rural education. The sociodemographic characteristics of students and families widely discussed in the research literature (e.g., in terms of investigating equity in the distribution of student achievement according to differences in economic status, race and ethnicity, language acquisition, and transience/residential stability) and acknowledged in educational policy (e.g., through state and federal funding formulae that assign weights to relevant student characteristics in order to provide additional funds for exceptional needs and/or to target historically underserved populations). In the *Student and Family Diversity* gauge, we compare rural student and family characteristics across the 50 states on terms that policymakers often define as relevant to state and U.S. education goals. In this section, we define each of the indicators in the *Student and Family Diversity* gauge and summarize state and regional patterns observed in the data.

Rural diversity index is a measure of racial heterogeneity at the school level. Specifically, if you were to randomly choose a student attending a school in a rural district, and then choose another student at random from within that same school, the rural diversity index is the percent chance that these two students would be of a different race or ethnicity. The higher the rural diversity index, the higher the ranking on the *Student and Family Diversity* gauge.

The rural diversity index made its first appearance in *Why Rural Matters 2018–2019*. Prior to that, we used the percentage of non-White rural students in each state as a rural diversity measure. The current indicator offers key advantages over the former method. First, rather than lumping all non-White races into a single category, this indicator accounts for differences between each of the seven NCES race codes,^x reflecting a much more

robust and accurate sense of what is meant by racial “diversity.” Second, this indicator better measures the extent of desegregation by defining diversity at the school level rather than the district level. Under the former method, a state with large populations of White and Black students who attended separate schools would be rated as highly diverse. To score high on this indicator, the rural students throughout the state must not only be of different races, but there must be significant racial diversity within individual schools.

How racially heterogeneous are rural districts in the United States? If you were to randomly choose two students from the same school in a rural district, your chances are better than one in three (33.4%) that the students would identify as different races. The range in rural diversity index among states is very large—from 12.8% in West Virginia to 61.3% in Delaware, where two randomly chosen students are more likely than not to be of different races. This “more likely than not” situation also occurs in Oklahoma (55.5%), North Carolina (52.7%), and Nevada (51.7%). An additional nine states have a rural diversity index above 40%: Maryland (49.1%), Florida (48.8%), Georgia (48.5%), Arizona (47.6%), South Carolina (47.0%), Texas (46.7%), New Jersey (43.8%), Virginia (42.0%), and Colorado (40.6%). At the district level, some of the values are much higher. Preston, Oklahoma has the distinction of being the rural district with the highest diversity index (76.1%). There are also many districts with lower values. In fact, 138 rural districts have a diversity index of 0.0%, meaning that every school in those districts is racially homogeneous; this is true of only three non-rural districts. Having a low diversity index does not necessarily mean that a school is primarily White. For instance, Benavides ISD in Texas has a low diversity index of 0.9%, yet of the district’s 233 students, all but one identifies as Hispanic.

States with a rural diversity index above 33% are in a nearly contiguous block starting from the Pacific Coast states and extending across the southern half of the United States to the Atlantic Coast, where the block

reaches as far north as New Jersey (see the indicator map on page 9 for a visualization of this block). The one exception outside this geographic block is Colorado (40.6%).

If you were to randomly choose two students from the same school in a rural district, your chances are better than one in three (33.4%) that the students would identify as different races.

Poverty level in rural school communities is a measure of the economic level of the school communities in rural districts. For each school, the National Center for Education Statistics collected data using the American Community Survey on the 25 nearest households with school-aged children. A weighted average of these households' incomes was then reported as a percentage of the poverty line.^{xi} The lower the percentage, the greater the level of poverty of the school communities and the higher the state ranks on the *Student and Family Diversity* gauge.

Across the United States, the communities around schools in rural districts have an average household income 2.91 times (291%) that of the federal poverty line. Although only 1 in 234 rural school communities has an average income below the poverty line, 1 in 7 has an average income below 185% of the poverty line (the federal cutoff for reduced price meals). In South Dakota, the poverty level in rural school communities overall is 287%, ranking right at the U.S. median. This average hides the fact that three of the poorest rural school communities in the United States are in South Dakota—all Sioux schools with average household incomes less than 70% of the poverty line.

Other than New Mexico as an outlier at 185%, values on this indicator range from 217% (Kentucky) to 532% (Connecticut). There are 17 states with average rural school community incomes less than half that of Connecticut. States with relatively low-income rural school communities are concentrated in the Southwest and the Deep South, along with a handful in the Pacific Northwest and Appalachia.

Percent of rural students with IEP represents the percent of rural students who have an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) that qualifies them for special education services. The higher the percent of students receiving IEP supports, the higher the state ranks on the *Student and Family Diversity* gauge.

Students with IEPs require additional supports and services only partly supported by federal funds, placing additional responsibilities on state and local funds to meet those needs. Across the United States, 15.0% of rural students qualify for special education services. In Pennsylvania (20.5%) and New Jersey (20.3%) more than one in five rural students has an IEP. Twelve additional states offer special education services for more than one in six rural students: Oklahoma (19.0%), Delaware (18.5%), Massachusetts (18.5%), Maine (18.3%), West Virginia (18.1%), New Hampshire (17.9%), Vermont (17.8%), Kentucky (17.8%), Indiana (17.5%), New York (17.4%), Minnesota (17.1%), and Connecticut (16.7%).

Percent of rural school-aged children experiencing poverty represents the percent of rural children between the ages of 5 and 17 living in a household with an income below the federal poverty line. The higher the poverty rate, the higher the state ranks on the *Student and Family Diversity* gauge.

Poverty is consistently correlated with most educational outcomes. Recent shifts in how discounted meal eligibility is reported makes this a less reliable measure of poverty than it once was. For that reason, in *Why Rural Matters 2018–2019*, we introduced two new measures of poverty: poverty level in rural school

communities and percent of rural school-aged children experiencing poverty. Each has its limitations, but they work together to describe the degree of poverty within each state. The main limitation of percent of rural school-aged children experiencing poverty is that it does not differentiate between children who attend public school and those who do not. Some children in this age group may be attending private schools, home schools, or other alternative school settings, and others may not be attending school at all (either because they haven't started, have already finished, or have dropped out). It nevertheless serves as a useful measure of the extent of rural children experiencing poverty in each state.

There is no regional pattern for states with the lowest levels of rural children who are experiencing poverty. The four lowest-ranking states on this indicator are located in the Northeast, Mountain West, and Plains: Rhode Island (0.8%), Utah (5.4%), Nebraska (5.7%), and Vermont (6.4%). States with the highest levels of rural child poverty are mostly located in the Southwest (New Mexico [24.4%], Arizona [17.6%]) and the Mid-South/Southeast/Appalachian regions (Kentucky [22.6%], Louisiana [21.7%], Mississippi [21.7%], South Carolina [20.5%], Arkansas [18.0%], North Carolina [17.2%], Alabama [17.0%], and West Virginia [16.8%]). Other states with rural child poverty rates above 16% are Hawaii (22.2%) and South Dakota (16.3%). Nine of the states ranking in the highest quartile of rural children who experience poverty also rank among the 15 states with the lowest rural school community income levels (New Mexico, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, South Carolina, Arkansas, Arizona, Alabama, and West Virginia). Four of the states with the highest levels of rural children who experience poverty also rank in the highest quartile on the racial diversity index (South Carolina, Arizona, North Carolina, and Georgia).

Percent rural student mobility represents the percent of households with school-age children who changed residences within the previous 12 months, per U.S. census figures. Housing insecurity disrupts consistency

in teaching and learning and impacts access to services and resources that support learning and development. The higher the mobility rate, the higher the state ranks on the *Student and Family Diversity* gauge.

Across the United States, just under one in ten rural students (9.7%) has changed residence in the past 12 months, ranging from a high of 15.3% in Florida to a low of 5.8% in South Dakota. Apart from Florida, states ranking highest on this indicator are located in the Southwest and Mountain West (Arizona, North Dakota, Wyoming, Colorado, and Idaho). In all, 10 of the top 13 highest-mobility states are west of the Mississippi River (the exceptions are Florida, South Carolina, and Alabama). Among the continental states in the lowest quartile, only South Dakota (5.8%) and Nebraska (7.9%) are west of the Mississippi.

STUDENT AND FAMILY DIVERSITY GAUGE RANKINGS

To gauge the diversity of rural students and families in each state, we averaged each state's ranking on the individual indicators, giving equal weight to each indicator (Table 3).

States in the most concerning quartile (labeled Urgent) on the *Student and Family Diversity* gauge are mostly clustered in the Southeast and Southwest (Delaware, Kentucky, and Nevada are exceptions). Among the indicators, percent of rural school-aged children experiencing poverty and the rural diversity index most closely parallel the overall gauge ranking, with, respectively, 9 of 13 and 8 of 13 most concerning states for the gauge also scoring in the most concerning quartile for the underlying indicator. By contrast, only three of the states in the highest priority quartile also placed in the most concerning quartile in terms of the percent of rural students who qualify for special education services (i.e., students with IEPs). See page 9 for a map showing regional patterns.

To investigate the relationships among the different indicators, we ran bivariate correlation analyses

among the five indicator rankings. Not surprisingly, the strongest correlation ($r = .70$) was between our two measures of poverty. The next strongest were a positive correlation ($r = .52$) between rural diversity index and percent rural student mobility and a negative correlation ($r = -.34$) between percent of rural students with IEP and percent rural student mobility. In other words, states with more rural students changing residences were also more likely to have more racial diversity and lower rates of students qualifying for special education services.

We also investigated the relationship between our diversity indicators and the indicators in the other gauges. The strongest relationships identified were

between poverty measures and student outcomes in reading and math. Specifically, we found correlations of $r = .75$ for the relationship between poverty level in rural school communities and rural NAEP grades 4 and 8 math composite score, $r = .67$ for the relationship between poverty level in rural school communities and rural NAEP grades 4 and 8 reading composite score, $r = .79$ for the relationship between percent school-aged children experiencing poverty and rural NAEP grades 4 and 8 math composite score, and $r = .70$ for the relationship between percent school-aged children experiencing poverty and rural NAEP grades 4 and 8 reading composite score. These relationships highlight the disparities in educational outcomes associated with family and community economic status.

TABLE 3 Student and Family Diversity Gauge Rankings

How important is it to the overall public education system of the state to address the needs of diverse populations in schools serving rural communities? These rankings represent the average of each state's score on five indicators. The higher the average ranking (i.e., the closer to ranking number 1), the more important it is for policymakers to address diversity issues in rural communities in their state.

FAIR		SERIOUS		CRITICAL		URGENT	
MA	30.2	AK	25.6	MS	20.4	AZ	8.2
ND	31.4	TN	25.8	OR	20.8	OK	9.4
IL	31.4	IN	26.6	CO	21.0	SC	10.0
MN	31.8	NJ	26.6	WV	23.0	DE	11.5
MD	33.0	SD	27.0	UT	23.2	FL	13.4
WI	33.6	ME	27.2	CA	23.2	NC	14.8
OH	34.0	CT	28.2	MO	23.2	KY	14.8
NH	35.8	WA	28.2	WY	24.2	LA	15.0
NE	38.0	NY	28.2	ID	24.2	NM	16.0
VT	38.2	MT	28.6	KS	24.2	AR	16.6
IA	38.6	MI	30.0	TX	25.0	NV	16.8
RI	43.3	PA	30.0	VA	25.0	AL	17.8
HI	NA					GA	18.6

Note: Numbers are rounded to the nearest tenth.

We also identified significant relationships among diversity indicators and indicators from our newest gauge measuring access to supports for learning and development. Specifically,

- rural access to public preschool is associated with the rural diversity index ($r = .34$)—i.e., states with greater rural diversity provide less access to public preschool for rural children;
- poverty level in rural school communities is associated with number of students per school psychologist or counselor ($r = .53$), percent rural households without broadband ($r = .58$), and percent of school-aged rural children who are uninsured ($r = .35$)—i.e., states with higher poverty levels in rural communities provide less access to crucial non-academic supports for child well-being and development;
- percent rural students with IEP is associated with number of students per school psychologist or counselor ($r = -.35$)—i.e., states with higher rates of rural students with IEP provide greater access to school psychologists and counselors;
- percent school-aged children experiencing poverty is associated with number of students per school psychologist or counselor ($r = .47$) and percent rural households without broadband ($r = .66$)—i.e., states with higher levels of rural children experiencing poverty provide less access to crucial supports for child well-being and development; and
- percent rural household mobility is associated with percent of school-aged rural children who are uninsured ($r = .30$)—i.e., states with higher rates of rural students changing residences also have higher rates of rural children who are uninsured.

A key takeaway here is that rural student populations with the greatest needs (e.g., children experiencing economic distress, transient students) as well as more diverse student populations are less likely to have access to supports that promote higher levels of learning, development, and overall well-being. See page 9 for a map showing regional patterns.



GAUGE INDICATORS

For this gauge, we used indicators that describe characteristics of the public schooling system that are the result of policy decisions and thus are amenable to change through different policy decisions. Moreover, we focused attention on policy-driven characteristics that are highlighted in educational research as influencing student achievement and other measures of student well-being. Illustrating variations in state policy contexts thus can be interpreted to suggest, in relative terms, the extent to which current policies are helping or hindering rural schools and students. In this section, we define each of the indicators in the *Educational Policy Context* gauge and summarize state and regional patterns observed in the data. Hawaii is excluded from this gauge because its organization as a statewide district makes analysis impossible. On each indicator, the higher the ranking (the closer to one), the greater the concern that the policy context is not optimal for rural education.

Rural instructional expenditures per pupil represents the total current expenditures for instruction in rural public school districts divided by the total number of students enrolled in those same districts. The lower the rural instructional expenditures per pupil, the higher the state ranks on the *Educational Policy Context* gauge and the greater the concern about rural education policy.

This indicator allows us to make comparisons among states regarding the amount of money spent per pupil on teaching and learning in rural schools. The U.S. average of \$7,174 per rural pupil is much closer to the low end of the range (\$4,908 in Idaho) than to the high end (\$14,731 in New York and \$13,397 in Alaska).^{xii} In addition to Idaho, 26 other states spend less than half of the amount that New York spends per pupil for instruction in its rural school districts.

The highest spending states are mostly states with low-enrolled rural districts (Alaska, Wyoming, and New Hampshire), or Northeastern urban states with a relatively small absolute number of rural students (New York, Connecticut, New Jersey, Rhode Island, and Massachusetts). Pennsylvania (reporting the ninth highest rural instructional expenditures per pupil at \$9,616) fits with neither of these two groups.

Results from correlation analyses show associations between the rural instructional spending per pupil indicator and both rural NAEP grades 4 and 8 math composite score ($r = .46$) and rural NAEP grades 4 and 8 reading composite score ($r = .51$). It seems logical that states that spend less money on instruction demonstrate lower educational outcomes. When we consider these results in combination with the strong associations between spending on instruction and our two poverty measures ($r = .65$ for poverty level in rural communities and $r = .55$ for percent rural school-aged children experiencing poverty), it suggests that state and federal sources of funding are inadequate to level the uneven playing field created by differences in community wealth and corresponding tax base.

When we consider these results in combination with the strong associations between spending on instruction and our two poverty measures...it suggests that state and federal sources of funding are inadequate to level the uneven playing field created by differences in community wealth and corresponding tax base.

Ratio of instructional expenditures to transportation expenditures is a measure of how many dollars are spent on teaching and learning for every one dollar spent transporting students—the lower the ratio, the more money being channeled toward transportation and away from teaching and learning, and the higher the ranking on this indicator.

Variations in pupil transportation costs are affected by factors beyond the control of policymakers (e.g., geography and terrain), but they also result from policies and practices related to the size and location of schools and school districts, personnel, and the length of students' bus rides. This indicator is an important factor in the educational policy context because extraordinary transportation costs shift money away from programs and resources that directly impact student learning.^{xiii}

On average, rural school districts across the United States spend about \$11.09 on instruction for every dollar spent on transportation, but there is considerable variation among states. Alaska and Vermont are outliers at \$29.98 spent on instruction (Alaska) and \$23.66 spent on instruction (Vermont) for every dollar spent on transportation in rural districts. Texas and Oklahoma both spend more than \$18 on instruction for every \$1 spent on transportation. The remaining states all spend less than half what Alaska spends, with the hardest hit states showing no regional patterns: West Virginia (\$6.40), Nevada (\$6.96), Indiana (\$7.89), Louisiana (\$8.09), Arizona (\$8.55), Oregon (\$8.59), New York (\$8.85), Alabama (\$8.90), and Kentucky (\$8.96). In fact, comparisons of states with similar geographies and terrains reveal substantial differences. South Dakota, for example, spends over \$3 more on instruction per transportation dollar than its neighbor North Dakota, and Vermont spends more than 2.5 times as much on instruction per transportation dollar (\$23.66) as its neighbor New York (\$8.85). It is worth noting that the state with the lowest ratio of instructional dollars per transportation dollar (West Virginia) contends with some terrain challenges but is also a state with a history

of large-scale consolidation resulting in regional schools serving large geographic areas and some of the longest bus rides for rural students in the United States.^{xiv} This highlights the importance of policy decisions on this (and other) indicators.

Median organization scale is a measure intended to capture the combined effects of school and district size. We computed the organizational scale for each rural school by multiplying the total school enrollment by the total district enrollment. For simplification in reporting, we then divided the result by 100. The figure reported for each state is the median for the organizational scale figure for every rural school in the state. The larger the organizational scale, the higher the state scores (the greater the level of concern) on the *Educational Policy Context* gauge.

School and district size exert influence over educational methods and schooling outcomes both individually and in combination with one another. Specifically, larger school and district size has been linked with undesirable schooling outcomes—particularly among students experiencing poverty and those with learning disabilities.^{xv} Further, larger districts exacerbate the negative influence of large school size and vice versa.^{xvi} This indicator provides a relative measure of the scale of operations for rural education in each state.

Large organizational scale is concentrated in the Southeast and contiguous areas in the Mid-Atlantic and Central Appalachia where countywide districts and regional high schools are the norm (Maryland, Georgia, North Carolina, Florida, Delaware, Alabama, South Carolina, Tennessee, Louisiana, Mississippi, Kentucky, and West Virginia). Every state in the most concerning quartile on this indicator is located east of the Mississippi River. The lowest-ranking states are mostly in the Great Plains and the West, where the norm is small, independent districts serving distinct communities.

Ratio of state revenue to local revenue in rural districts is a measure of dependence on local fiscal capacity

and an indirect measure of the extent to which state revenue is a significant factor in equalizing revenue per pupil across communities of varying levels of wealth and poverty. A low ratio means a relatively small amount of state aid in relation to funding from local sources and thus an increased likelihood of inequitable funding. The lower the ratio, the higher the state scores on the indicator.

This indicator needs to be interpreted with a great deal of caution because it does not take into account whether state or local revenue is enough to meet the needs of schools (in school finance terms, it is a measure of fiscal equity but not a measure of fiscal adequacy). A high ratio of state to local revenue may mean the funding system is equitable only in that it provides inadequate funding levels everywhere. A low ratio is a clearer signal that the school funding system relies too much on local fiscal capacity and, whether minimally adequate or not, is very likely inequitable. These data relate only to the proportion of revenue from state versus local sources in the rural districts of a state. Including the non-rural districts would likely alter the numbers considerably, in part because the industrial and commercial property tax base per pupil is usually lower in rural areas. In addition, much of the agricultural or forest land values in rural areas are withheld from the school tax base or their revenue yields are reduced by various forms of abatements and preferential assessments.

Across the United States, the average ratio of state to local revenue in rural school districts is \$1.18, meaning state government supplies \$1.18 in funding to rural districts for every \$1.00 allocated from local tax revenues. Nebraska has the lowest ratio with rural districts receiving only \$0.28 of state funding for every dollar of revenue generated locally. The next three lowest states are clustered in the Northeastern United States.: Rhode Island (\$0.36), Connecticut (\$0.42), and New Hampshire (\$0.45). The situation is dramatically different for their geographic neighbor, Vermont, where rural districts receive more than \$15 from the state

for \$1 raised locally—the highest ratio in the United States,^{xvii} and more than 3.5 times the funding ratio of the next highest state, Alaska (\$4.14). In the four years since *Why Rural Matters 2018–2019* was released, 27 states have decreased in ratio of state to local revenue; of these, New Mexico has seen the greatest decrease (from \$4.42 to \$3.34).

The highest-ranking states on this indicator (specifically, the states with the lowest level of state aid relative to local revenue) mostly fall into two distinct groups: Northeastern states with relatively low levels of rural poverty and high levels of rural property valuation (Rhode Island, Connecticut, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Massachusetts, and Maine); and Midwestern/Great Plains states with low to moderate levels of rural poverty and a largely agricultural property tax base in rural areas (Nebraska, South Dakota, Missouri, Wisconsin, Ohio, and Illinois). The first group includes many states that spend relatively high levels per pupil in their rural schools. All but Maine are among the highest-spending quartile for the rural instructional expenditure per pupil indicator (Maine is in the next quartile). The second group spends, on average, nearly \$4,000 less per pupil in their rural schools (\$7,278 compared to around \$11,229 for the first group). Texas is a geographic exception but is similar to the second group in its lower instructional spending per pupil (\$5,999).

Adjusted salary expenditures per instructional FTE

is used here as a proxy for average teacher salaries. For each rural district, the total dollar amount spent on instructional salaries is multiplied by the NCES's Comparable Wage Index for Teachers^{xviii} for that district, and then divided by the total number of instructional staff members. The lower the adjusted rural salary expenditure per FTE (or full-time equivalent, a measure that accounts for staff who only work part-time or who are assigned to more than one school), the higher the state's ranking on the *Educational Policy Context* gauge and the more urgent the concern for the condition of rural education.

In most states, rural school districts are simply at a competitive disadvantage in the market for teachers. There are many factors contributing to this challenge, but lower teacher salaries is certainly among them.

In most states, rural school districts are simply at a competitive disadvantage in the market for teachers. There are many factors contributing to this challenge, but lower teacher salaries is certainly among them. Beginning with *Why Rural Matters 2018–2019*, we adjusted teacher salaries based on the Comparable Wage Index for Teachers (CWIFT), created by the National Center for Education Statistics. This index helps adjust for geographic variations in teacher salaries by looking at Census data on salaries for other occupations in each district. For example, Sunol Glen Unified, a school district in rural California has an average teacher salary of \$106,241, but non-teacher occupations in that district earn 23.5% more than their peers in the same non-teacher occupations across the United States, yielding an adjusted teacher salary of \$86,025 after accounting for this premium. Meanwhile, teachers in Fayette County Schools in rural West Virginia earn an average of \$55,324, roughly \$50,000 less than the average Sunol Glen teacher. However, after adjusting for the 31.9% wage discount seen in other occupations, Fayette County teachers earn the equivalent of \$81,239—on par with the adjusted amount of the Sunol Glen teachers. There are limitations to this methodology (e.g., challenges with modeling for communities with the attraction of a low cost of living but other disamenities that make it difficult to attract teachers), but it does help compare the rural districts across the United States from a more equivalent perspective.

Adjusted salary expenditure per instructional FTE in rural districts ranges from \$50,848 in Arkansas to \$109,665 in New York, with a U.S. average in rural districts of \$76,374. Compare this to the adjusted average salary expenditure per instructional FTE in town districts (\$79,633), urban districts (\$80,396), and suburban districts (\$83,018). Although we have reported these disparities before, the fact that they persist even after adjusting for geographic variation in wages is especially noteworthy and speaks to the need for action by policymakers.

Five states show a decrease in adjusted rural teacher salaries since this indicator was first reported in *Why Rural Matters 2018–2019*: Nevada (–11.3%), Arkansas (–8.5%), Vermont (–4.1%), Oregon (–0.7%), and Indiana (–0.7%). Of these, Arkansas is perhaps the most noteworthy—already among the states with lowest

adjusted salary expenditure per instructional FTE (ranking as the second highest priority in the previous report and the top priority state in this report) a decrease of \$4,751 is likely to make teacher recruitment and retention even more difficult.

States with the lowest adjusted rural salary expenditures according to this indicator are primarily in the Southeast, the Southwest, and the Midwest/Great Plains (in ascending order from lowest salary: Arkansas, Missouri, Mississippi, Colorado, Oklahoma, North Dakota, Kansas, Illinois, South Carolina, South Dakota, Indiana, and Texas). States with the highest adjusted rural salary expenditures are located primarily in the Northeast, the West, and the Mid-Atlantic (in descending order: New York, Alaska, Washington, California, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Wyoming, and Rhode Island).

TABLE 4 Educational Policy Context Gauge Rankings

How crucial is it for policymakers to address the policy context of their state as it relates to the specific needs of schools serving rural communities? These rankings represent the average of each state’s score on five indicators. The higher the average ranking (i.e., the closer to ranking number 1), the more important it is for policymakers to address rural educational issues within that state.

NOTABLE		IMPORTANT		VERY IMPORTANT		CRUCIAL	
DE	28.6	OK	24.6	SC	20.4	IN	14.0
NH	29.2	RI	24.8	GA	21.2	FL	14.2
NM	29.8	NC	25.8	TN	21.6	MS	14.6
NY	30.0	ND	25.8	KY	22.0	MO	15.6
MN	30.0	NJ	26.6	ME	22.4	AZ	16.2
KS	30.8	UT	26.8	ID	22.8	AL	17.2
NE	33.0	MA	27.0	MD	23.0	LA	17.4
WY	33.2	CT	27.4	OH	23.2	VA	17.4
VT	38.2	MI	28.0	OR	23.2	WV	18.4
CA	40.0	MT	28.2	SD	23.8	NV	19.6
WA	40.2	IA	28.4	CO	24.0	AR	19.6
AK	47.4			PA	24.0	TX	19.8
HI	N/A			WI	24.0	IL	20.0

Note: Numbers are rounded to the nearest tenth.

Indicators that correlate most strongly with adjusted salary expenditures per instructional FTE are rural instructional expenditures per pupil ($r = .68$), percent rural households without broadband access ($r = .48$) and rural NAEP grades four and eight reading composite score ($r = .41$). The first association is not surprising (i.e., the majority of instructional spending goes toward instructional salaries, so higher spending in one should be reflected in the other). The third association suggests that districts with higher levels of performance on reading tests are paying higher salaries to teachers and other instructional staff.

EDUCATIONAL POLICY CONTEXT GAUGE RANKINGS

To gauge the extent to which the educational policy context is favorable or unfavorable for rural schools, we averaged each state's ranking on the individual indicators, giving equal weight to each (Table 4).

The indicators that contribute most to the crucial ranking of the states in the most concerning quartile for this gauge are rural instructional expenditures per pupil (8 of 13 are in the most concerning quartile on this indicator); ratio of instructional to transportation expenditure (7 of 13); and median organizational scale (6 of 13). The 13 Crucial states vary most in their ranking on the ratio of instructional to transportation expenditures indicator, ranging from top-ranked West Virginia to number 46 Texas, with an average ranking of 16. Only two states in the most concerning quartile for the gauge (Missouri and Texas) rank within the most crucial quartile on the indicator state revenue to schools per local dollars. These are states where school funding systems depend relatively more on local tax bases than state revenue.

Fairing best in this gauge are three Western states (Alaska, Washington, and California); three Northeastern states (Vermont, New York, and New Hampshire); three Great Plains states (Wyoming, Nebraska, and Kansas); and Minnesota, Alaska, and Delaware.

See page 10 for a map showing regional patterns.



Educational Outcomes Gauge

EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES GAUGE INDICATORS

This gauge includes indicators describing student academic performance on U.S. assessments. Four of our five educational outcome indicators in this report come from performance on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP).^{xix} NAEP is administered and compiled by the U.S. Department of Education and offers assessment data for state-by-state comparisons, including comparisons of rural school districts as a sub-group within states. Although our use of NAEP scores continues a longstanding tradition of the *Why Rural Matters* reports, we nuance them in this report to better highlight socioeconomic inequities. The only non-NAEP indicator in this gauge compares the graduation rate in rural districts with the graduation rate in non-rural districts.

Rural poverty difference in math (grade 8) is the average score among students not eligible for free/reduced lunches minus the average score among students eligible for free/reduced lunches on the grade 8 NAEP math test. The larger this difference is, the greater the inequity between the two groups, and the more urgent the ranking.

In assessments of eighth-grade math, rural-specific data suggest that rural schools are relatively successful at mitigating the impacts of poverty. Rural children who experience poverty outperform all children who experience poverty^{xx} by an average of 20%; however, there is significant state-to-state variability. For example, the rural poverty difference in NAEP scores of eighth graders in Colorado, Louisiana, and South Carolina is greater than the average poverty difference in math scores for all students across the United States. Rural schools in Hawaii, Arizona, West Virginia, and Oklahoma have the smallest difference when scores of children who experience poverty and those who do not are compared.

Rural poverty difference in reading (grade 8) is the average score among students not eligible for free/reduced lunches minus the average score among students eligible for free/reduced lunches on the grade 8 NAEP reading test. The larger this difference is, the greater the inequity between the two groups, and the more urgent the ranking.

On average, rural schools have a smaller poverty difference in eighth-grade NAEP reading achievement than the combined measure for non-rural and rural schools. Specifically, the poverty difference in rural schools is an average of 17% smaller than the same poverty difference when both rural and non-rural schools are combined. Arkansas and Idaho lead other states on this indicator, both with poverty differences less than half the average for all schools. Nebraska, Oklahoma, and Texas score at or slightly above the U.S. average for all schools. Conversely, a few states have poverty differences on NAEP reading scores greater than the average for rural and non-rural schools across the United States. In descending order those states are Virginia, Mississippi, Illinois, New Mexico, Nevada, Connecticut, Arizona, and Minnesota.

Rural NAEP composite in math (grades 4 and 8) is the average of the standardized grade 4 math NAEP scores and the standardized grade 8 math NAEP scores. This can be interpreted as the number of standard deviations the rural districts of the state were above (or below) the U.S. rural mean for the same tests. As with rural NAEP composite reading scores, on average, the composite scores for fourth- and eighth-grade NAEP reading show very little disparity between rural students and all students in the United States. However, in a few states such as New Mexico, Hawaii, West Virginia, Alabama, and Louisiana, rural students have significantly lower NAEP scores than the average combined scores of rural and non-rural students in the United States. Likewise, other states scored significantly higher. Connecticut is of particular interest given its significant poverty difference in grade 8 reading, contrasted to its relatively high rural scores

on the rural NAEP composite in math for grades 4 and 8. Other states with comparatively high rural NAEP composite scores include Nebraska, New Jersey, and Massachusetts.

Rural NAEP composite in reading (grades 4 and 8) is the average of the standardized grade 4 reading NAEP scores and the standardized grade 8 reading NAEP scores. This can be interpreted as the number of standard deviations the rural districts of the state were above (or below) the U.S. rural mean for the same tests.

Composite scores for fourth- and eighth-grade NAEP reading are almost identical between rural and non-rural students in the United States. Across states, however, variations exist in rural means. New Mexico, West Virginia, Hawaii, Oklahoma, Alabama, South Carolina, Washington, Virginia, Maine, Texas, and Oregon fall in the quartile of highest concern for fourth- and eighth-grade rural NAEP reading. More than half of the states performing best on this indicator are located in the Northeastern U.S. (Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New Jersey, Connecticut, Maryland, and New Hampshire). Other states also in the highest-scoring quartile in fourth- and eighth-grade rural NAEP reading are Utah, Colorado, Ohio, Wyoming, and Pennsylvania.

Rural high school graduation rate advantage is calculated as the rural high school graduation rate minus the non-rural high school graduation rate. Positive quantities indicate higher state graduation rates for rural students than for non-rural students.

Throughout the United States, rural students graduate at higher rates than non-rural students (89.8% versus 87.2%). There are some exceptions at the state level, however, and states with rural graduation rates that are lower than non-rural graduation rates are: Arkansas, Arizona, Nevada, Utah, South Carolina, South Dakota, Oregon, West Virginia, California, North Carolina, and Delaware. These states have a negative value on this indicator and are ranked as the most urgent. States that are graduating rural students at rates that are

substantially higher than non-rural students include Rhode Island, New York, Massachusetts, Maryland, Connecticut, and Nebraska.

EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES GAUGE RANKINGS

To calculate the educational outcomes for students attending rural districts in each state, we averaged each state’s ranking on the five indicators, giving equal weight to each indicator (Table 5).

States with the least concern for *Educational Outcomes* were concentrated in the Northeast (Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Maryland, New Jersey, Connecticut, Pennsylvania, and New Hampshire), with two states in the Midwest (Nebraska and Ohio) and one in the West (Idaho) also receiving Fair rankings. States that received rankings in the quartile of most concern

were concentrated in the South (South Carolina, Louisiana, Virginia, Alabama, and Mississippi), with the rest scattered across the United States (New Mexico, Oregon, Delaware, Arizona, Hawaii, Nevada, South Dakota, and Kansas).

As in previous versions of *Why Rural Matters*, children experiencing poverty continue to experience greater challenges on achievement testing. However, six of the ten states that received a *Fair* ranking (the best ranking) on the *Educational Outcomes* gauge also ranked *Fair* in the *Access to Supports for Learning and Development* gauge (Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Maryland, Nebraska, New Jersey, and Connecticut). Conversely, four states that ranked of most concern in the *Educational Outcomes* gauge also ranked of most concern in the *Access to Supports for Learning and*

TABLE 5 Educational Outcomes Gauge Rankings

Given the educational outcomes of rural students across the 50 states, how urgent is it that policymakers take steps to address the spatial and educational inequities that impact educational outcomes? These rankings represent the average of each state’s score on five indicators. The higher the average ranking (i.e., the closer to ranking number 1), the more important it is for policymakers to address rural educational issues within that state.

FAIR		SERIOUS		CRITICAL		URGENT	
ID	29.8	AR	24.2	WV	7.4	NM	7.4
NH	30.2	OK	24.2	ME	18.2	SC	9.6
PA	31.2	WY	24.8	KY	18.6	OR	9.7
CT	31.8	IN	25.0	WA	20.2	LA	10.2
OH	32.0	FL	25.8	GA	20.4	VA	12.6
NJ	36.7	CO	26.0	MN	21.2	DE	13.0
NE	38.2	TN	26.0	NC	21.4	AL	13.2
MD	38.7	ND	26.6	MT	22.8	AZ	14.0
RI	41.7	WI	27.2	MI	23.4	HI	14.5
MA	44.7	NY	29.0	TX	23.5	NV	15.0
AK	NA	IA	29.6	IL	23.8	MS	15.0
CA	NA	UT	29.7	MO	23.8	SD	16.2
VT	NA					KS	17.2

Note: Numbers are rounded to the nearest tenth.

Development gauge (New Mexico, Oregon, Arizona, and Mississippi). As achievement is inextricably linked to access to opportunities and support for learning, this makes a compelling comparison highlighting the need to focus resources and opportunities on children's learning and development.



Access to Supports for Learning and Development Gauge

ACCESS TO SUPPORTS FOR LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT GAUGE INDICATORS

This gauge includes indicators measuring access to non-academic supports that contribute to students' learning and overall development and well-being.

Number of rural students per school psychologist or school counselor is a measure of rural students' access to trained professionals who provide support for social-emotional concerns. A higher number of rural students served by a single psychologist or counselor means less access for those students to that resource. Thus, the larger the number, the higher the state ranks on the *Access to Supports for Learning and Development* gauge and the more serious the concern for the policy environment.

On average, the ratio of rural students to school psychologists/counselors in the United States is 310:1 (i.e., one psychologist or counselor for every 310 students in rural districts). States range from a high of 574:1 (Michigan) to a low of 149:1 (New Hampshire). In addition to Michigan, six other states have ratios of 400:1 or higher: Indiana (501:1), Louisiana (489:1), Alaska (443:1), Mississippi (436:1), California (427:1), and Minnesota (400:1). At the other end of the spectrum, seven states join New Hampshire with ratios of 225:1 or less: Connecticut (167:1), Vermont (169:1), New York (186:1), New Jersey (193:1), Massachusetts (210:1), Wyoming (220:1), and Rhode Island (221:1).

States providing less access to school psychologists and counselors show no real regional patterns whereas states providing the greatest access show a clear regional pattern (with the exception of Wyoming, all higher access states are in the Northeast).

Percent rural households without broadband is calculated as the total number of rural households lacking access to broadband, divided by the total number of rural households. A higher rate of rural households without broadband indicates a lack of access to communication and enrichment opportunities for students and families (and, in the case of mandatory remote schooling such as during the COVID-19 pandemic, a lack of access to basic schooling operations).^{xxi} The higher the state's percentage, the higher the state scores on the indicator.

States with the highest rates of rural households lacking broadband are almost exclusively located in the Southeast and contiguous Central Appalachia regions. Following New Mexico (the highest-ranking state at 21.4% of rural households without broadband), they are: Mississippi (20.6%), Alabama (18.9%), West Virginia (17.5%), Arkansas (17.4%), Louisiana (17.2%), South Carolina (16.5%), Kentucky (16.1%), Missouri (15.8%), Tennessee (15.7%), Oklahoma (15.4%), Virginia (15.0%), North Carolina (14.8%), and Georgia (14.7%). Ten states located mostly in the Northeast, Mountain West, and West all have less than 10% of rural households without broadband access: Connecticut (5.2%), Rhode Island (5.7%), New Jersey (5.8%), Massachusetts (6.5%), Utah (6.9%), Colorado (7.5%), New Hampshire (7.9%), Wyoming (8.8%), and Washington (9.1%). Delaware (8.9%) is an exception to the regional patterns. Across the United States, 13.4% (nearly one in six) of rural households lack broadband access.

Percent of rural school-aged children who are uninsured represents the total number of rural school-aged children who are uninsured, divided by the total number of rural school-aged children. Lack of insurance is associated with lack of medical care and can have a

dramatic impact on students' learning and development (e.g., lacking preventative care that can minimize time out of school for illnesses). The higher the state's percentage, the higher the state score on the indicator.

Across the United States, 6.7% of rural school-age children are uninsured. All but three of the states with the highest rates of uninsured rural children are located west of the Mississippi: Wyoming (13.9%), Texas (13.5%), Arizona (11.8%), North Dakota (10.1%) Idaho (9.9%), Alaska (9.3%), Montana (9.1%), Nevada (8.9%), and Oklahoma (8.8%). The exceptions are Pennsylvania (9.7%), Indiana (9.4%), and Ohio (9.0%). States with the lowest rates of uninsured rural school-aged children (i.e., states where more rural school-aged children have health insurance) are located in the Northeast, Mid-

Atlantic, and West: Massachusetts (1.1%), Vermont (1.4%), Rhode Island (1.6%), New Jersey (2.6%), Connecticut (3.5%), Hawaii (3.5%), Virginia (3.6%), Maryland (3.7%), Washington (3.7%), and West Virginia (3.8%).

Percent rural children enrolled in public preschool is a rough estimate of the proportion of preschool-age children enrolled in a public preschool.^{xxii} Access to high-quality early childhood education experiences is crucial to long-term development and academic success. A lower rate of rural children enrolled in public preschool suggests a lack of access to such experiences. The lower the state's percentage, the higher (more concerning) the state score on the indicator.

The U.S. average for this indicator is 34.1% of rural children enrolled in public preschool, but the results for

TABLE 6 Access to Support for Learning and Development Gauge Rankings

Given the levels of access to learning and development supports among rural students in each state, how urgent is it that policymakers take steps to address the specific needs of schools serving rural communities? These rankings represent the average of each state's score on five indicators. The higher the average ranking (i.e., the closer to ranking number 1), the more important it is for policymakers to address rural educational issues within that state.

FAIR		SERIOUS		CRITICAL		URGENT	
WI	29.8	SC	24.8	AL	20.2	AZ	10.4
DE	30.0	AR	24.8	WV	20.2	ID	13.0
MD	30.2	GA	25.4	NC	20.6	IN	13.2
IA	31.4	SD	25.6	MT	20.8	AK	13.4
NE	32.4	NH	25.8	NV	21.8	MS	15.4
HI	32.7	VA	26.4	ND	22.4	PA	16.2
UT	33.0	WY	27.2	OK	22.6	NM	16.6
NY	35.0	KS	27.6	CA	22.6	FL	17.4
CT	37.4	MI	28.0	LA	23.4	TN	17.4
RI	38.2	ME	28.2	IL	23.6	TX	17.6
MA	40.2	MN	28.8	WA	24.0	OR	17.6
VT	43.4	CO	28.8	KY	24.4	OH	19.0
NJ	43.6					MO	19.8

Note: Numbers are rounded to the nearest tenth.

individual states vary dramatically—from nearly six in ten students in Nebraska (57.8%) to slightly more than one in ten (11.8%) in Oregon. In addition to Oregon, other states ranking high on this indicator are mixed regionally, including: Delaware (14.7%), Nevada (20.3%), California (20.9%), Rhode Island (21.7%), Connecticut (22.1%), New Hampshire (24.1%), Florida (25.0%), Maryland (25.1%), Idaho (25.6%), Washington (25.7%), Virginia (26.2%), and Arizona (26.3%). States ranking lower in priority on this indicator (i.e., states with higher rates of public preschool enrollment for rural children) are similarly varied in terms of geographic region, with the Plains, Northeast, Midwest, and Southeast all represented: Nebraska (57.8%), Vermont (56.1%), Iowa (55.2%), Wyoming (53.9%), Minnesota (47.9%), Oklahoma (47.7%), Illinois (47.6%), Kansas (47.4%), Georgia (44.8%), Missouri (44.6%), Massachusetts (42.0%), and New Jersey (41.8%).

Percent of rural gifted and talented students who are female is an access measure directly tied to equity. Access to gifted and talented services is an important support for students, promoting engagement and providing challenging enrichment opportunities. The lower the state's percentage of gifted and talented students who are female, the higher the state scores on the indicator.

Across the United States, 50.4% of the rural gifted and talented student population is female^{xxiii} (given roughly equal proportions of male and female students in rural school districts, this would seem to be equitably representative). Admittedly, this measure does not tell the full story of gender equity in access to gifted programming because we are not able to disaggregate the data by subject (e.g., we cannot measure the extent to which girls are represented in gifted math programs, or the extent to which boys are represented in gifted reading programs), but it provides a starting point for consideration of the issue. Individual states depart considerably from the U.S. average, from 40.0% in Alaska to 62.4% in Rhode Island. In all, eight states show rates of 48% or lower: Alaska (40.0%),

New Hampshire (45.4%), Wyoming (45.7%), Arizona (46.9%), Tennessee (47.1%), Washington (47.1%), Idaho (47.2%), and West Virginia (48.0%). A total of 10 states show rates higher than 53%: Rhode Island (62.4%), Louisiana (59.7%), Michigan (58.6%), Vermont (57.0%), South Carolina (56.4%), Utah (56.4%), New York (55.2%), Arkansas (55.1%), New Jersey (55.1%), and Connecticut (53.5%). Nine of ten states with 53% or higher female representation in gifted and talented programs are located east of the Mississippi. Five of eight states with 48% or lower representation are west of the Mississippi.

ACCESS TO SUPPORT FOR LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT GAUGE RANKINGS

To gauge access to learning and development supports for students attending rural districts in each state, we averaged each state's ranking on the five indicators, giving equal weight to each (Table 6).

Based on the five indicators used in this gauge, the majority of states where rural students have the least access to supports for learning and development are not clustered geographically. Two small clusters (Pennsylvania-Ohio-Indiana and Texas-New Mexico-Arizona) are joined here by states in the Southeast and Midwest. There are no Northeastern states in the Urgent and Critical categories; Northeast and Mid-Atlantic states are mostly ranked near the bottom in the *Fair* (least concerning) category.

The indicators that contribute most to the urgent ranking of the states in the most concerning quartile for this gauge are number of rural students per school psychologist or counselor and percent of rural school-aged children who are uninsured (both with 7 of 13 states in the most concerning quartile on this indicator). The 13 *Urgent* states vary most in their rankings on the percent rural children enrolled in public preschool indicator, ranging from number 1 Oregon to number 41 Missouri, with an average ranking of 22.

See page 13 for a map showing regional patterns.



Rural Education Priority Gauge

To create priority rankings that reflect the overall status of rural education in each state, we averaged the cumulative rankings on the five gauges (*Importance, Student and Family Diversity, Educational Policy Context, Educational Outcomes, and Access to Supports for Learning and Development*). The rankings for the *Rural Education Priority* gauge are presented in Table 7.

Despite a complete overhaul of the indicators in the *Educational Outcomes* gauge and the addition of the *Access to Supports for Learning and Development* gauge with five new indicators (replacing the *College Readiness* gauge in previous reports), the list of states ranking as the highest priority (i.e., in the *Leading* quartile) shows little change since the 2018–2019 report. Only three states (Missouri, Indiana, and Oregon) are new additions to the *Leading* quartile, replacing Florida, Texas, and South Dakota (each of which now appears in the next highest priority category, the *Major* quartile).

States showing the biggest jumps in priority ranking since *Why Rural Matters 2018–2019* are Indiana (from 29th to 11th, moving from the third quartile [*Significant*] to the *Leading* quartile) and Missouri (from 18th to 5th, moving from the second quartile [*Major*] to the *Leading* quartile). In the other direction, South Dakota (from 5th to 18th), Washington (from 26th to 36th), and Vermont (from 32nd to 42nd) showed the biggest improvements in priority. As a reminder, this series of reports is not designed to be a longitudinal scoreboard where an increase in priority means that something bad must have happened in the rural areas of that state over the past several years (and vice versa). It simply means that the rural areas of that state have more pressing concerns relevant to the indicators measured in this current report.

Despite a complete overhaul of the indicators in the *Educational Outcomes* gauge and the addition of the *Access to Supports for Learning and Development* gauge...the list of states ranking as the highest priority...shows little change since the 2018–2019 report.

Nine of the 13 states in the *Leading* quartile of overall rural education priority are located in a contiguous region located mostly in the Southeast (Mississippi, Alabama, West Virginia, Missouri, Louisiana, Kentucky, South Carolina, North Carolina, and Arkansas; this block is adjacent to four other states in the second-highest (*Major*) priority quartile: Florida, Georgia, Virginia, and Tennessee. Such a clearly demarcated geographical block of high-priority states suggests regional challenges that transcend state lines. These challenges may be very different than those facing Arizona (*Leading*) and New Mexico (*Major*).

None of the highest-ranking states on the *Rural Education Priority* gauge rank in the most concerning quartile on all five underlying gauges. Two of the highest-ranking states (Mississippi and Arizona) rank in the most concerning quartile on four of the five underlying gauges. Three more (Alabama, Louisiana, and Arkansas) rank in the most concerning quartile on three gauges. Seven (Missouri, Kentucky, Oklahoma, South Carolina, North Carolina, Indiana, and Oregon) rank in the most concerning quartile on two gauges, and the remaining high-priority state (West Virginia) ranks in the most concerning quartile on only one gauge. Rankings on the *Student and Family Diversity* and *Educational Policy Context* gauges most closely parallel the rankings on the *Rural Education Priority* gauge, with eight of the states in the *Leading* quartile on the

Rural Education Priority gauge also placing in the most concerning quartile on both the *Student and Family Diversity* gauge and the *Educational Policy Context* gauge. Six of the *Leading* quartile states on the *Rural Education Priority* gauge placed in the most concerning quartile on the *Educational Outcomes* gauge; five placed in the most concerning quartile on the *Access to Supports for Learning and Development* gauge and the *Rural Importance* gauge.

In the *Notable* (lowest priority) quartile on the *Rural Education Policy Priority* gauge, no state ranked in the least concerning quartile on all five of the underlying gauges, and only two states (Rhode Island and Massachusetts) ranked in the least concerning quartile on four of the five underlying gauges. A total of 35 states ranked in the highest-priority quartile on at

least one of the five gauges. Clearly, every state has rural education issues that need to be addressed. The *Access to Supports for Learning and Development* gauge most closely parallels *Notable* rankings on the *Rural Education Priority* gauge. Twelve of 13 states ranking in the *Notable* quartile on the *Rural Education Priority* gauge also ranked in the least concerning quartile on the *Access to Supports for Learning and Development* gauge (of note, a new gauge for this report that reflects our effort to measure and describe the distribution on relevant non-academic resources and infrastructure). The takeaway from this finding is unmistakable: States that have the greatest need for attention from policymakers to address rural student and family needs—based upon the five gauges as a whole, that represent both demographic givens and contexts created and maintained through policy

TABLE 7 Rural Education Priority Gauge Rankings

Rankings represent the combined average ranking for each state on the five gauges (*Importance, Student and Family Diversity, Educational Policy Context, Educational Outcomes, and Access to Supports for Learning and Development*). The higher the average ranking (i.e., the closer to ranking number 1), the greater the need for policymakers to address rural education issues within that state.

NOTABLE		SIGNIFICANT		MAJOR		LEADING	
MN	32.8	KS	25.0	FL	17.8	MS	7.8
WI	33.0	ND	25.2	NM	17.8	AZ	11.6
IA	34.4	DE	26.4	GA	18.6	AL	11.2
UT	35.4	IL	26.6	TX	18.8	WV	13.6
VT	36.5	PA	27.0	SD	19.2	MO	15.0
NY	36.8	OH	28.4	NV	19.4	LA	15.2
NE	37.4	CO	29.0	VA	19.4	KY	15.2
MD	38.6	WY	30.0	TN	20.0	OK	15.6
CT	38.6	CA	31.0	ME	20.0	SC	15.6
NJ	39.0	MI	31.0	ID	20.2	NC	15.8
MA	41.6	WA	31.2	MT	22.8	IN	16.6
RI	43.8	NH	32.4	AK	24.8	AR	16.8
HI	NA					OR	17.2

Note: Numbers are rounded to the nearest tenth.

decisions—serve a student population with less access to non-academic supports that contribute to academic success and overall well-being lower priority states. Clearly, these states (and others) must look more broadly at education issues and marshal policy and practice to address equity issues beyond traditional schooling factors.

As in past reports, there were a few cases where states ranked very high or very low on one gauge but consistently the opposite on other gauges. Two examples: Florida ranked 44th on *Importance* but 5th on *Student and Family Diversity*, 2nd on *Educational Policy Context*, and 8th on *Access to Supports for Learning and Development*. Ohio, on the other hand, ranked 12th on the *Access to Supports for Learning and Development* gauge, but 44th on *Student and Family Diversity* and 46th on *Educational Outcomes*. So, in Florida, rural students represent only a small proportion of the total public-school enrollment in what is the third most populous state, have high needs, attend schools hampered by an unfavorable policy context, and offer limited access to learning and development supports. In Ohio, rural students lack access to learning and development supports, have relatively less need, and have relatively better learning outcomes.

Conclusions and Implications

Over 7 million students are enrolled in rural school districts, 15.7% of all public-school students in the United States. Roughly one in seven of those rural students live below the poverty line, more than one in six qualify for special education services, and one in ten has changed residence in the previous 12 months.

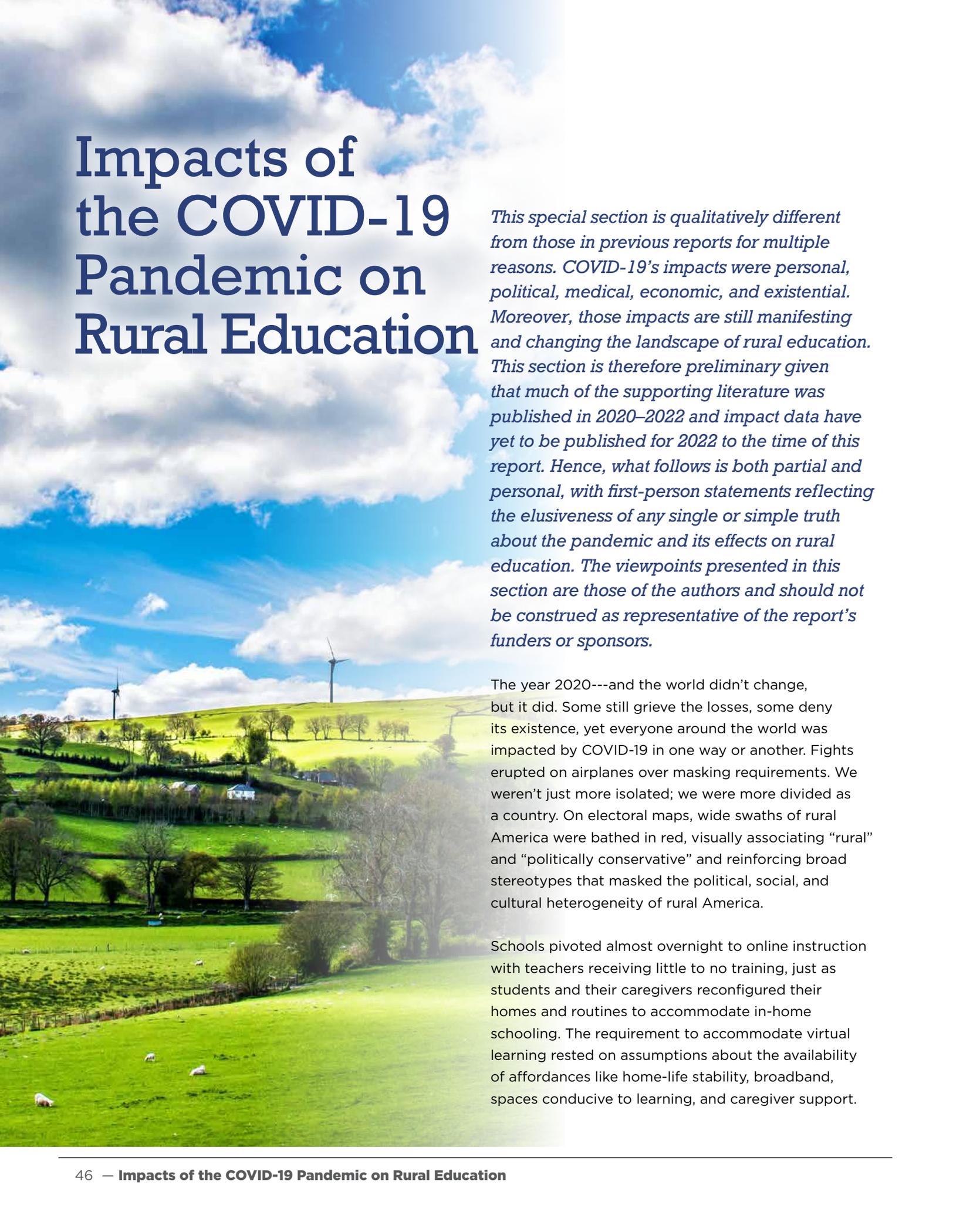
The results published in this report, particularly when viewed in the context of the series of reports, should communicate clearly to policymakers that they cannot ignore the challenges faced by rural schools and

the students they serve, nor disregard what those challenges mean to state and U.S. goals of improving achievement and increasing access to opportunities and supports for all students, especially those impacted by educational and spatial inequities.

The invisibility of rural education persists in many states where education policy is dominated by highly visible urban problems. In 18 states, at least one-fourth of all public-school students are enrolled in rural school districts. On the other hand, more than half of all rural students live in just 10 states. Two states (North Carolina and Georgia) are in both categories (i.e., in a state with large proportional and absolute rural student enrollments). The majority of rural students attend school in a state where they constitute less than 20% of the public-school enrollment, and more than one in four are in states where they constitute 15% or less.

The Bottom Line

Rural schools and communities continue to face substantial challenges due to a host of issues related to educational and spatial inequities. As results from the new *Access to Supports for Learning and Development* gauge indicate, these challenges are compounded by the inaccessibility of non-academic resources and infrastructure that are integral to academic success and student well-being. As post-pandemic recovery continues across the United States, states and local districts must reevaluate what it means to provide a public education that meets student and family needs and prepares students for life beyond PK-12 schooling (including college and career readiness and engaged citizenship). These challenges are widespread, but most intense in the Southeast, Southwest, and parts of Appalachia. Moreover, the same challenges recur throughout the report series and irrespective of changes in the specific indicators used. We know what the challenges are, and we know where they are felt most intensely; what is needed is the will to address them.



Impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Rural Education

This special section is qualitatively different from those in previous reports for multiple reasons. COVID-19's impacts were personal, political, medical, economic, and existential. Moreover, those impacts are still manifesting and changing the landscape of rural education. This section is therefore preliminary given that much of the supporting literature was published in 2020–2022 and impact data have yet to be published for 2022 to the time of this report. Hence, what follows is both partial and personal, with first-person statements reflecting the elusiveness of any single or simple truth about the pandemic and its effects on rural education. The viewpoints presented in this section are those of the authors and should not be construed as representative of the report's funders or sponsors.

The year 2020---and the world didn't change, but it did. Some still grieve the losses, some deny its existence, yet everyone around the world was impacted by COVID-19 in one way or another. Fights erupted on airplanes over masking requirements. We weren't just more isolated; we were more divided as a country. On electoral maps, wide swaths of rural America were bathed in red, visually associating "rural" and "politically conservative" and reinforcing broad stereotypes that masked the political, social, and cultural heterogeneity of rural America.

Schools pivoted almost overnight to online instruction with teachers receiving little to no training, just as students and their caregivers reconfigured their homes and routines to accommodate in-home schooling. The requirement to accommodate virtual learning rested on assumptions about the availability of affordances like home-life stability, broadband, spaces conducive to learning, and caregiver support.

Lack of such affordances demanded innovation and resilience among families. Working parents called upon grandparents and other family members to monitor students during the workday, formed “pods” (groups of kids from different families rotating to different homes to complete the school day), and traveled to places where they could access wifi, including the school parking lot, but also fast food restaurants.

Mostly, we just wanted it to end so that we could return to our jobs and schools, and to the spaces where we connected with family and friends prior to the pandemic. We wanted things to be as if the pandemic hadn’t happened. Despite the heterogeneity of rural places in the United States, a common feature is the connectedness: people-to-people, people-to-land, even people-to-past as tradition. As such, the recommended/mandated social distancing to control the spread of the virus was a direct assault on the defining characteristic of rural communities.

The greatest challenge in analyzing on any scale the effects of the pandemic on rural education is the lack of data and research on the subject. In the world of large-scale data sets, and especially publicly-available ones, a 2–3 year lag in availability means that as of the writing of this report, COVID-era data are only just now becoming available. As such, this essay draws on the limited research available, in some cases extrapolating from research on other similar situations (such as the 2005 Pakistan earthquake), to set the stage for the next round of *Why Rural Matters*, where we will have a more complete picture of pandemic impacts on education. This is unfortunate not only for the tentativeness of this special section, but more importantly because there is little doubt that there will be gaps in learning and experiences of our students that require urgent interventions.

This section uses scant literature and data from 2020–2023 to shine a light on rural education in the United States during that time period. Rural places

have long demonstrated both resilience and a spirit of innovation that lend itself to an optimism about post-pandemic rural education. Anecdotal reports demonstrate the ingenuity and dedication of school districts, including the delivery of meals to students, greater coordination with parents in supporting their students’ remote learning, and the delivery of technology and, where possible, access to broadband internet. We acknowledge these efforts and see them as perhaps even evidence of how rural and small-town communities can coordinate and implement resiliency strategies in ways that other locale types may not be able to do. This section focuses instead on pandemic effects that may require the attention of policymakers, districts, and community members—that is, places where more or different actions are needed.

Two broad and overlapping themes emerge from the limited literature available on the impacts of COVID on rural education: education and well-being. The former includes subthemes of teaching and curriculum, inequities and gaps, educational outcomes, and tech resources. “Well-being” represents the context of impacts on education, namely homelife changes, economic impacts, and the availability of wraparound services. Given the already limited state of literature broadly, rural-specific COVID-19 literature is even more limited. As such, the impacts described below often are for rural and non-rural locales alike. Rural-specific impacts are highlighted wherever possible.

**“It’s never the changes we want
that change everything.”**

Junot Díaz from *The Brief Wondrous Life
of Oscar Wao*

The 2022 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) reports^{xxiv} were the most comprehensive, starkest measure of what is surely to be more significant pandemic-related impacts on learning to follow. They illustrate the impacts on educational outcomes in reading and mathematics in the fourth and eighth grades, showing learning gaps (race, gender, year-over-year, locale) widening or shrinking according to complex dynamics/causes that cannot yet be determined.

The overarching result in NAEP data was a reduction in scores. In mathematics, rural grade 4 performance declined by two points and rural grade 8 performance declined by eight points in 2022 compared to 2019. In reading, rural grade 4 performance declined by one point and rural grade 8 performance declined by four points.

In grade 4, gender gaps among rural students widened slightly for mathematics (from a gap of three points to a gap of four points) and narrowed for reading (from a gap of seven to a gap of five—of note, this “narrowing” of the gap does not represent an improvement among boys; they just declined less than girls). In grade 8, gender gaps among rural students widened for mathematics (indeed, reversing from girls on average scoring two points higher than boys to girls on average scoring four points lower than boys) and gender gaps for reading stayed constant (with girls outperforming boys by nine points). Mathematics scores for rural grade 8 girls appear to be the hardest hit by the COVID-19 period, declining 11 points from 2019 to 2022 (more than any other student group on either test at either grade level).

Changes over the same time frame in gaps tied to race among rural students were mixed, with the gap narrowing or remaining flat on three measures (grade 4 reading, declining from a gap of 16 to a gap of 13; grade 8 reading, declining from a gap of 13 to a gap of 12; and grade 4 mathematics, staying constant at gap of 13) and increasing on the fourth (grade 4 mathematics, increasing from 16 to 17).

Changes over the same time frame in gaps tied to socioeconomic status among rural students were similarly mixed, with the gap narrowing on three measures (grade 4 reading, declining from a gap of 24 to a gap of 22; grade 8 mathematics, declining from a gap of 23 to a gap of 22; and grade 8 reading, declining from a gap of 20 to a gap of 18) and increasing on one measure (grade 4 mathematics, increasing from a gap of 19 to a gap of 20). Rural achievement gaps tied to socioeconomic status were by far the largest (in comparison with gender-based gaps and race-based gaps) for both grades and both subjects, before and after the COVID-19 period.

While the research literature does not yet offer rural-specific analyses of pandemic issues and their impact on teaching and learning, there is some limited research that—although not specific to rural schools and communities—does suggest insights that might inform the work moving forward. Early in the pandemic, a pre-pandemic study on shifts to online learning found that “...student learning was significantly impacted by stress, anxiety, illness, being forced to learn in a vastly different method than previously experienced, and the increased potential to fall behind due to lack of access to materials.”^{xxv} These stressors were borne differently by some groups, “the most vulnerable populations are falling further behind with online instruction. Some of these students have unstable housing or are homeless while others lack reliable internet access or computer accessibility”^{xxvi}

One study used summer learning loss literature and the analyses of learning losses following the 2005 Pakistan earthquake to illustrate how learning losses can accumulate over time. “The direct effect of the school closures alone cannot account for such large deficits in later test scores, suggesting affected children learned less each year after they regiment to school because of the short-term interruption...One possible explanation is that the curriculum and instruction did not adapt to the children’s lower learning levels upon

re-entry into school and hence the affected children fell farther and farther behind.”^{xxvii} This suggests that the impacts on learning of COVID-19-related closures will be felt for some time, even though classrooms are mostly back to face-to-face instruction. After modeling these accumulated losses, the study concluded that “if learning in grade 3 is reduced by one-third, roughly the amount of time many children are [during the pandemic] likely to be out of school, learning levels in grade 10 (compared to a counterfactual of the same children with no shock) are a *full year lower*.”^{xxviii} New models of intervention are needed as soon as possible to make up for lost instruction earlier to minimize the accumulation of learning loss. One such model, an “instruction reorientation strategy,” combines short-term remediation with long-term reorientation of instruction to children’s learning levels.^{xxix} That model not only erases learning losses, but places grade 10 students farther ahead than they would have been absent the shock of the pandemic. Famed educator Gloria Ladson-Billings notes, “normal is where the problems reside...‘going back’ is the wrong thing for children and youth who were unsuccessful and oppressed in our schools before the pandemic.”^{xxx}

More than just 2020 school closures, the shift to online learning may not have been significantly different on learning outcomes than outright closures. In surveys during the 2020 pivot to online instruction, teachers reported unpreparedness to teach online, and many districts focused their efforts only on math and ELA during that time.^{xxxi} “Teachers also taught less new material, especially in high-poverty schools.”^{xxxii} Student absenteeism was a further problem—an NCES report quantified this, stating “school leaders report[ing] increased student absenteeism as a COVID-19-related problem...across a wide range of school types, including in elementary schools (75%), schools with lower student poverty rates (73%), and rural schools (71%).”^{xxxiii}

If learning in grade 3 is reduced by one-third, roughly the amount of time many children are [during the pandemic] likely to be out of school, learning levels in grade 10...are a full year lower.

Not only did the stress associated with a change disproportionately impact vulnerable groups of students, but one study found that district-level schooling modes (in-person, hybrid, distance) disproportionately affected learning across different populations.^{xxxiv} Looking at 12 states’ reading test score data, the study found that declines in pass rates were more likely to be found in districts with less in-person instruction. More concerning, these declines were disproportionately strong in districts where the majority of students were students of color. No such difference was found in math scores. The researchers concluded that, “lost participation seems to disproportionately come from groups with generally lower test scores, this would suggest our estimates underestimate test score losses.”^{xxxv}

Technology access, including adequate computational devices and broadband internet, drove resource-related outcome gaps.^{xxxvi} The problem is not simply access to internet but adequate access to internet—that is, bandwidth sufficient to support two-way video chats and other graphics-intensive programs on sufficiently-sized screens. It is estimated that “9.7 million children nationwide do not have access to reliable internet in their homes.”^{xxxvii}

The pandemic impacts were felt by all, but safety nets and resource resilience were not distributed uniformly across the United States. The next section looks at the impacts of the pandemic on economic, social, and physical well-being. As in the previous section, we focus wherever possible on rural-specific impacts.

Well-being

Hunger, poverty, and other insecurities are highly impactful on learning. Twenty-first century teachers are called on to teach the whole child by attending to the well-being of children for whom they serve as ad hoc counselors, providers, and guardians. Rural teachers, especially, wear many hats, often teaching multiple subject areas, coaching, serving as nurses, and sometimes even bus drivers. Now, more than ever, schools provide these “wraparound services.” Hence, any interrogation of the impacts of the pandemic on rural schooling has to look at the contextual well-being of the students, teachers, and communities in which that schooling takes place. As one research pointed out, “Accessibility to academic resources, healthcare, mental health supports, food and nutrition, and safe places to learn were just a few of the challenges COVID-19 presented to the marginalized. In the context of the adapted hierarchy, all levels were impacted. For many CLD [Children living with Learning Disabilities] and low-SES students, schools provide mental and physical health support, food and nutrition, and safe, structured environments.”^{xxxviii}

Access to the wraparound services mentioned here depends on regular connection between the teacher and the student, and this was and is a significant challenge. Finding substitutes for teachers who were sick or who left the profession during the pandemic was a significant challenge. One report found that 77% of public schools experienced increased difficulty in finding substitutes during the pandemic.^{xxxix} Another found increased vacancies in teacher positions linked to the pandemic, especially in areas involving vulnerable populations such as students with individualized education plans.^{xl} The impact of vacancies on rural schools may be even greater in cases where there are one or few teachers in any given discipline or support area.

COVID-19 likely had impacts on the domestic experiences of rural children as well.^{xli} When the school-student connection is strained or gone, so too are the outside monitors of student well-being within

the home. Many factors amplify these effects in rural areas, including the lack of affordable childcare present even pre-pandemic, placing an added responsibility on working parents to find adult supervision so that the parents might work. Fifty-eight percent of rural areas experience “childcare deserts.”^{xlii} Multiple factors exacerbate the effects of COVID-19 in rural communities. According to one researcher:

“Across rural America, the lack of childcare is exacerbated by a geography that makes it infeasible to serve most children in large, centralized childcare centers. There’s no public transportation; parents might have to drive 30 miles to get to a childcare center in town. And for those who work second or third shift at a manufacturing plant, or a prison, or at a shipping warehouse—the kinds of employers often found in rural areas—a childcare center that’s open from 8 to 6 isn’t an option.”^{xliii}

For many students, school is the primary source of nutritious meals. Even before the pandemic, rural students experienced greater levels of food insecurity than their non-rural peers; however, the pandemic further expanded this gap.^{xliv} Nutrition and behavior are linked in ways that are still being uncovered. During the 2021–2022 academic year, the socio-emotional development of students in public schools was adversely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, according to 87% of the schools surveyed. According to the same survey, 84% of public schools agreed or strongly agreed that students’ behavioral development has also suffered negative consequences.^{xlv} This is just one data point potentially linking nutrition and mental health both across the United States generally and especially in rural places.

Even before the pandemic, access to mental and physical health resources (a false distinction) was already challenging in rural places. Hospital closures and difficulty attracting and retaining qualified medical professionals became an even greater issue during the pandemic. With more than 100 rural hospitals closed

since 2005,^{xlvi} it is not surprising that “more than two-thirds of public schools reported an increase in the percentage of students seeking mental health services from school since the start of the pandemic”^{xlvii} and that “higher percentages of public schools and rural and town locations than in suburban locations strongly disagreed that their school can effectively provide mental health services to all students in need.”^{xlviii} Drivers of the surge in mental health needs included “stress, anxiety, illness, being forced to learn in a vastly different method than previously experienced.”^{xlix} One study of health and economic factors on rural well-being observed that “the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on rural populations have been severe, with significant negative impacts on unemployment, overall life satisfaction, mental health, and economic outlook.”^l Rural areas are more vulnerable than non-rural areas given issues of persistent poverty, lack of access to broadband internet as well as mental/health care.^{li} Particularly harsh effects of the COVID-19 pandemic were found in rural areas on availability of part-time work.^{lii} Employment and resources are especially impactful on homelife satisfaction and security, nutrition, and school attendance. As such, these findings are especially concerning now and in the long run.

But a more direct challenge for rural students in the pandemic is access to adequate technology, both broadband access and computing technology. Both rural areas and districts with high relative percentages of children living in homes below the federal poverty line had high numbers of families reporting limited access to educational technologies both in school and at home.^{liii} The digital divide of the past has become a need for participating in school life and the economy more broadly; it is not yet to be found on Maslow’s hierarchy or adapted hierarchy,^{liiv} but during quarantine and social isolation, the best fed and healthiest student could not participate in learning without broadband access able to handle basic video conferencing. While bringing broadband access to every corner of the United States is likened by politicians to rural

electrification, thus far the will to act and to allocate funds has not happened. Fully one-third of rural adults said that they did not have access to the internet at home as of 2020.^{liv}

With more than 100 rural hospitals closed since 2005... “more than two-thirds of public schools reported an increase in the percentage of students seeking mental health services from school since the start of the pandemic”...

Conclusion

We are at the beginning of understanding on any broad scale how the COVID-19 pandemic affected teaching and learning, let alone being able to make confident claims about the specific effects in rural areas. The pandemic required rapid changes, resilience, coping, ingenuity, compromising, and more. The one thing of which there is no doubt is that rural education did not escape COVID-19 impacts. Comprehensive, publicly available data are only now starting to emerge even as teaching and learning are having to find ways to respond to the consequences of pandemic disruptions. We expect the emerging data will offer far greater insight into these changes, exposing not only areas of concern requiring immediate attention and significant spatial inequities, but also positive consequences that speak to how rural pandemic responses may have changed education and related supports for learning and wellness for the better.

Alignment of Why Rural Matters 2023

to the National Rural Education Association's Rural Research Agenda 2022–2027

The National Rural Education Association (NREA) has been a voice for rural education since its founding in 1907. By highlighting the success of rural schools and communities and calling attention to challenges, NREA has a mission to promote rural vitality. Notably, for the first time, NREA is the host organization for the Why Rural Matters report, which was previously sponsored by another rural advocacy organization, The Rural School and Community Trust. With NREA's 2022 release of the National Rural Education Association's Rural Research Agenda 2022–2027,^{lvi} the collaboration between NREA and Why Rural Matters could not be better timed. With NREA's Rural Research Agenda forefront in our minds from the beginning of planning for Why Rural Matters 2023, we specifically tailored the report to answer the rural research agenda's call for research that investigates educational and spatial equity, while also highlighting strengths-focused, innovative rural practices.

Although the *Why Rural Matters* report has been and remains a nonpartisan reporting of rural successes and challenges, the creators of the *Why Rural Matters* report would be remiss in not recognizing the ongoing political divisiveness that continues to create large rifts between rural and non-rural communities in the United States and discord within rural communities themselves. In the current political climate, rural people and places face greater scrutiny than ever before, often experiencing stereotypes that separate rural people and places from productive discussions about the very real challenges they experience, as well as diminishing possible platforms for showcasing rural innovation and success that can make important contributions across educational locales — rural or

non-rural. These tensions reveal an imperative for rural educational research about practices that increase access to rural educational opportunities and the need to bring rural strengths and successes into focus across the United States. In this section of the *Why Rural Matters* report, we describe the NREA Rural Research Agenda 2022–2027 and provide an analysis of how this *Why Rural Matters* report is aligned to the new NREA Research Agenda. An understanding of the alignment of these two important pieces of work is relevant for any educational partners who are interested in the next steps that are needed to advance equity and opportunity in rural education research and practice.

The Ongoing Rural Research Imperative

The call for more research about rural education is not new. Rural education scholars have noted the significant lack of research about rural educational settings for decades, repeatedly calling for an increase in the amount of educational research that is specifically attentive to the unique challenges and strengths of rural people and places. In 1995, rural researcher Alan DeYoung wrote, “Rural American schools still educate almost 28% of the nation’s children, but only educational historians and rural sociologists have paid much attention to issues and dynamics of such places.”^{lvii} A decade later, Michael Arnold reported, “For all practical purposes, the knowledge base about important rural education issues is nonexistent.”^{lviii} Calls for rural research continued in the first quarter of the 21st century^{lix} and were periodically punctuated with specific research agendas that were designed to increase the amount of rural education research.^{lx, lxi}

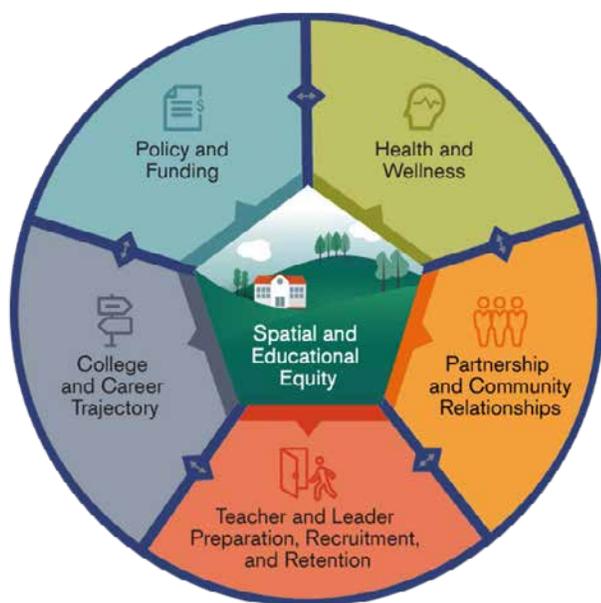
In recognition of the pressing need for rural education research, the *Why Rural Matters* reports have consistently provided rural education partners with essential research that identifies the strengths and needs of rural schools and communities on a state-by-state basis for nearly a quarter of a century. The first edition of *Why Rural Matters* appeared in the *Journal of Research in Rural Education* in 2000 and was the first report of its kind to specifically provide an analysis of rural education in each of the 50 states.^{lxii} Since then, the report has appeared nearly biannually, each edition continuing the original report’s goal of “bringing rural schools and communities into focus.”^{lxiii} With each iteration seeing hundreds of citations in research journals and policy reports and an unknowable number of citations in grant requests and other informal outlets, the report has for decades provided data that educators, researchers, and policymakers have used to advocate for impactful resources, supports, and opportunities for rural children and communities.

In 2016, NREA joined the effort to advance rural education research with the release of its first official Rural Research Agenda 2016–2021.^{lxiv} The NREA Research Agenda – 2016–2021 was comprehensive and described 10 broad research priorities that permitted researchers, practitioners, and policymakers to identify the issues that were most important in their school or community’s context. Although NREA’s Rural Research Agenda 2016–2021 was still focused on increasing the amount of research that was focused on rural locales, the agenda also pointedly stated that, “Equity in educational opportunity lies at the heart of our mission as an organization and serves as a guiding principle for our research agenda.”^{lxv} NREA’s first research agenda launched a formal call for charting a research path that was continued by the release of the organization’s second rural research agenda in 2022.

NREA's Rural Research Agenda

2022–2027

The National Rural Education Association's Rural Research Agenda 2022–2027 fully highlights the organization's mission of increasing access to educational opportunities. This research agenda is a call to action that asks educational partners to examine the ways that educational and spatial equity create challenges and spur innovation in rural education contexts.^{lxvi} The research agenda was drafted as a result of an extensive research project that was responsive to participants' perceptions of rural research priorities.^{lxvii, lxviii} The agenda centers Spatial and Educational Equity with five additional interconnected themes circling the core category—Policy and Funding; Teacher/Leader Recruitment, Retention, and Preparation; College and Career Trajectory; Community Partnerships and Relationships, and Health and Wellness.^{lxix} The goal of the new research agenda is to shed light on innovative rural practices, address unique rural challenges, and continue to build on the strengths of rural people and places through an intersectional lens of Educational and Spatial Equity.^{lxx, lxxi} The core category, Spatial and Educational Equity, is a term that may be new to many, but its definition will likely be familiar.



Spatial equity is the way that equity is linked to place and explicitly refers to how resources of all types are allocated, how services are distributed within rural schools and communities, and the way rural people are able to access educational opportunities. In rural education, spatial inequity is exacerbated by policies that impact funding systems, access to early intervention supports, opportunities for interdisciplinary learning experiences, the availability of mental health services, access to reliable broadband, and much more (see Figure 1 for examples of rural spatial inequities).

Rural places have long been incubators of innovative practices that use scalable models to positively impact student learning and community well-being. Yet, for decades rural places and people have experienced significant spatial inequities, ones that are compounded by the intersection of educational inequity that is present across all educational locales.^{lxxii} It is possible to trace causes of spatial inequities, as well as to identify where spatial inequities intersect with other forms of educational inequity. What is of significant concern, however, is calling attention to the outcomes that are created by patterns of inequity that lead to longstanding and persistent challenges for rural children, schools, and communities. The need to report the ways that spatial equity/inequity impacts rural education across states is at the heart of what the many *Why Rural Matters* reports have reported over the decades. The *Why Rural Matters* reports have always described disparate access to educational resources and opportunities across rural contexts. Now, informed by NREA's Rural Research Agenda, *Why Rural Matters 2023* continues to identify and highlight examples and patterns of rural educational inequities that demand consideration from policymakers while also highlighting areas of strength within the 50 states.

Developing *Why Rural Matters* 2023

When the new NREA Rural Research Agenda was released, work on *Why Rural Matters 2023* was just beginning, which allowed the *Why Rural Matters* research team to respond purposefully to the rural agenda's research priorities. Since the first *Why Rural Matters* report was published in 2000, gauges and indicators used to determine state-by-state analyses have been reactive to current educational challenges and opportunities. Understanding trends and needs has always been an important factor in determining which indicators comprise the *Why Rural Matters* featured gauges, and the authors of the *Why Rural Matters* reports have always used current research to determine which direction to take in analyzing rural education indicators.

The first *Why Rural Matters* report debuted with two gauges: *Rural Importance* and *Rural Urgency*,^{lxxiii} and by

the time the *Why Rural Matters 2018–2019* report was released, the report contained the two original gauges, as well as three additional gauges.^{lxxiv} Over time, the indicators used to calculate each gauge have also evolved depending on the availability of rural education data. For example, in the *Why Rural Matters 2018–2019* report, in calculating the *Student and Family Diversity* gauge, the report's researchers moved away from using the number of rural students receiving free or reduced lunches due to a recognition that many schools now provide all students with an opportunity to receive discounted lunches.^{lxxv} Now, the release of NREA's Rural Research Agenda 2022–2027 provides a unique opportunity to align to the most current research available regarding pressing research priorities. In the section that follows, a description of how this iteration of *Why Rural Matters* is aligned to NREA's Rural Research Agenda 2022–2027 is discussed.

FIGURE 1 Rural Spatial Inequity Examples



BROADBAND ACCESS

- Limited ability to participate in virtual school options
- Decreased access to research, learning applications, and other online learning resources
- Reduced parent/caregiver access to school events
- Reduced access to teacher and school communications



TRANSPORTATION

- Increased distance to health care services
- Increased time spent on bus rides to and from school and/or school-supported extracurricular activities
- Inequitable dispersal of state funding for school transportation costs



STAFFING

- Challenges in recruiting and retaining teachers and school leaders
- Issues in staffing of school support personnel, including counselors, bus drivers, nurses, speech/language pathologists, and others
- Lower pay for leaders, teachers, and other support staff

Alignment of *Why Rural Matters*

to NREA's Rural Research Agenda 2022–2027

Why Rural Matters 2023 represents an intentional alignment to NREA's Rural Research Agenda and a recognition of the importance that Spatial and Educational Equity have in determining the overall condition of rural education in the 50 states and states' ability to meet the diverse needs of rural children and families. Throughout each of the five gauges, *Why Rural Matters 2023* highlights a clear connection to the research agenda's core theme of Spatial and Educational Equity, as well as to the intersection with the research agenda's five supporting themes. *Why Rural Matters 2023* has five gauges: 1) *Importance*, 2) *Student and Family Diversity*, 3) *Educational Policy Context*, 4) *Educational Outcomes*, and, 5) *Access to Supports for Learning and Development*. The first three gauges and their indicators are nearly identical to the last *Why Rural Matters* report. The fourth gauge, while maintaining a focus on educational outcomes, measures a different set of outcomes. The fifth gauge is completely new in this report (see the results section of this report for a more detailed description of each gauge and how its indicators were calculated). Whether new or unchanged, each gauge in the *Why Rural Matters 2023* report is connected to NREA's Rural Research Agenda 2022–2027. To illuminate these connections, what follows next is a discussion of the how the five *Why Rural Matters* gauges align to the research agenda's core category of Spatial and Educational Equity and to the agenda's five intersectional supporting categories, which include policy and funding; teacher/leader recruitment, retention, and preparation; college and career trajectory; community partnerships and relationships, and health and wellness.^{lxxvi, lxxvii, lxxviii}



Importance Gauge

NREA's Rural Research Agenda calls for research that investigates funding through a lens of spatial equity. The *Importance* gauge speaks to this important measure of rural school access to supports and services. The *Importance* gauge includes five indicators that are used to determine the importance

of attending to rural education in each state. In general, a higher percentage of rural schools, students, and funding correlates to a higher ranking on the *Importance* gauge. Further connected to NREA's Rural Research Agenda and the *Importance* gauge, *Why Rural Matters 2023* illuminates some states that provide funding in spatially equitable ways, as well as others that have work to do to address spatial inequities. An examination of funding through a lens of spatial equity on a state-by-state basis provides the data the rural research agenda identifies as a research priority. In states with high *Importance* gauge rankings, awareness of funding and policy decision-making allows invested parties to address challenges that inhibit spatial equity.



Student and Family Diversity Gauge

The *Student and Family Diversity* gauge

provides an essential examination of the intersection between NREA's core theme of Spatial and Educational Equity and the Health and Wellness theme on the rural research agenda. The five indicators that comprise this gauge provide an investigation of *racial diversity*, *poverty*, *disability*, and *household mobility* (which is used as a potential indicator of housing insecurity). Of note, states with an “*Urgent*” measure on this indicator represent the highest levels of intersection between rural student measures of race, poverty, and disability. Conversely, states with more favorable scores on the *Diversity* gauge had much lower scores on the *rural diversity index* indicator (i.e., a measure of the chances of randomly selecting two students from a rural school who are of a different race/ethnicity), indicating an important intersection between Spatial and Educational Equity for rural students of color. This gauge continues to illuminate the intersectional nature of equity/inequity and highlights the importance of including spatial equity as a contributor to other educational equity challenges such as disability. The intersection of equity forms the core theme of NREA's Rural Research Agenda.



Educational Policy Context Gauge

Policy and Funding is one of the five themes of NREA's Rural Research Agenda, creating a direct link to the *Educational Policy Context* gauge. This gauge uses five indicators to examine the ways that policies impact funding for instruction, staffing, and transportation in rural schools. In rural educational settings, funding formulas have long been recognized as inequitable, exacerbating both Spatial and Educational Inequities.^{lxxxix, lxxx, lxxxi} The five indicators used in the *Educational Policy Context* gauge highlight the strong connection between equitable policy and funding and a state's overall educational well-being.

One of the indicators on this gauge examines the ratio of instructional to transportation expenditures, specifically the amount of money spent on instruction for every \$1 spent on transportation in rural districts. In rural contexts, funding for transportation has historically been an area of significant spatial inequity, with state funding formulas often failing to account for higher transportation costs in rural districts.^{lxxxii} Another indicator on the *Educational Policy Context* gauge is a measure of salary expenditures per the number of full-time equivalent teachers, which directly aligns to the rural research agenda's theme of Teacher and Leader Preparation, Recruitment, and Retention. Recruiting and retaining teachers is a serious concern across educational locales but is an issue of heightened concern in rural educational settings.^{lxxxiii} Teacher salaries impact a rural district's ability to recruit and retain teachers, and those teachers have a significant impact on the quality of the instruction that is delivered to children. As *Why Rural Matters 2023* illustrates, states that more equitably compensate their teachers fare better in their state's overall ranking. An analysis of policy and funding patterns is a major contributor to all *Why Rural Matters* reports, a need firmly supported by the research priorities outlined in NREA's Rural Research Agenda.



Educational Outcomes Gauge

The *Educational Outcomes* gauge is aligned with the rural research agenda in several ways. One of its main themes is College and Career Trajectory. This theme recognizes the importance of knowing what path students take when they leave high school. *Why Rural Matters 2023* addresses this in one of the five indicators used to determine the *Educational Outcomes* gauge. The rural advantage for high school indicator is a measure of the rural high school graduation rate minus the non-rural high school graduation rate. The *Educational Outcomes* gauge also examines the intersection of two areas of Spatial and Educational Equity in the rural research agenda, specifically the ways that poverty and rurality intersect to indicate educational outcomes through academic achievement measures. However, it must also be noted that NREA's Rural Research Agenda does not explicitly mention academic achievement as one of its goals, and instead highlights the connection to spatial equity (i.e., access to resources, supports, and opportunities) as the most essential indicator of rural students' academic success and well-being. The intersection of these issues is addressed in *Why Rural Matters 2023's* newest gauge: *Access to Supports for Learning and Development*.



Access to Supports for Learning and Development Gauge

Of the five *Why Rural Matters* gauges used to analyze the condition of rural education in the 50 states, arguably no gauge is better aligned to NREA's Rural Research Agenda 2022-27 than the *Access to Supports for Learning and Development* gauge. The research agenda was released when planning for *Why Rural Matters 2023* was beginning, which allowed for this new gauge to be specifically developed in order to be responsive to the research agenda using an assets- and strengths-focused design. With strengths-based perspectives driving

NREA's Rural Research Agenda and a core focus on Spatial and Educational Equity, the research agenda is a call to action to increase access to educational resources and supports, all of which are highlighted in *Why Rural Matters 2023's* fifth and final gauge.

To start, the *Access to Supports for Learning and Development* gauge aligns closely to the research agenda's theme of Health and Wellness and its intersection with Spatial and Educational Equity. The gauge's first indicator provides an average number of rural students per school counselor/psychologist in a district. Also connected to the Health and Wellness theme, the *Access to Supports for Learning and Development* gauge uses an indicator that reports the percent of uninsured school-aged children. Two other indicators in the gauge reveal a clear alignment between Spatial and Education Equity and other themes on the research agenda. First, the percent of rural enrollment in public preschools indicator connects Spatial and

Educational Equity to the research agenda's themes of Health and Wellness, College and Career Trajectory, and Policy and Funding. Despite research that supports preschool improving access to early intervention services, as well as a positive correlation to future success in school, funding policies often drive access to public preschool.^[xxxiv, xxxv, xxxvi, xxxvii] Second, the *Access to Supports for Learning and Development* gauge uses an indicator that reports enrollment of females in gifted education programs. Finally, an indicator that reported rural households that did not have access to broadband services was used in the *Access to Supports for Learning and Development* gauge. When considering the strong impact that access to resources, supports, and opportunities has on school success and the focus of these issues in NREA's Rural Research Agenda, the *Access to Supports for Learning and Development* gauge is essential for understanding the condition of rural education in each state.



Next Steps

No matter the location of their school or community, rural children in all 50 states deserve equitable access to educational resources, supports, and opportunities. This belief is what drives both *Why Rural Matters 2023* and the National Rural Education Association's Rural Research Agenda 2022–2027. That children in rural schools receive fewer resources, supports, and/or opportunities due to the location of their school or to factors related to their unique identities as individuals speaks to one of the most inequitable conditions that impacts schooling in the United States. When considered through the intersection of Spatial and Educational Equity, it becomes clear that reports such as *Why Rural Matters 2023* are essential for answering the call to action created by the research agenda. All editions of *Why Rural Matters* are created with attention to specific rural contexts as a guiding practice. This time, the *Why Rural Matters* report was also designed to be responsive to the research priorities described in the research agenda. What becomes clear in an analysis of this report when considering the research agenda is that addressing issues of spatial inequity, with particular attention to the intersection of educational equity, must be at the forefront of all work in rural education. As one analyzes the findings presented in *Why Rural Matters 2023*, it is heartening to see many states doing well on a multitude of indicators, yet it is equally troubling to see the disparities that exist for rural children depending on the location of their school/district.

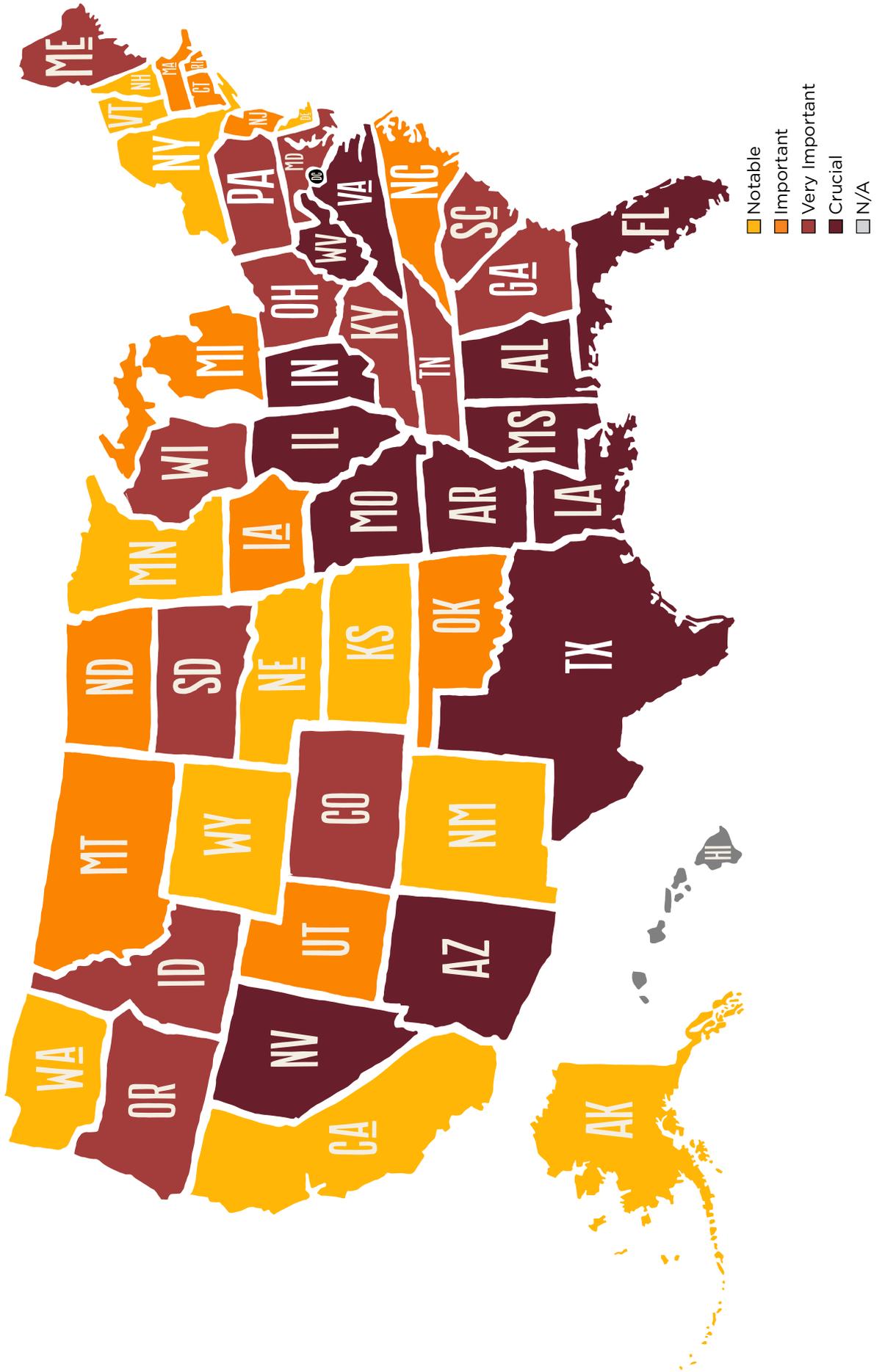
Why Rural Matters 2023 provides empirical analysis of trends and issues in rural educational settings across the 50 states. However, although this report helps to provide essential data related to most of the core themes of NREA's Rural Research Agenda, it does not highlight case-specific instances of innovative practices that are often highly impactful and broadly scalable to other rural locales. This is especially true in regards to the research agenda's theme of Partnerships and Community Relationships. With this in mind, the authors of *Why Rural Matters 2023* hope that rural education partners will use the data presented here to continue research that addresses NREA's research priorities. In particular, more work on the innovative practices that occur within rural schools and communities is needed through a variety of research methodologies including qualitative studies and studies with smaller numbers of participants. Innovative practices are often developed in order to address educational and spatial inequities or to capitalize on rural strengths in ways that intersect with all the themes presented in the research agenda. We hope that both the National Rural Education Association's Rural Research Agenda 2022–2027 and *Why Rural Matters 2023* provide a launching point for these studies and spur the reporting of the innovative practices that are occurring across rural educational settings.



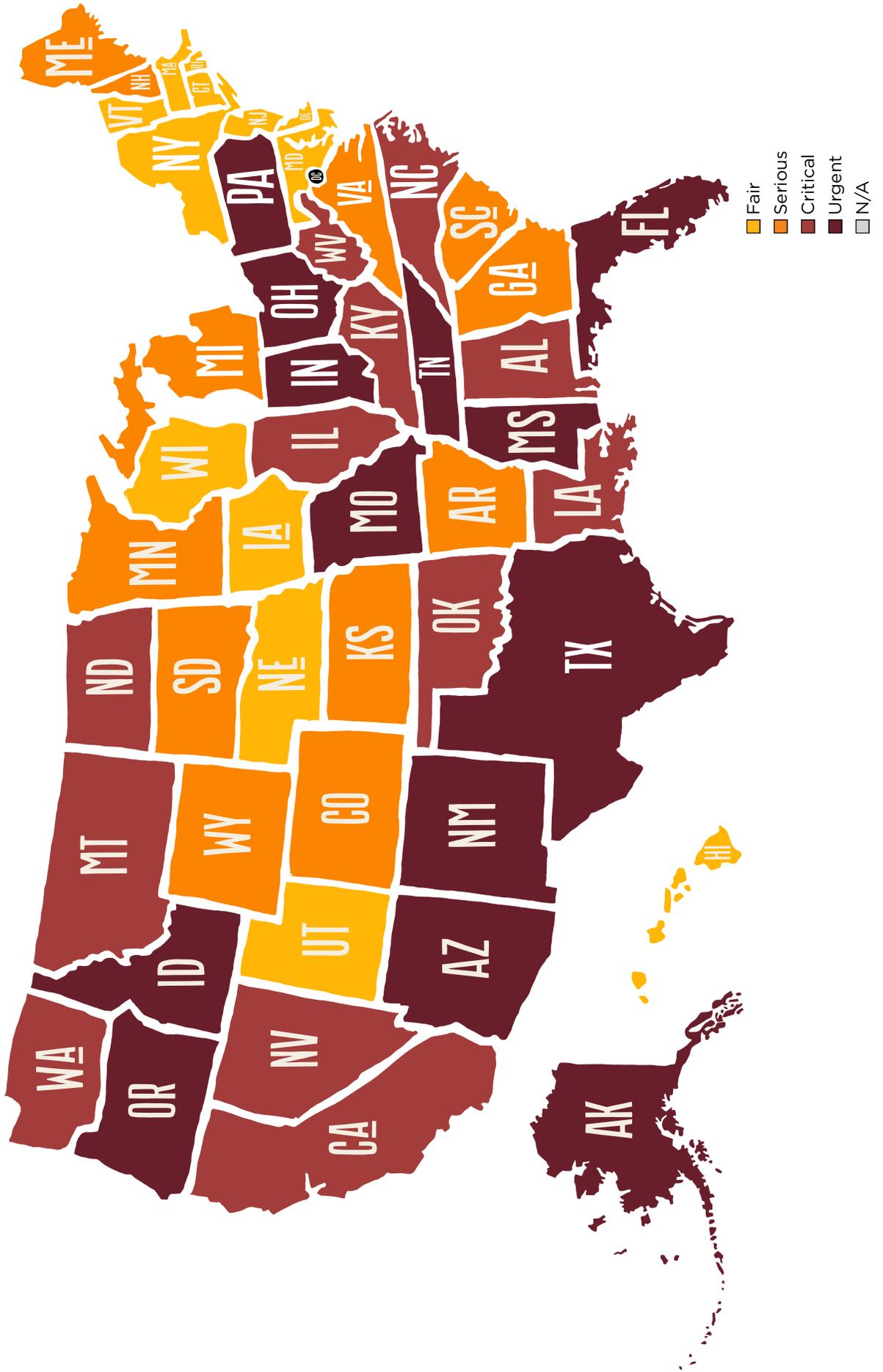
Maps of State Rankings



Educational Policy Context Gauge

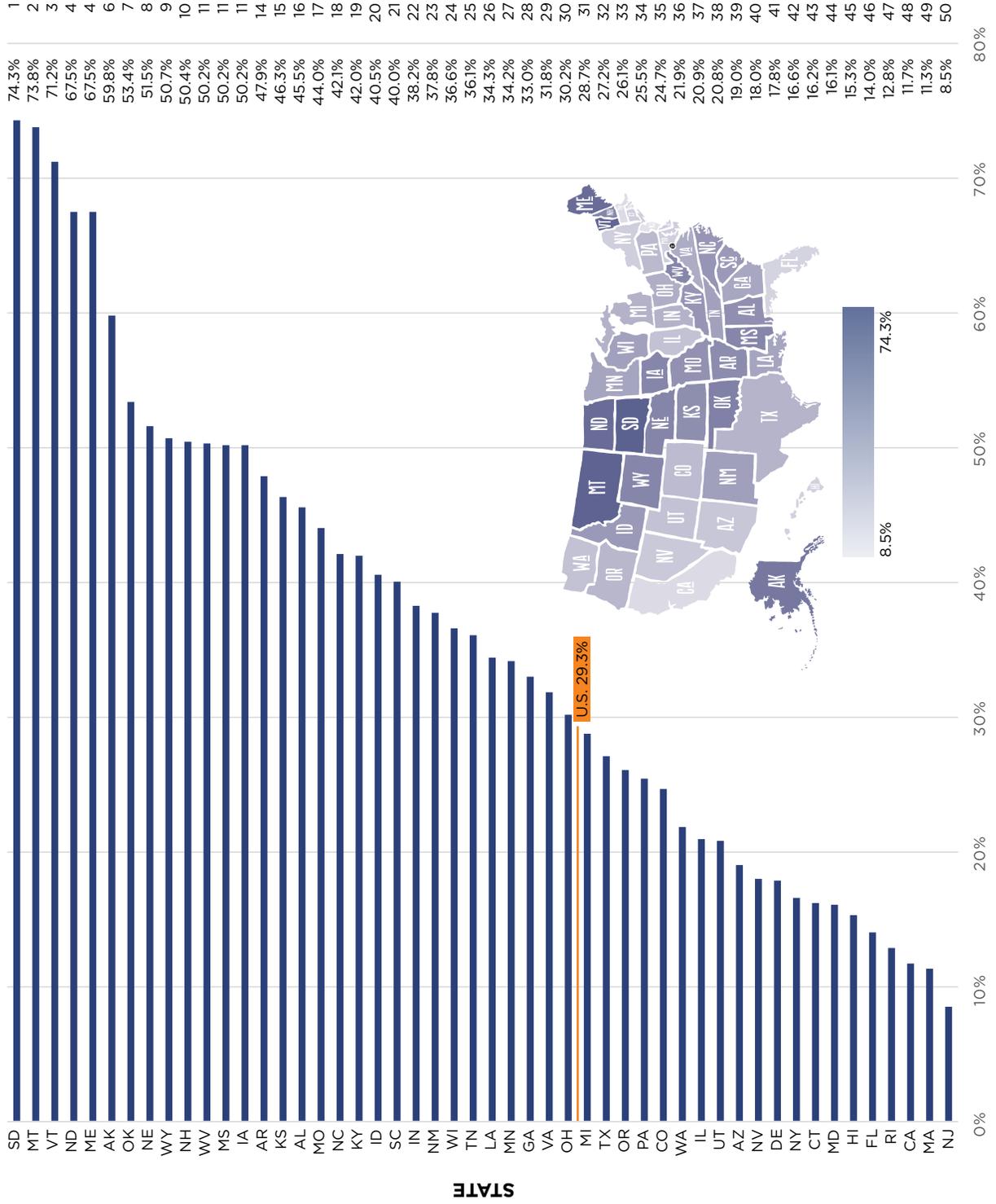


Access to Supports for Learning and Development Gauge



Percent Rural Schools

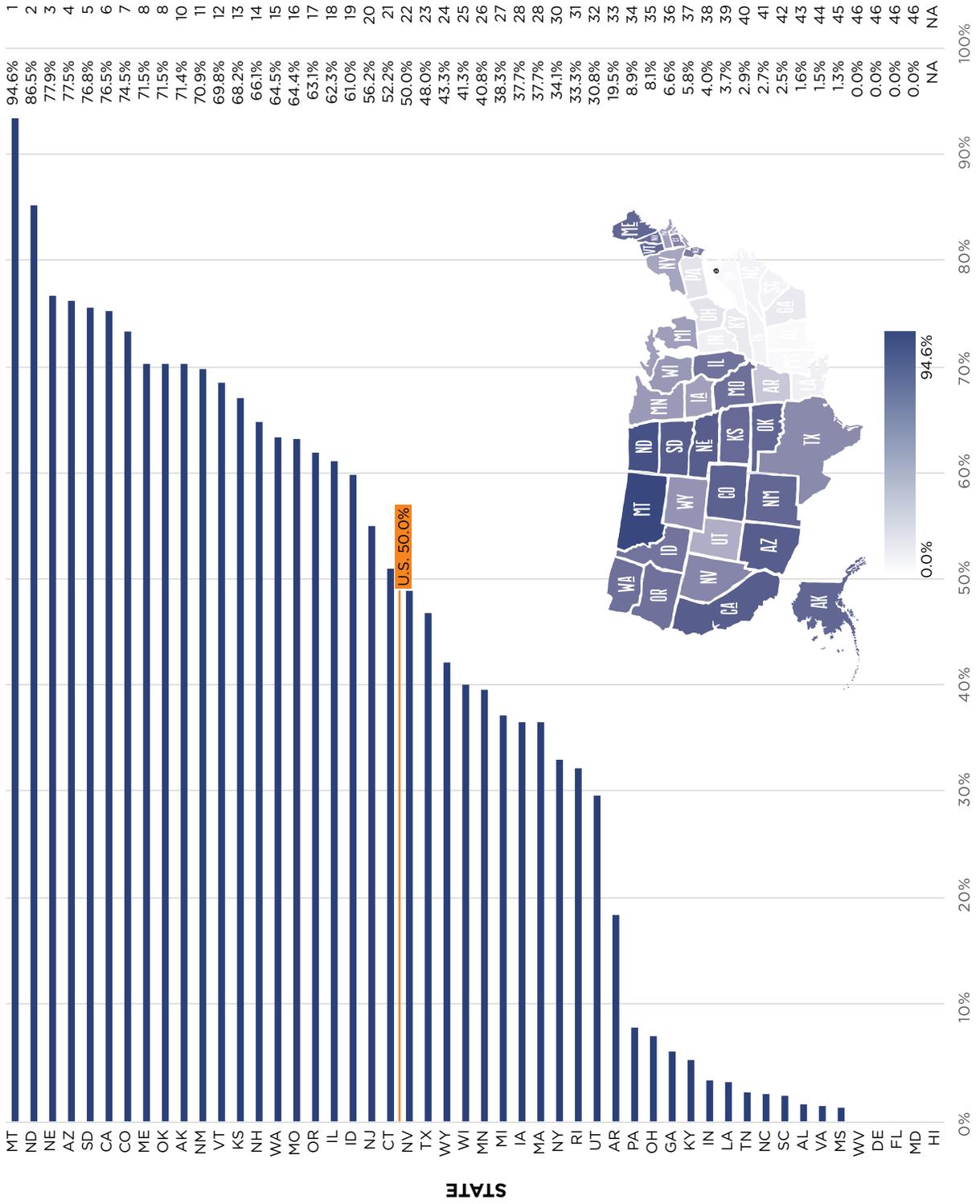
The number of public schools located in places classified as rural by the U.S. Census Bureau, expressed as a percentage of all public schools in the state.



Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data, Public School Universe, 2021-2022

Percent Small Rural School Districts

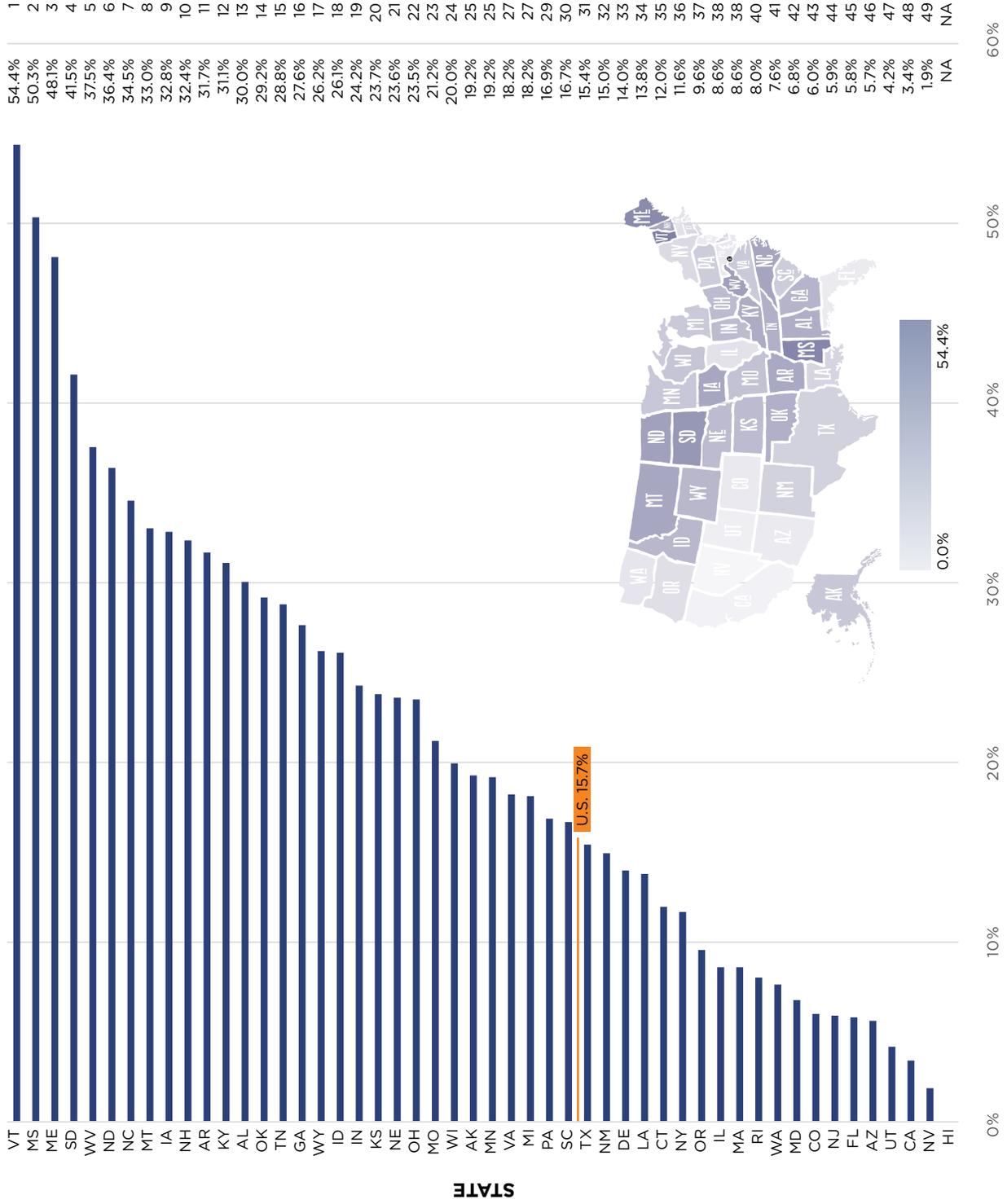
The number of rural public school districts with an enrollment size below the national median for rural districts (493 students), expressed as a percentage of the total number of public school districts in the state.



Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data, Public School Universe, 2021-2022

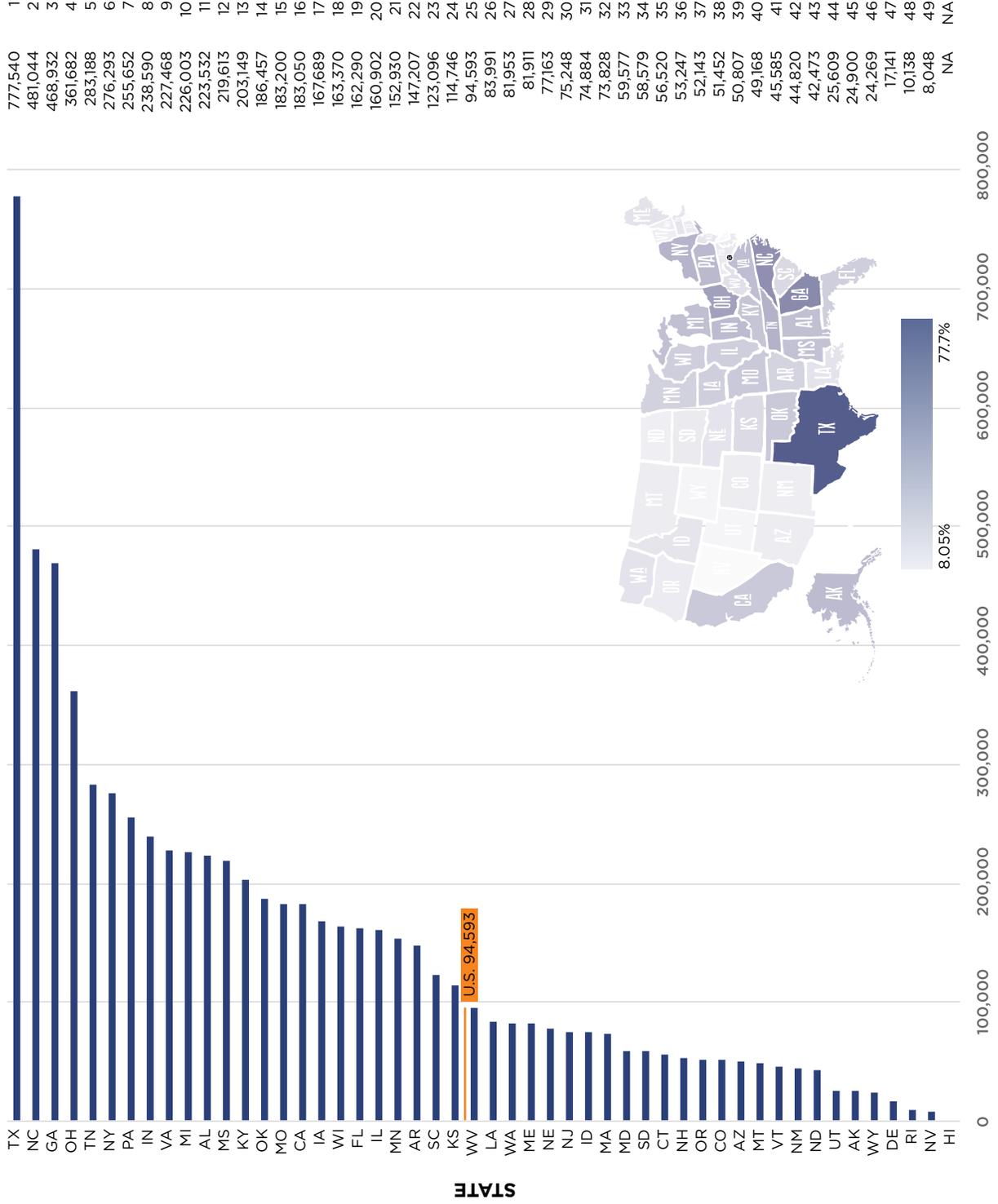
Percent Rural Students

The number of students attending public schools located in districts classified as rural by the U.S. Census Bureau, expressed as a percentage of all public school students in the state.



Number of Rural Students

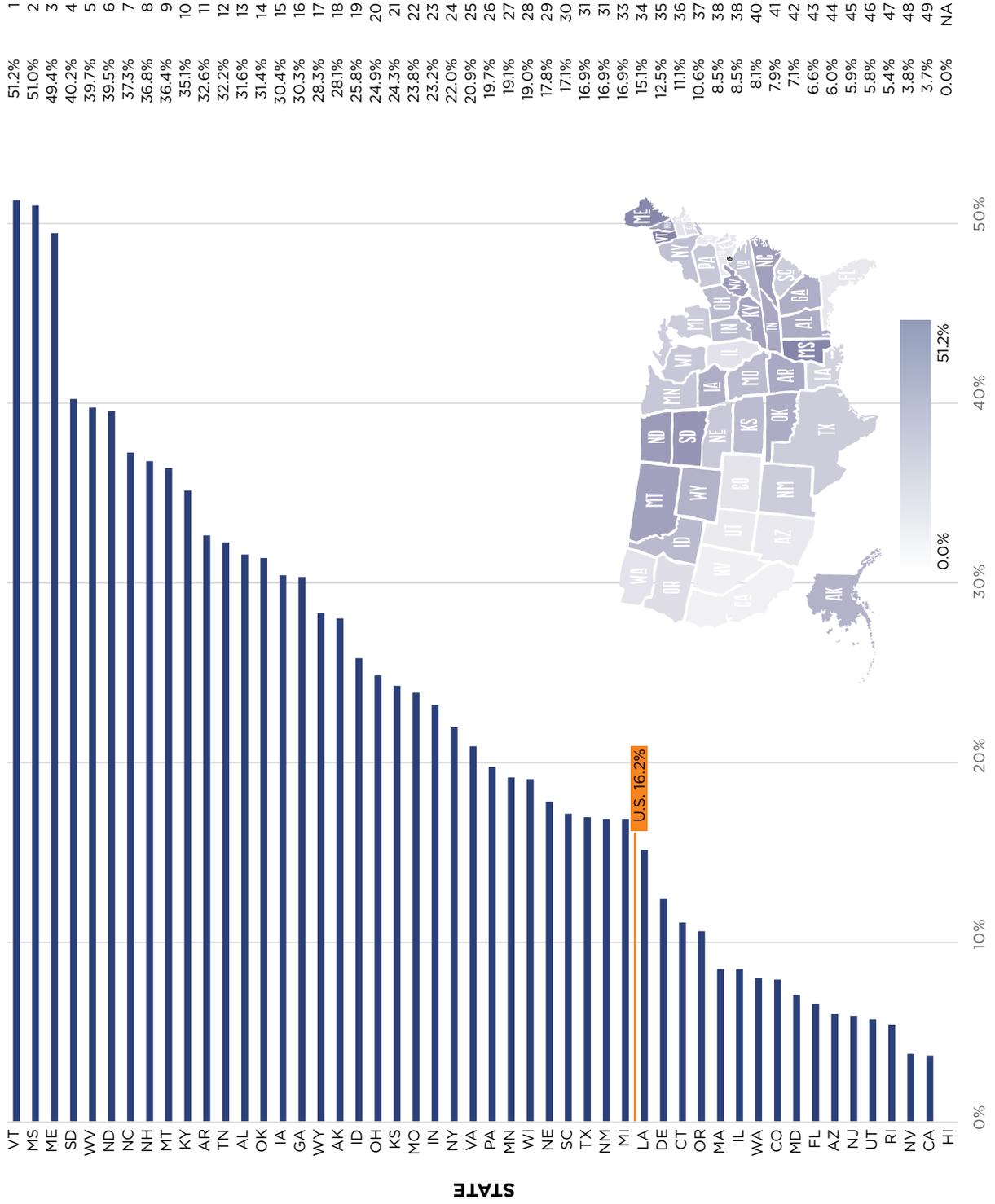
The number of students attending public schools located in a district classified as rural by the U.S. Census Bureau.



Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data, Public School Universe, 2021-2022

Percent of State Education Funds to Rural Districts

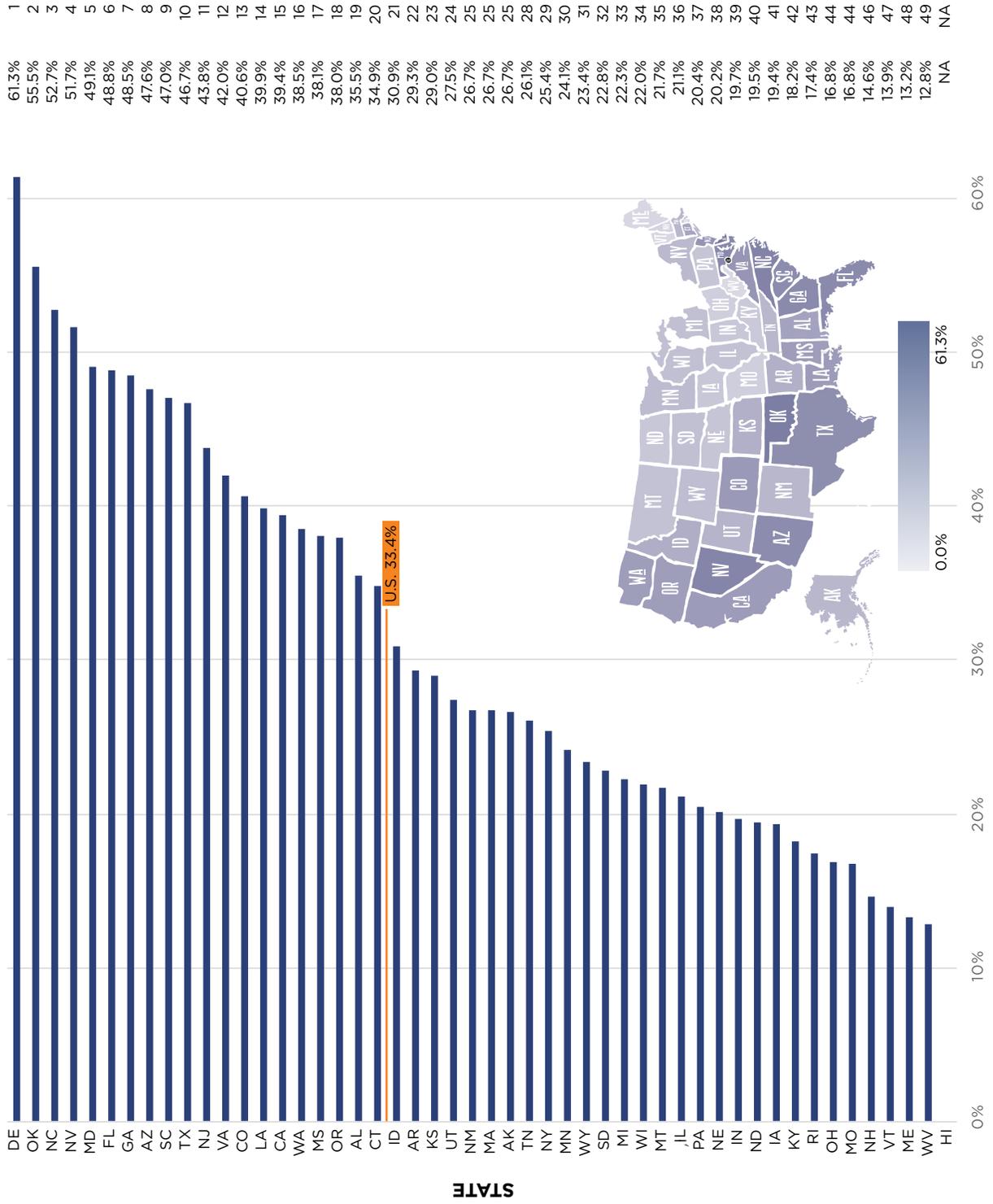
State education funding to local school districts located in rural settings, expressed as a percentage of all state education funding to local school districts.



Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data, Public School Universe, 2018-2019

Rural Diversity Index

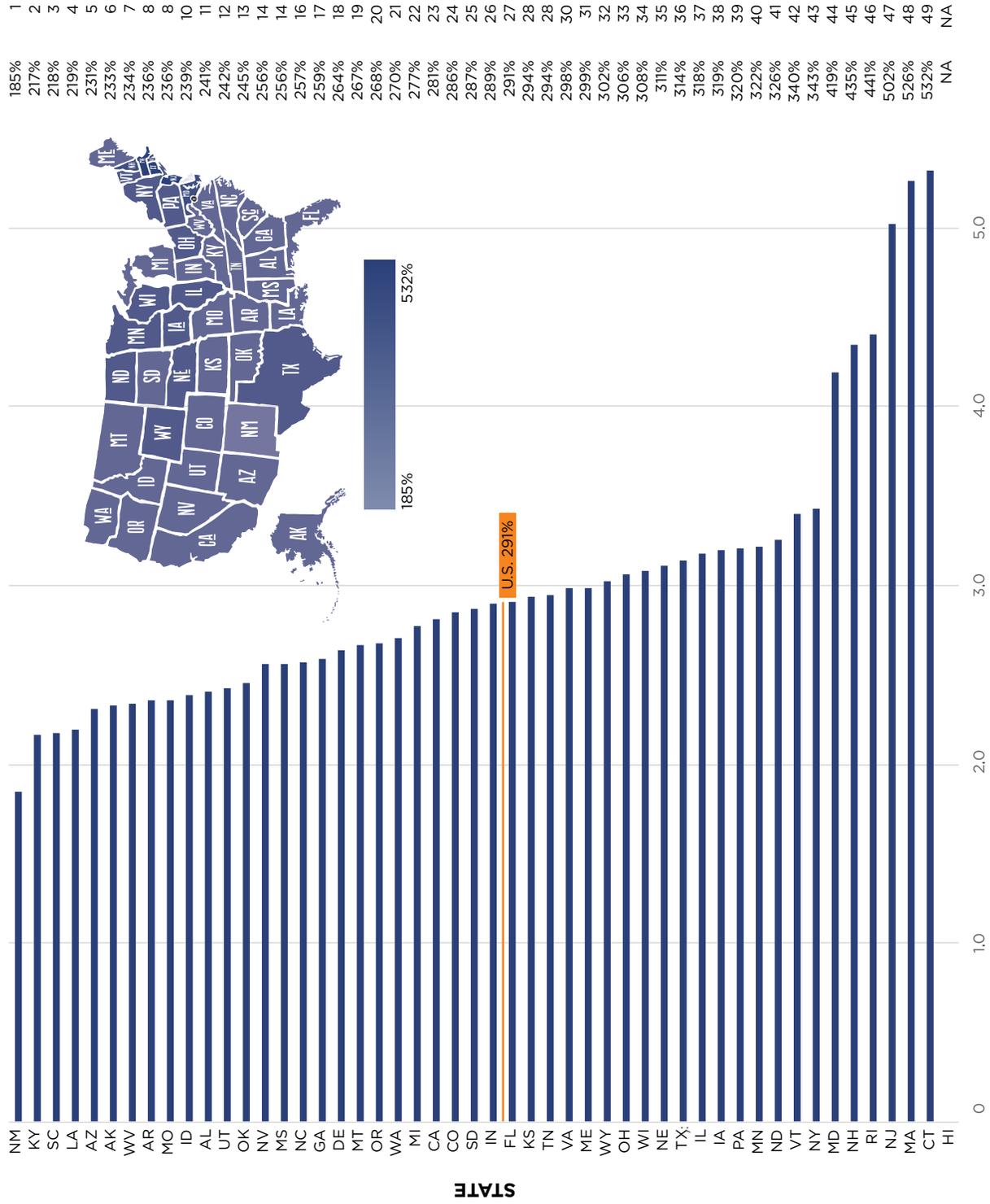
Given a randomly-chosen public school located in a rural district (weighted by school enrollment), and two randomly-chosen students within the school, this is the chance that the students will be of different races.



Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data, Public School Universe, 2021-2022

Poverty Level In Rural School Communities

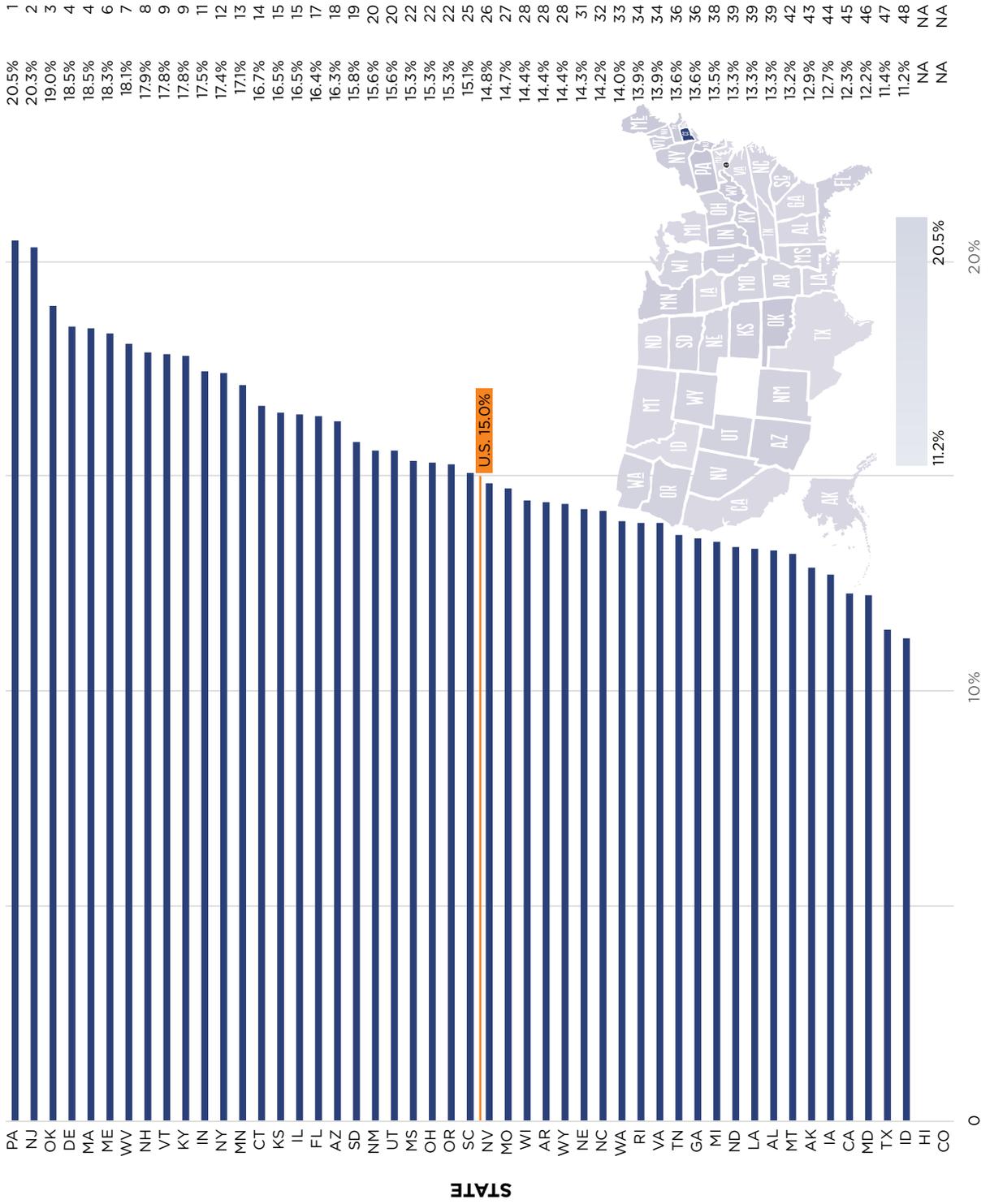
A “school community” is defined as the 25 closest Census-identified households with school-aged children to each school within a rural district. Percents represent the weighted incomes of these 25 households relative to their poverty line as determined by the Department of Health and Human Services. School-level percentages are then aggregated up to the state-level (using district enrollment as a weight).



Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data, Public School Universe, 2019-2020, Education Demographic and Geographic Estimates, 2019-2020

Percent Rural IEP Students

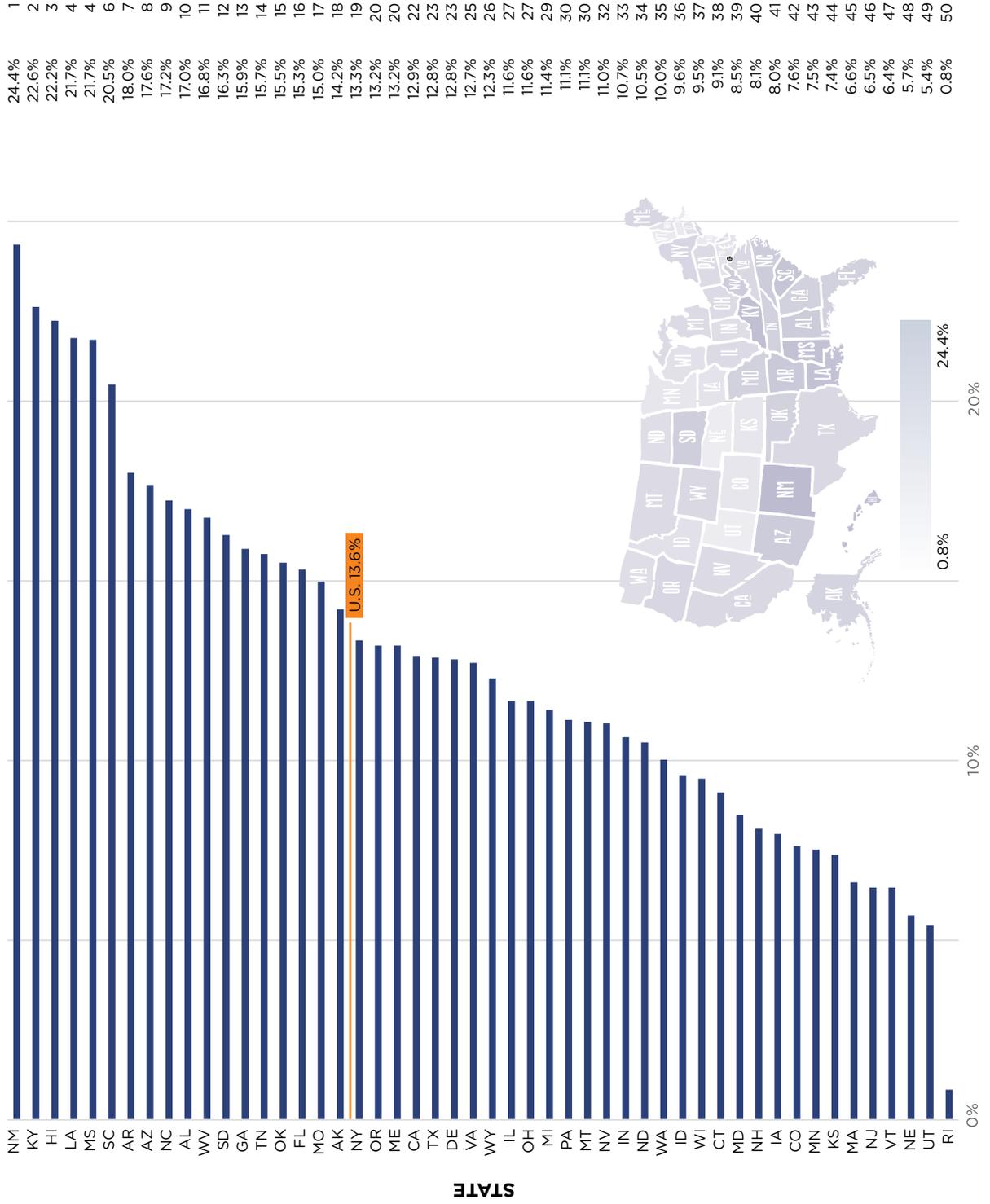
The total number of students who are enrolled in rural districts and receive special education services, expressed as a percentage of all students enrolled in rural districts



Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data, Public School Universe, 2019-2020

Percent of Rural School-Aged Children In Poverty

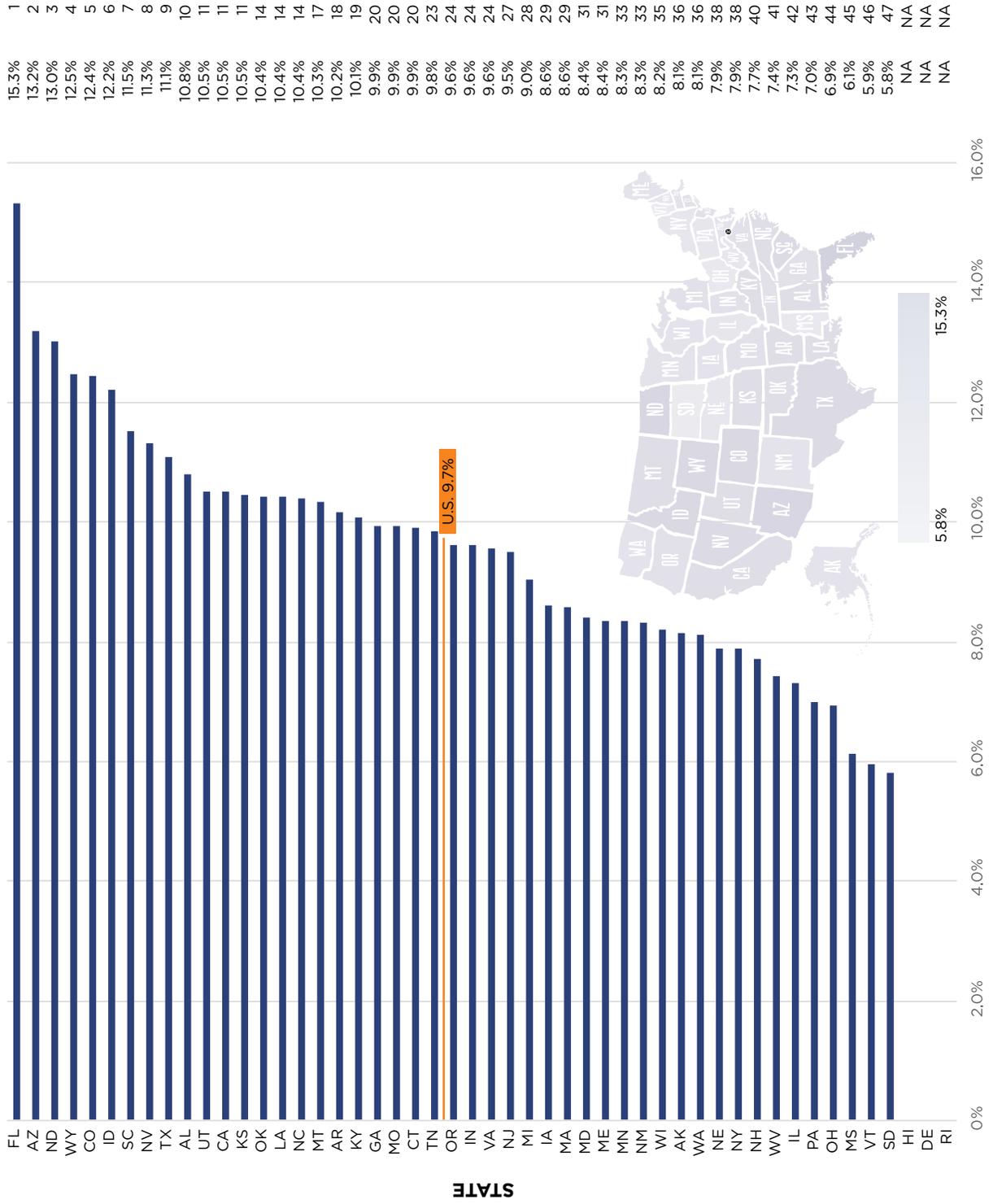
The number of children aged 5-17 who are living below the poverty threshold and in an area classified as rural by the U.S. Census Bureau, expressed as a percentage of all children aged 5-17 living in a rural area in the state.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2021 (1-year estimates)

Percent of Rural Household Mobility

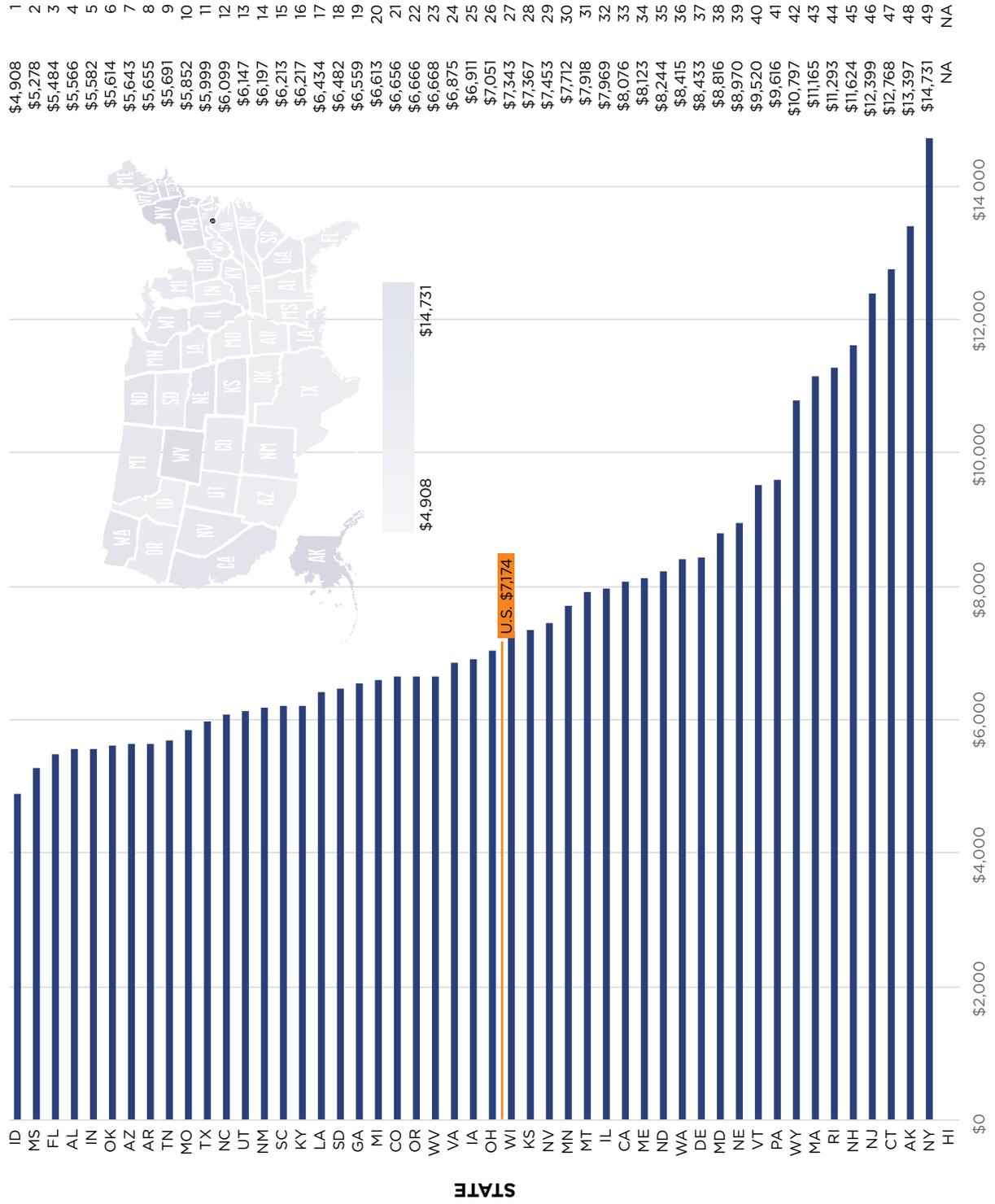
The percentage of rural households with school-aged children who changed residences within the previous 12 months, per U.S. Census figures.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2021 (1-year estimates)

Rural Instructional Expenditures Per Pupil

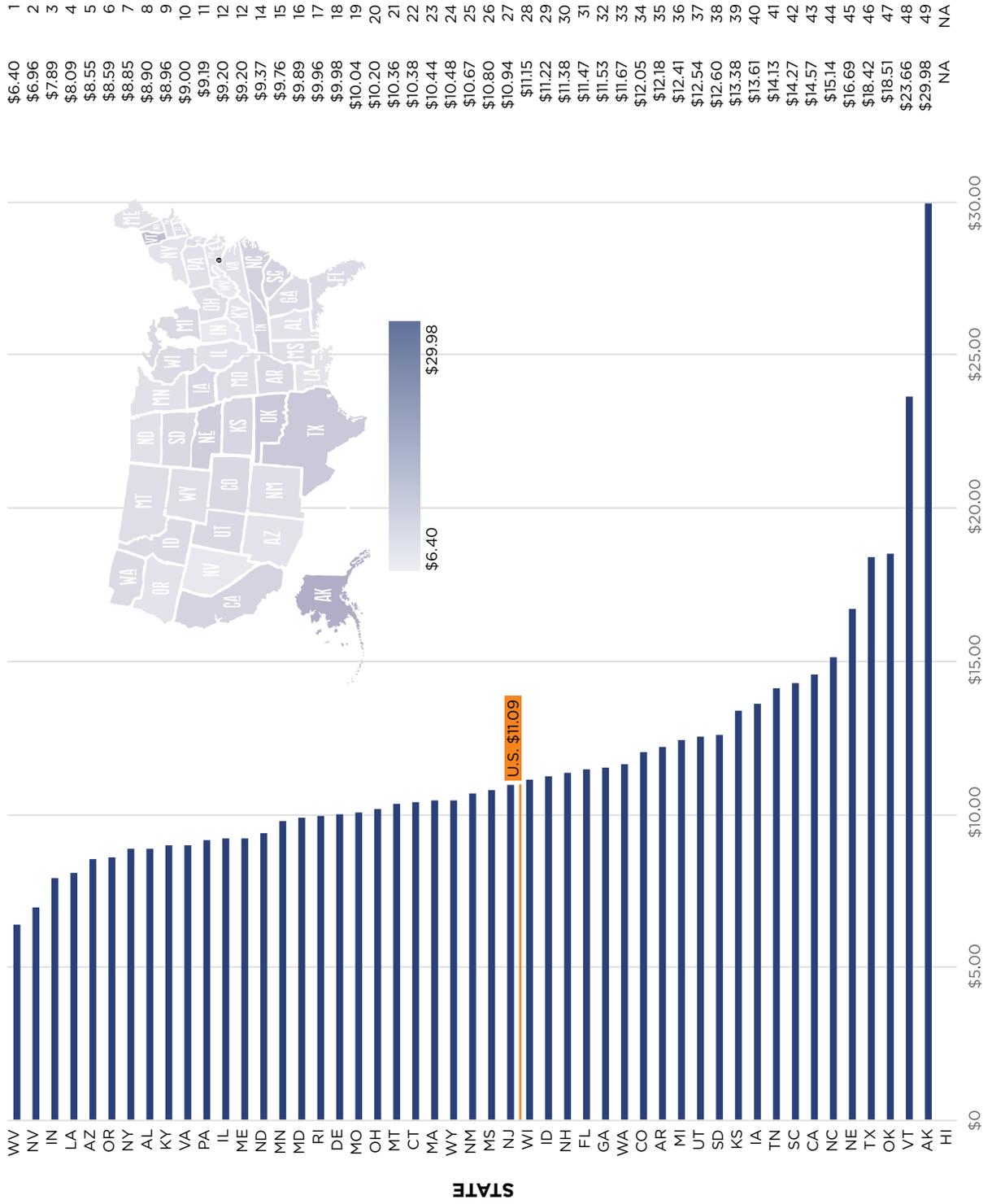
Total current expenditures for instruction in rural school districts, divided by the total number of students enrolled in those school districts.



Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data, Public School Universe, 2018-2019

Ratio of Instructional to Transportation Expenditures

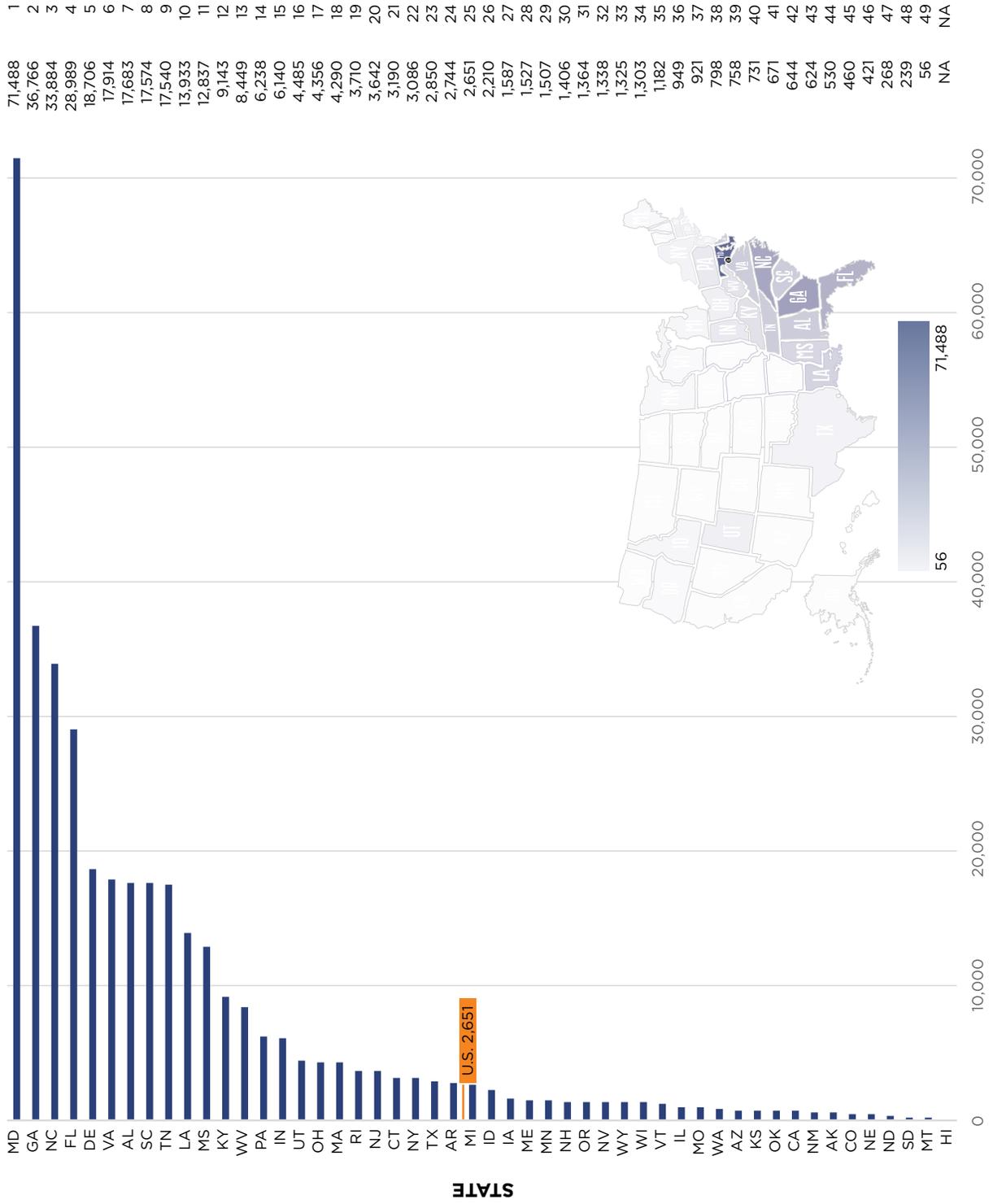
Ratio of total current expenditures for regular education instruction in rural districts to total current expenditures for pupil transportation in rural districts.



Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data, Public School Universe, 2018-2019

Median Organizational Scale (Divided by 100)

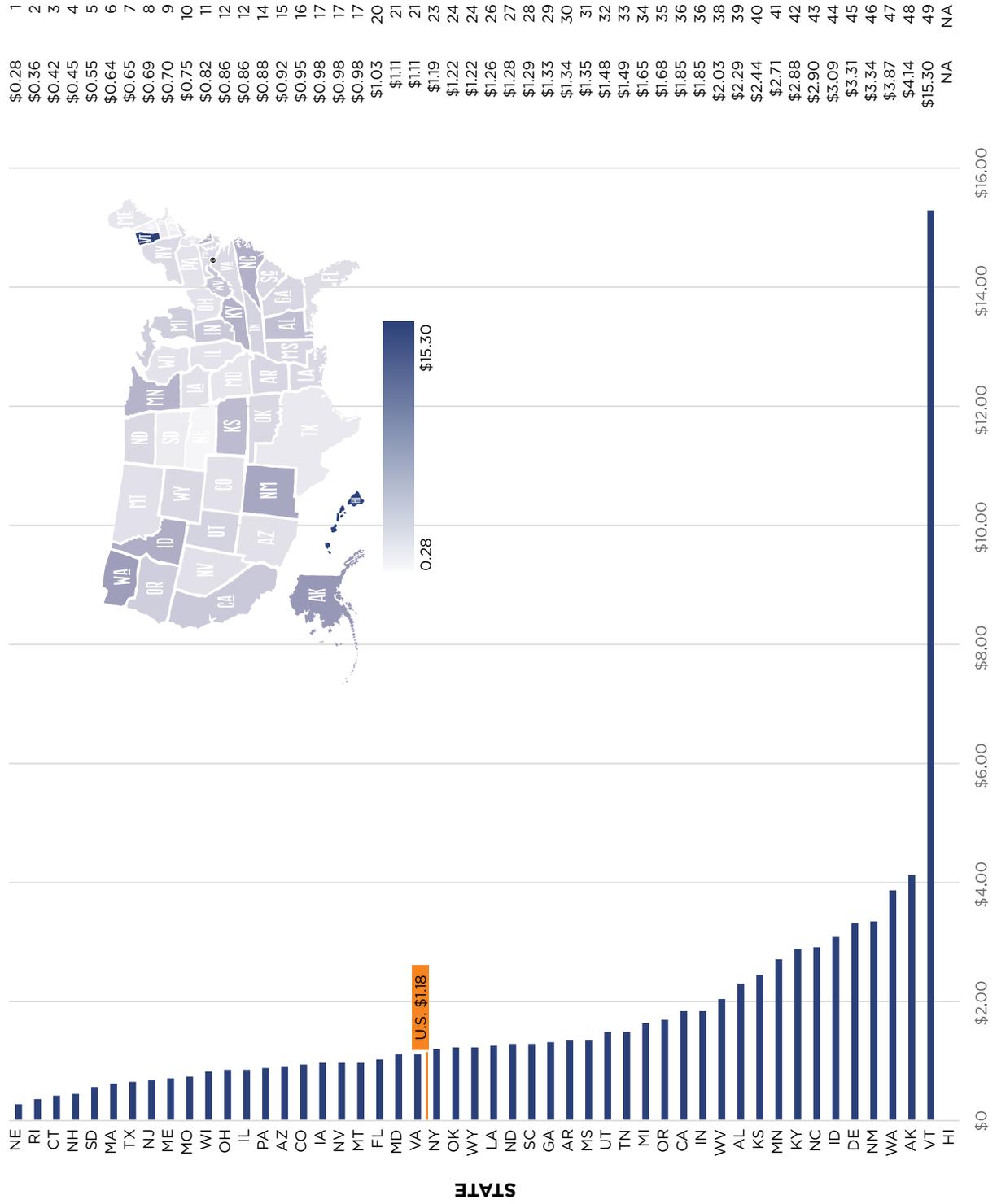
The state median for the organizational scale indicator obtained by multiplying school enrollment by district enrollment.
 (Note: For simplification, the indicators were divided by 100.)



Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data, Public School Universe, 2021-2022

State Revenue to Schools Per Local Dollar

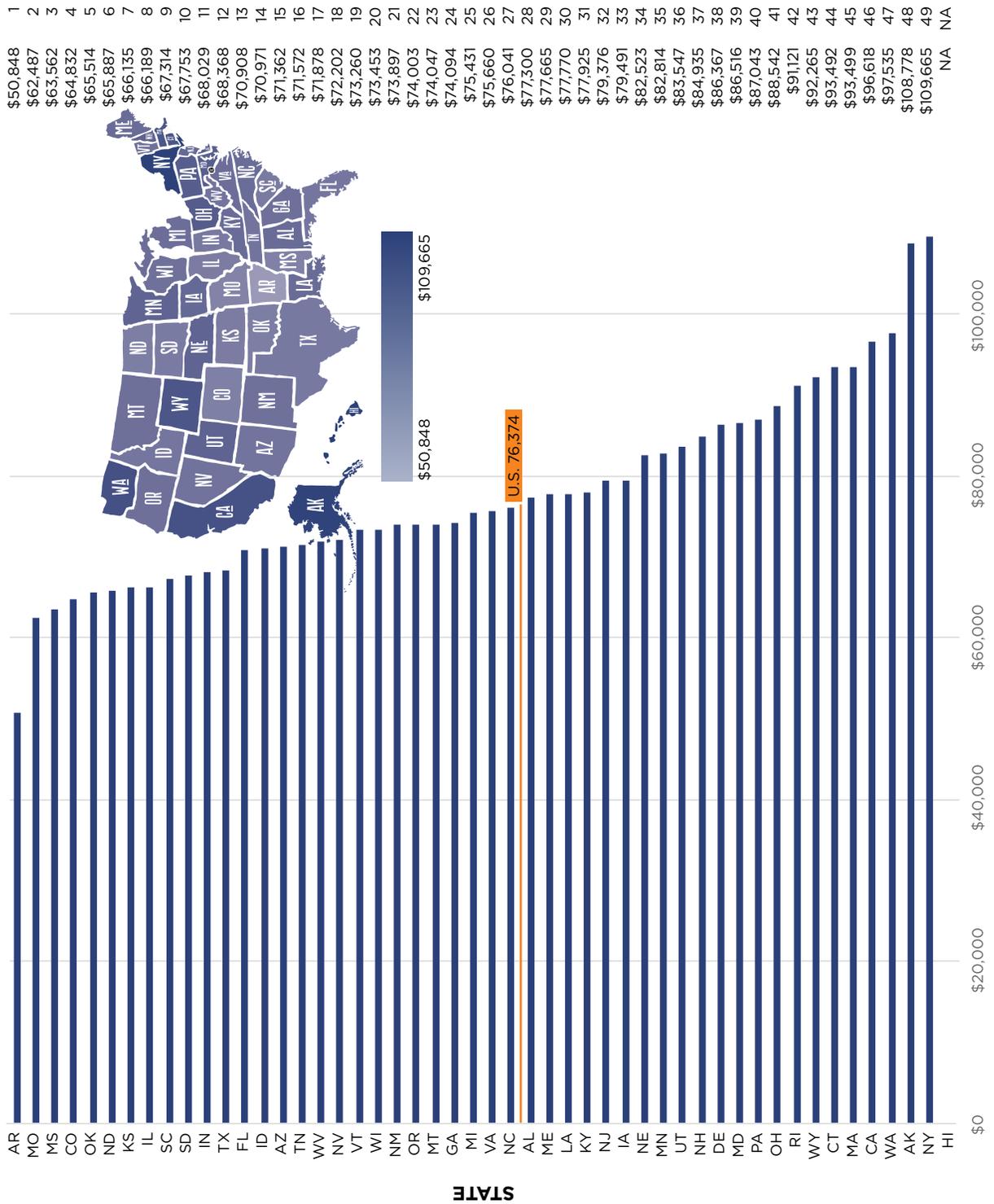
The number of dollars received by rural districts from state funds for each dollar generated by local funds.



Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data, Public School Universe, 2018-2019

Adjusted Salary Expenditures Per Instructional FTE

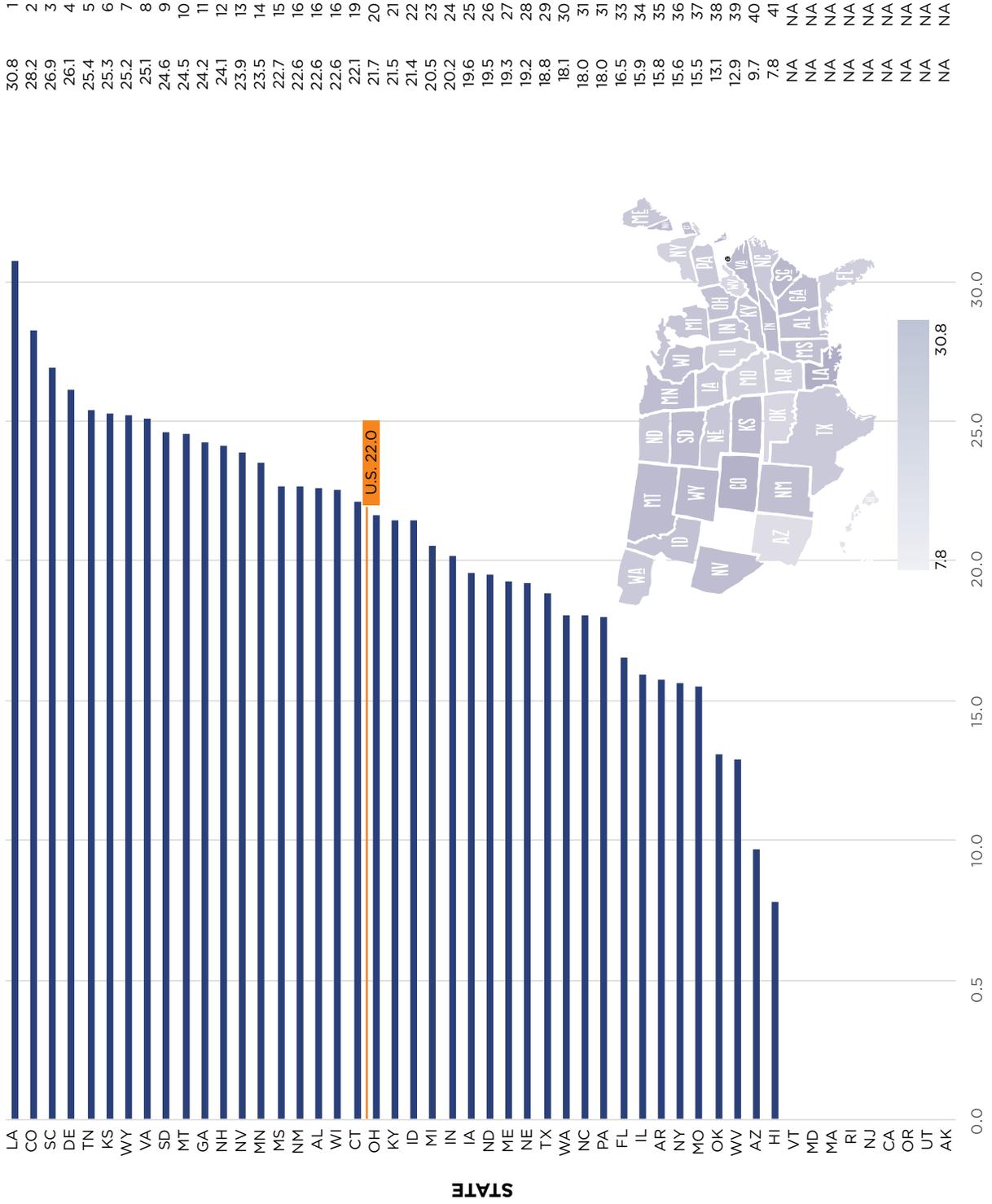
Total current expenditures for instructional salaries, divided by the total number of instructional full-time equivalent staff members, multiplied by the National Center for Education Statistics' respective Comparable Wage Index for Teachers for each rural district.



Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data, Public School Universe, 2018-2019, Education Demographic and Geographic Estimates, 2019

Rural NAEAP Poverty Difference in Math (Gr 8)

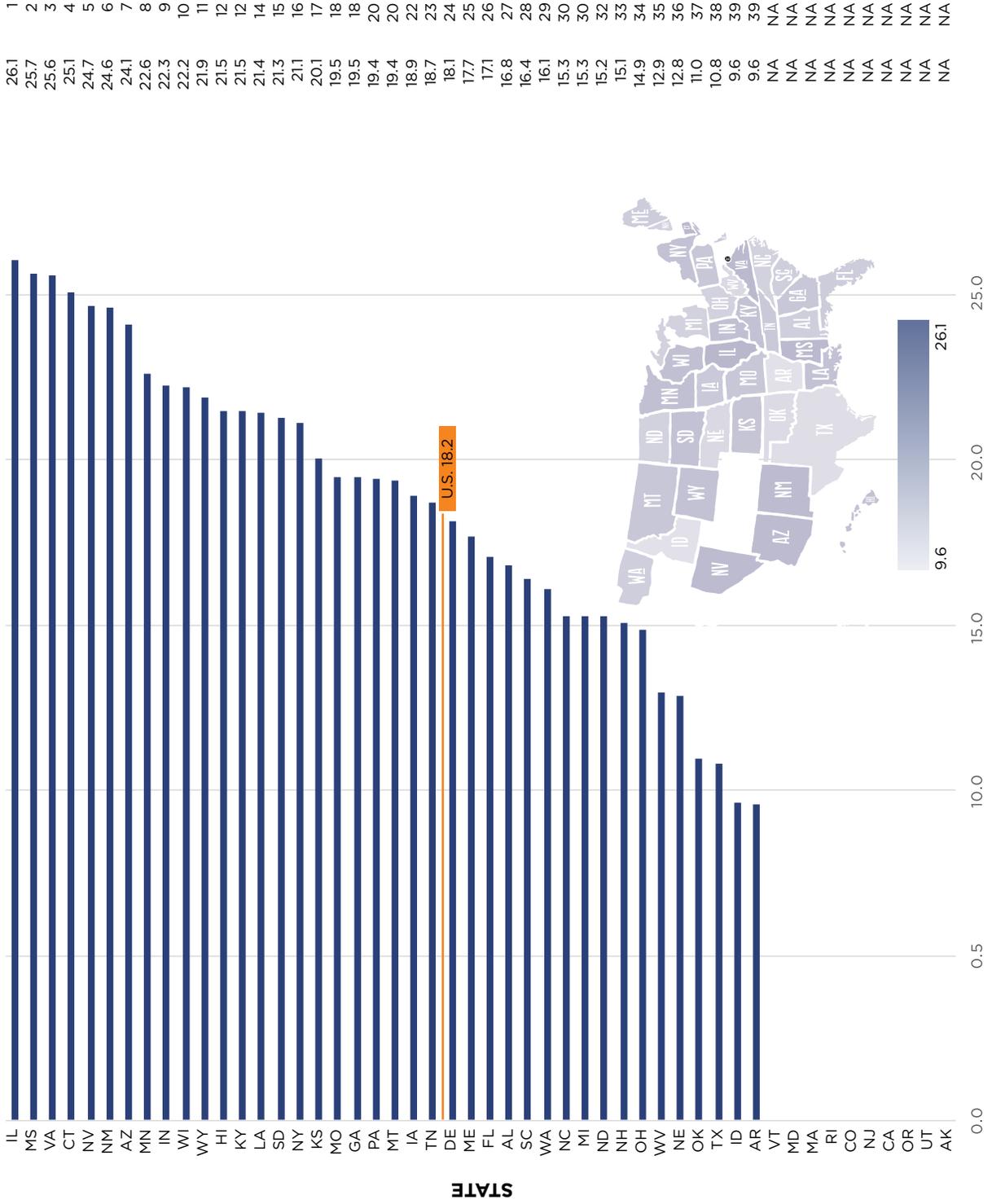
The average score of the rural students ineligible for free or reduced lunch in each state on the 8th grade National Assessment of Educational Progress math test minus the average score of the rural students eligible for free or reduced lunch in each state on the same test.



Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress, 2022

Rural NAEAP Poverty Difference In Reading (Gr 8)

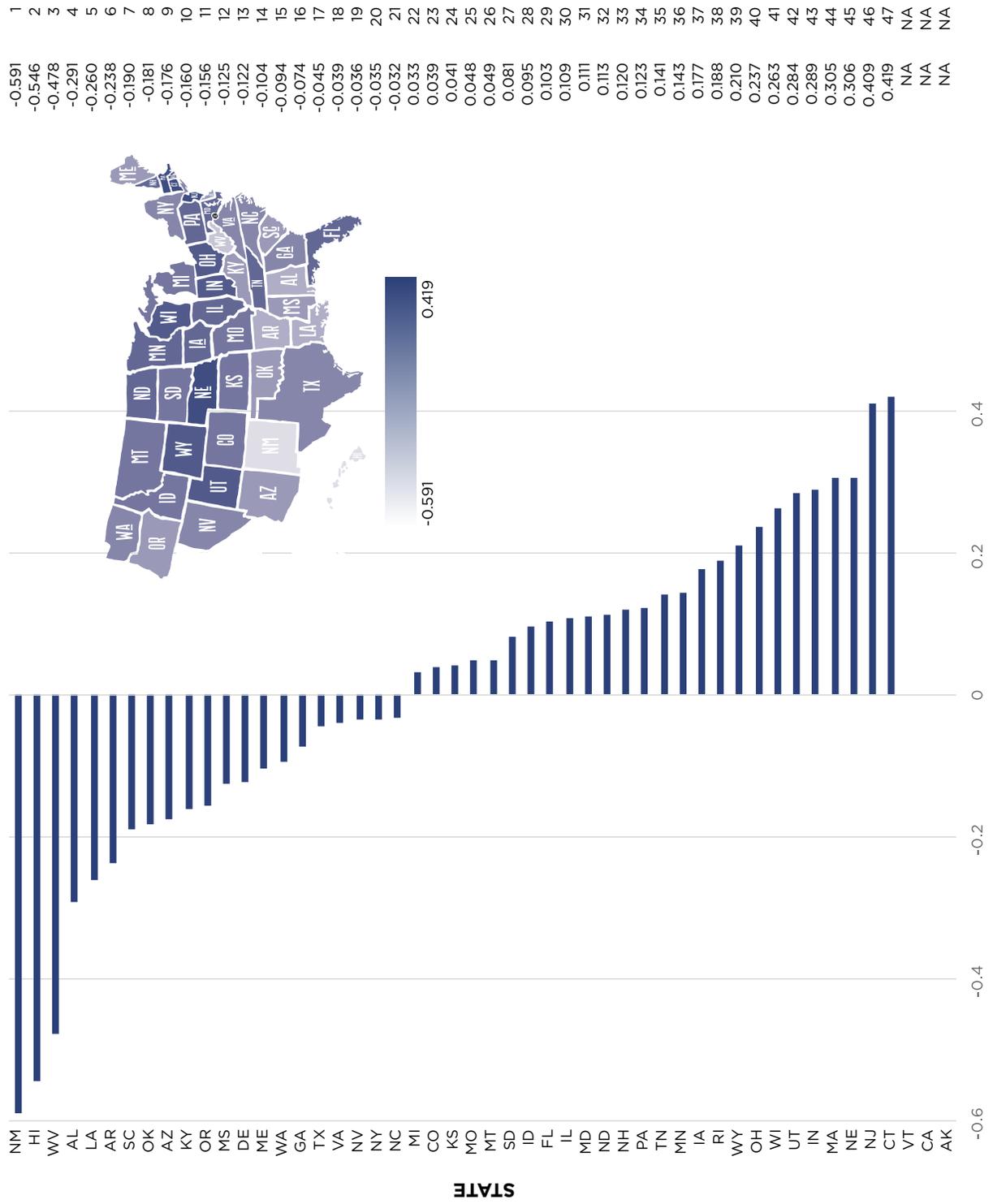
The average score of the rural students ineligible for free or reduced lunch in each state on the 8th grade National Assessment of Educational Progress reading test minus the average score of the rural students eligible for free or reduced lunch in each state on the same test.



Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress, 2022

Rural NAEAP Composite Math (Gr 4 and 8)

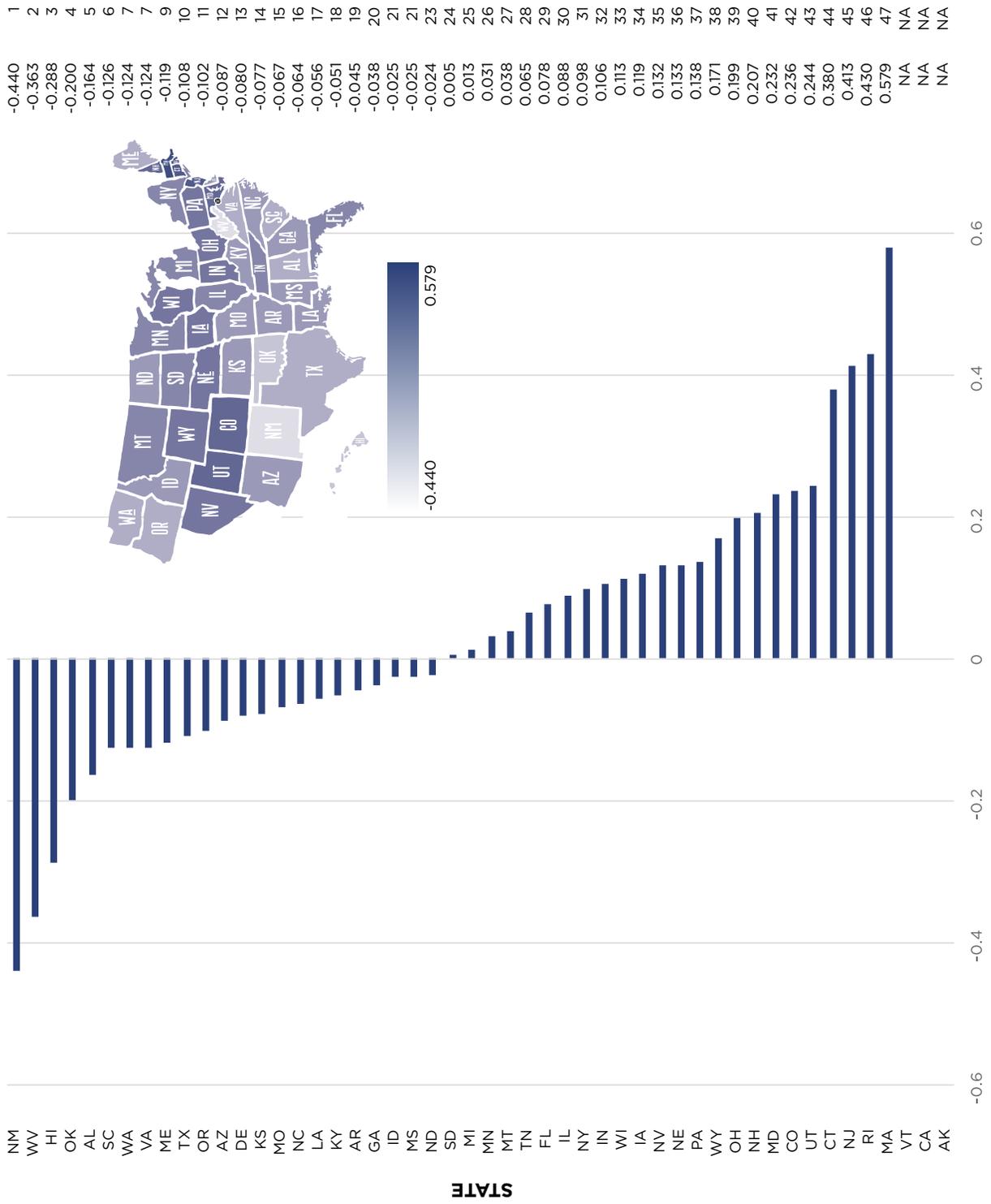
The average of the standardized scores for the rural students in each state on the National Assessment of Educational Progress for 4th and 8th grade math tests. (Note: Standardized z-scores based on national rural mean and standard deviation for each test.)



Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress, 2022

Rural NAEAP Composite Reading (Gr 4 and 8)

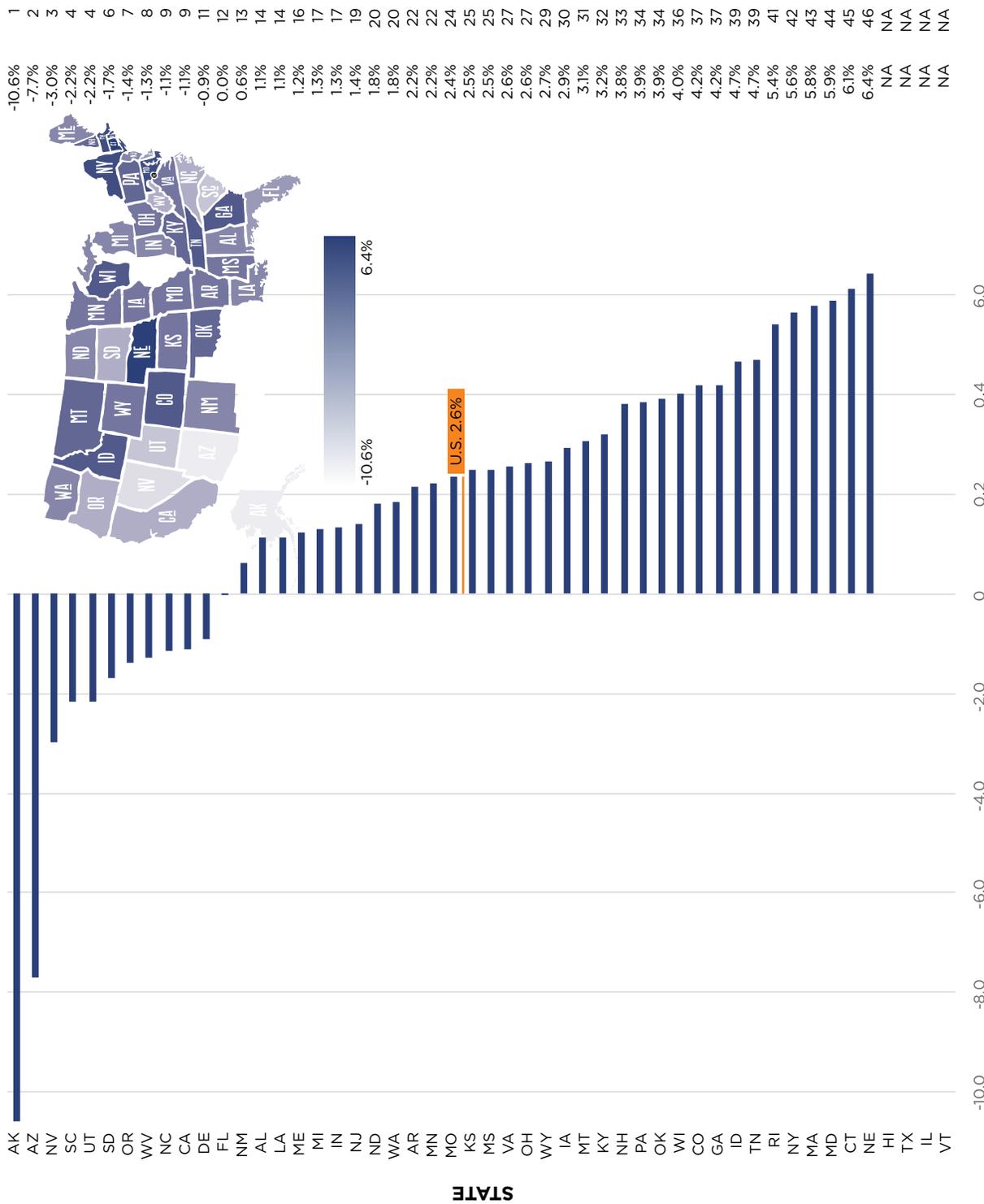
The average of the standardized scores for the rural students in each state on the National Assessment of Educational Progress for 4th and 8th grade reading tests. (Note: Standardized z-scores based on national rural mean and standard deviation for each test.)



Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress, 2022

Rural Advantage for High School Graduation Rate

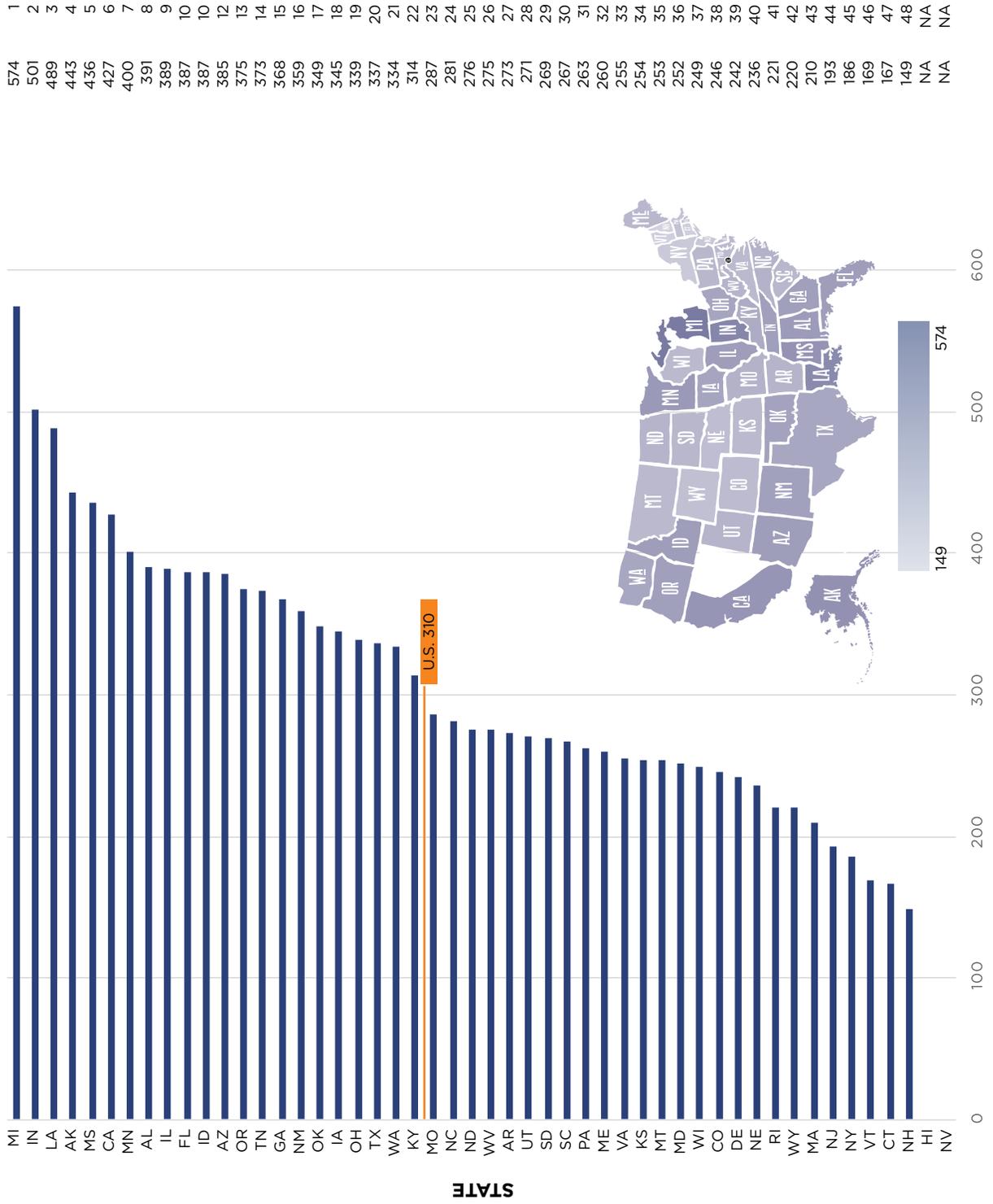
The weighted average high school graduation rate in rural districts minus the weighted average high school graduation rate in nonrural districts. (Note: "Graduation rate" is the number of graduating seniors in rural school districts divided by the total number of students who started with the cohort four years earlier, adjusted for transfer students. *)



Source: U.S. Department of Education, EDData, Four-Year Adjusted-Cohort Graduation Rates School Year 2019-20

Students Per Psychologist/School Counselor

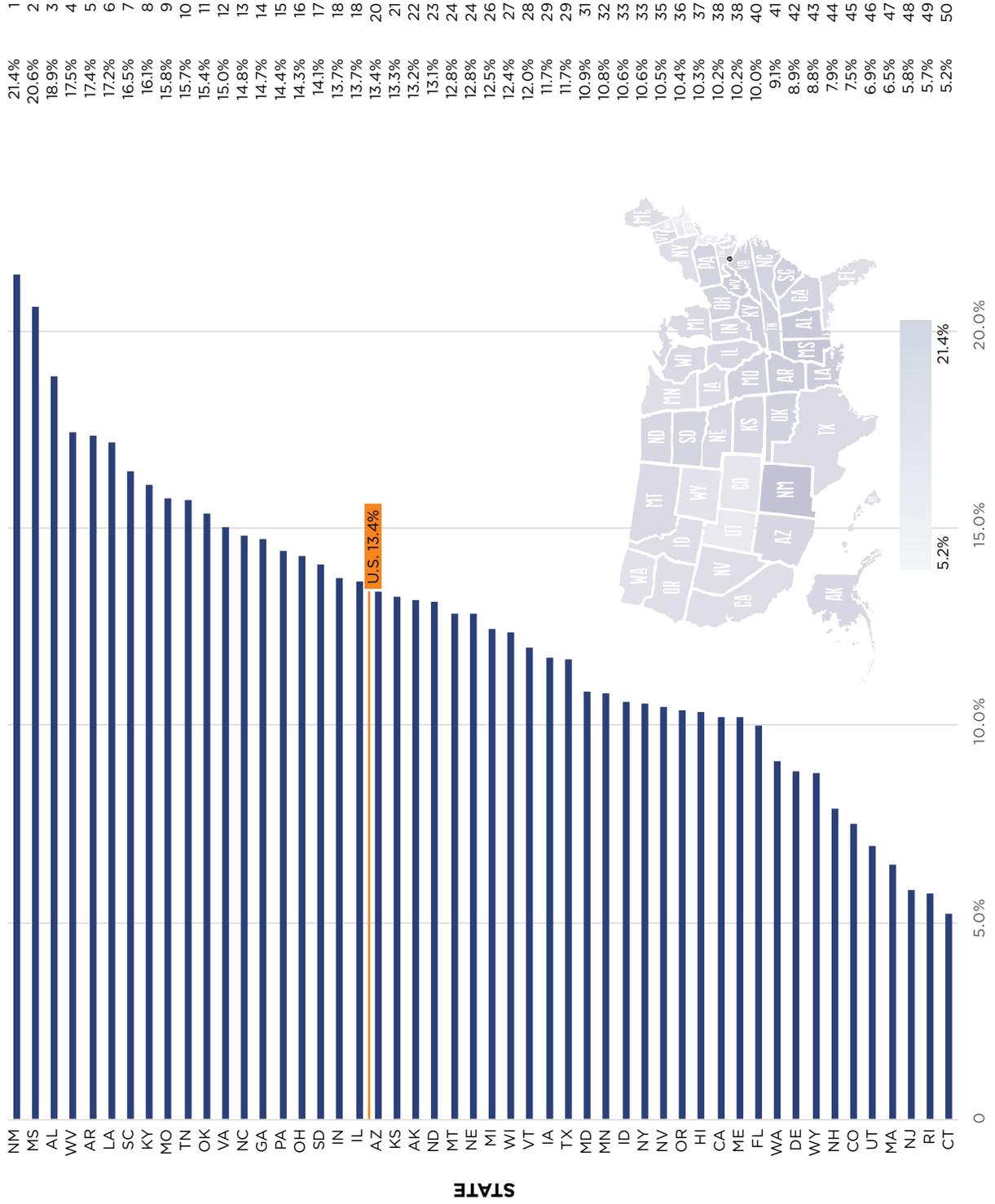
The number of students enrolled in rural districts in the state divided by the number of psychologists and school counselors in those same districts.



Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data, Public School Universe, 2021-2022

Percent of Rural Households Without Broadband Access

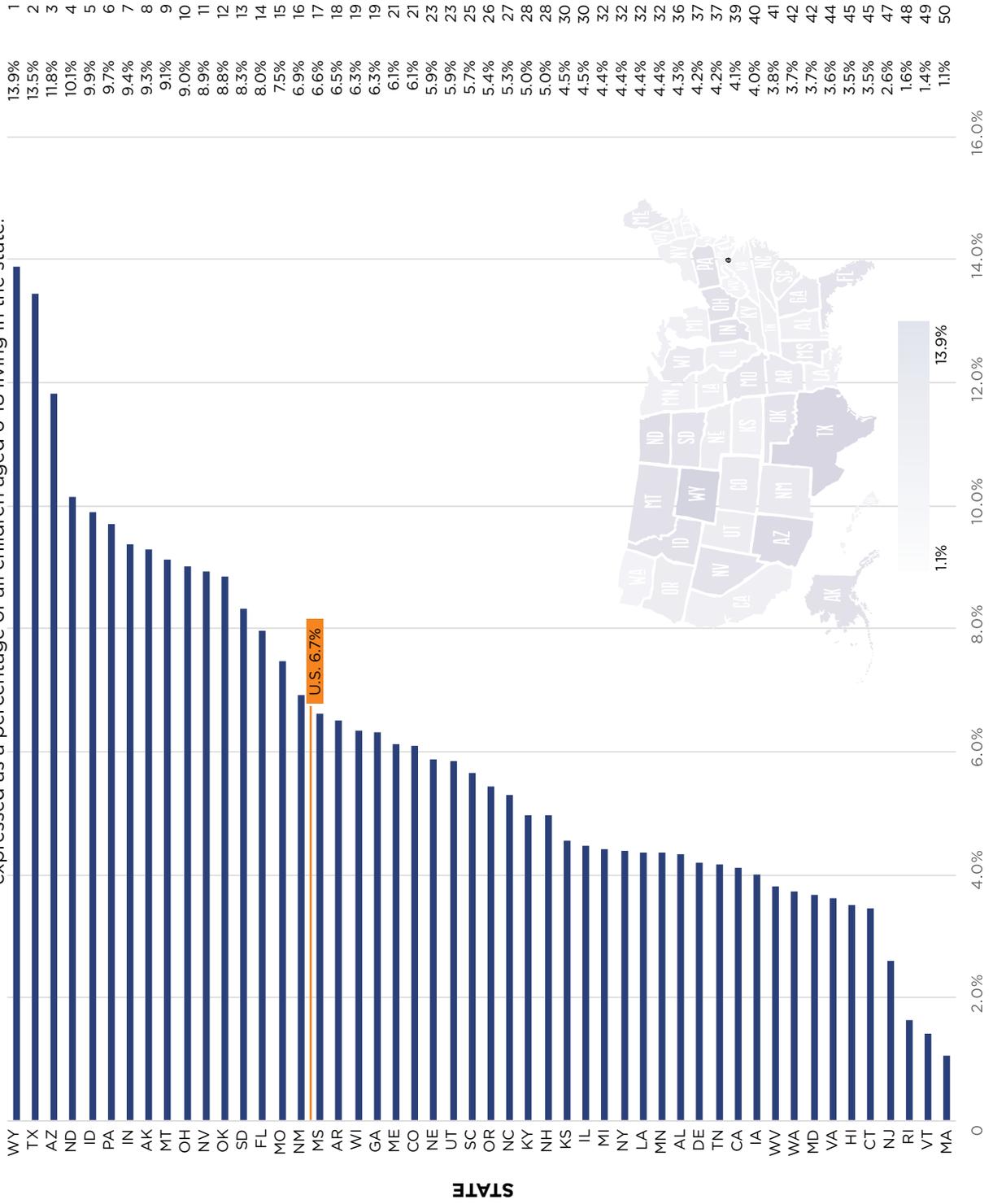
The number of households who report having no access to broadband internet of any type (e.g., cell, DSL, satellite, fiberoptic, cable) in a Census-defined rural area, expressed as a percentage of all households in the state.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2021 (1-year estimates)

Percent of Rural School-Aged Children Without Health Insurance Coverage

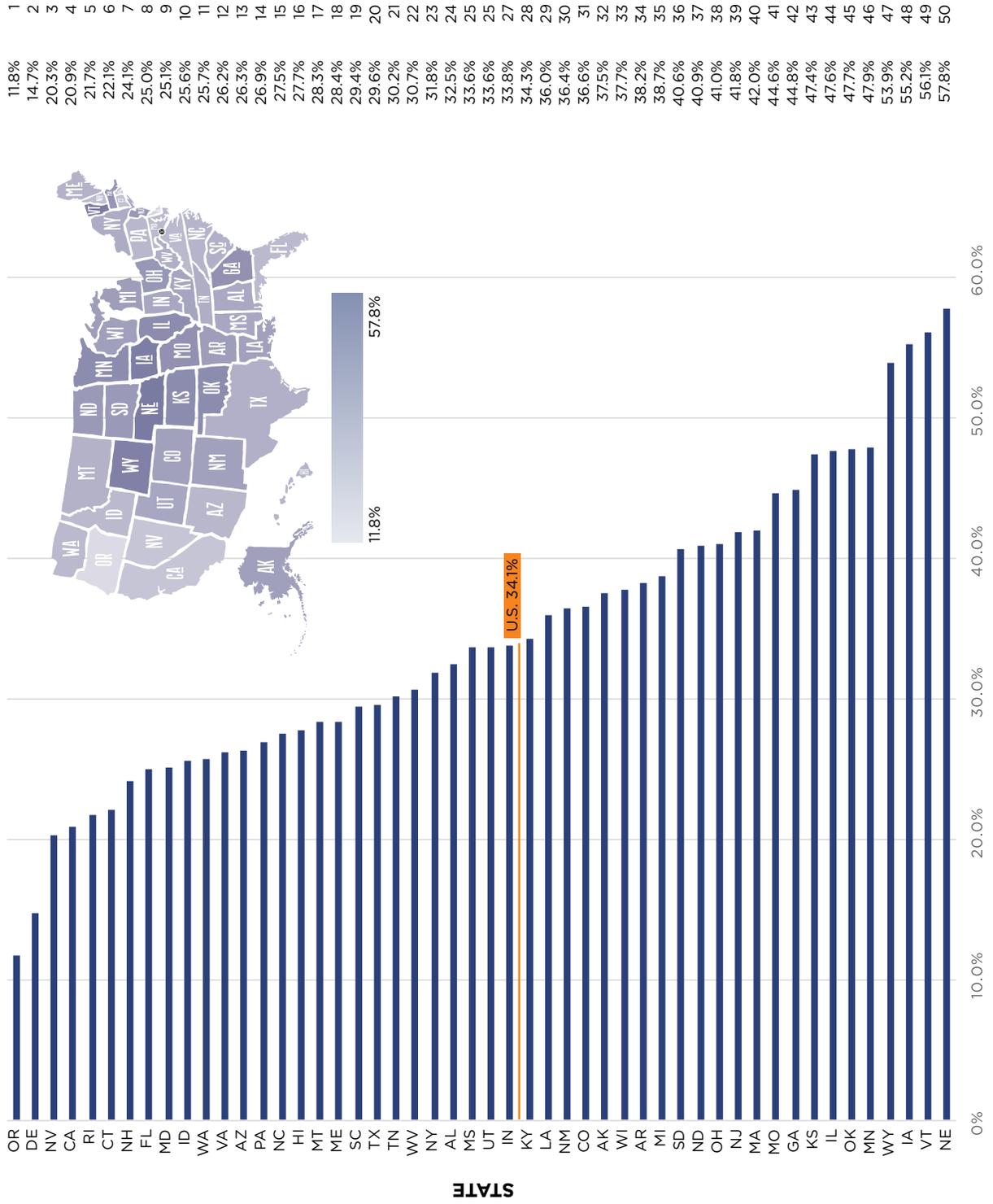
The number of children aged 6-18 who are currently uninsured and living in an area classified as rural by the U.S. Census Bureau, expressed as a percentage of all children aged 6-18 living in the state.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2021 (1-year estimates)

Percent Rural Enrollment In Public Preschool

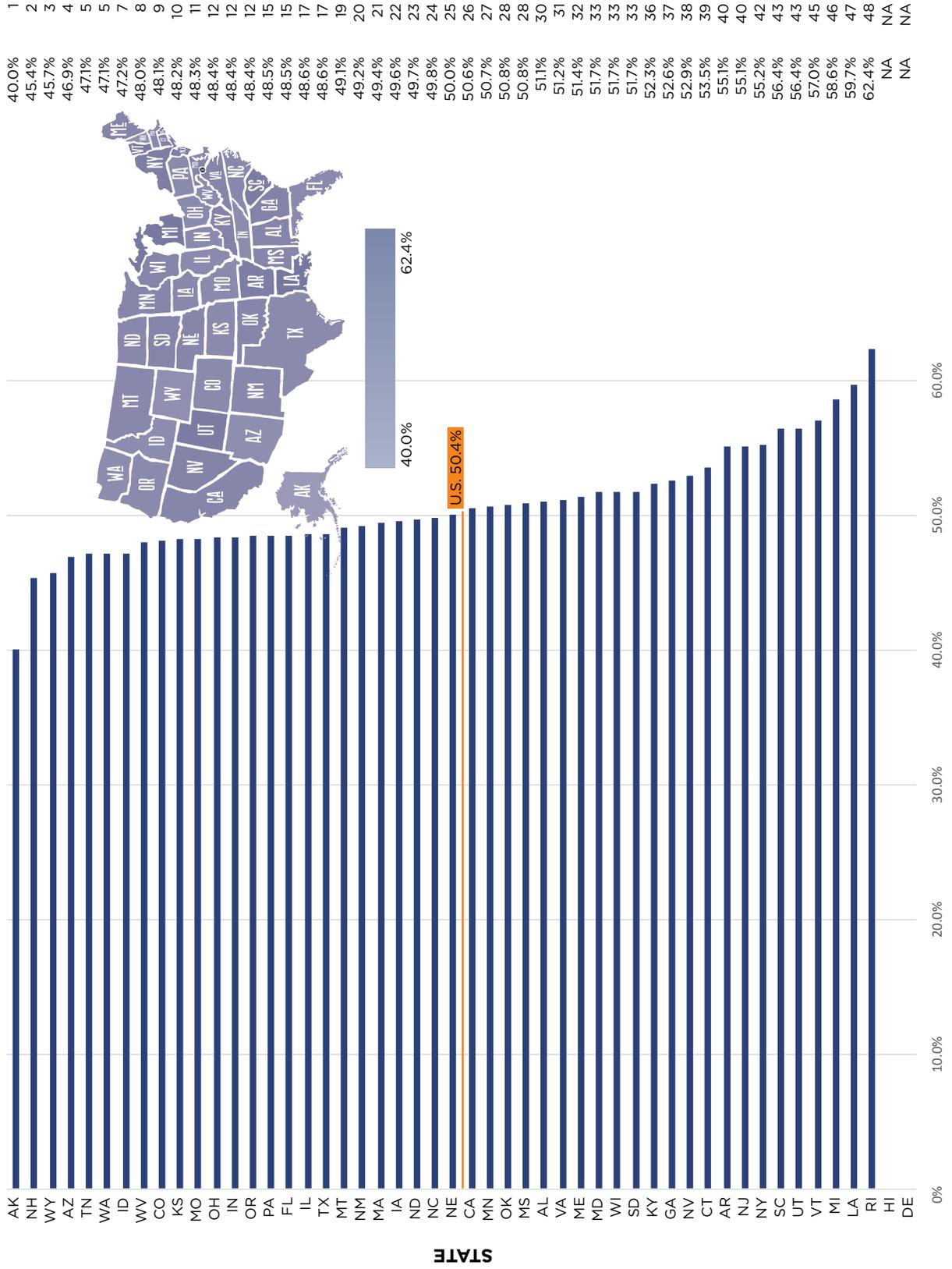
The number of students attending a public preschool in a Census-defined rural area divided by 40% of the total children age 0 to 4 living in those same rural areas in the state.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2021 (1-year estimates)

Percent of Rural Gifted Students Who Are Female

The number of female students enrolled in gifted or talented programs in rural schools, divided by the total number of students enrolled in gifted or talented programs in rural schools.



Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, Civil Rights Data Collection, 2017-18

State-by-State Results



Priority Ranking

2

Leading

Alabama

As the second highest priority state, key factors converge to present persistent challenges for rural education in Alabama. Nearly half of the state's schools are rural, and only three states spend less per student to educate rural students. Almost one in five of Alabama's children experiences poverty and one in ten has changed residences in the past year. Nearly one in five lacks access to broadband at home. Rural school

districts in Alabama are particularly noteworthy for their large size: fewer than two percent are small. Accordingly, Alabama ranks among the top 10 of all states in transportation costs relative to instruction. Students in Alabama schools demonstrate low achievement relative to the median scores of test takers in other states in both reading and math.

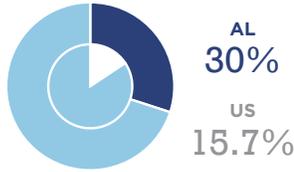
GAUGE 1

Importance of Rural Education

NOTABLE	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	CRUCIAL
---------	-----------	----------------	---------

RANK
17

Percent rural students



	AL	RANK
Percent rural schools	45.5%	16
Percent small rural districts	1.6%	43
Percent rural students	30.0%	13
Number of rural students	223,532	11
Percent of state education funds to rural districts	31.6%	13



GAUGE 2

Student and Family Diversity

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT
------	---------	----------	--------

RANK
12

Percent of rural household mobility



	AL	RANK
Diversity index	35.5%	19
Poverty level in rural school communities	241%	11
Percent of rural students with IEP	13.3%	39
Percent of rural school-aged children experiencing poverty	17.0%	10
Percent of rural household mobility	10.8%	10



GAUGE 3

Educational Policy Context

NOTABLE	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	CRUCIAL
---------	-----------	----------------	---------

RANK
6

Median organizational scale



	AL	RANK
Rural instructional expenditures per pupil	\$5,566	4
Ratio of instructional to transportation expenditures	\$8.90	8
Median organizational scale (x100)	17,683	7
State revenue to schools per local dollar	\$2.29	39
Adjusted salary expenditures per instructional FTE	\$77,300	28



GAUGE 4

Educational Outcomes

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT
------	---------	----------	--------

RANK
7

HS grad rate rural advantage



	AL	RANK
Rural poverty difference in math (Gr 8)	22.6	16
Rural poverty difference in reading (Gr 8)	16.8	27
Rural NAEP composite math (Gr 4 and 8)	-0.291	4
Rural NAEP composite reading (Gr 4 and 8)	-0.164	5
HS grad rate rural advantage	1.1%	14



GAUGE 5

Access to Supports for Learning and Development

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT
------	---------	----------	--------

RANK
14

Percent of school-aged children without health insurance coverage



	AL	RANK
Students per psychologist/school counselor	391	8
Percent of rural households without broadband access	18.9%	3
Percent of rural school-aged children without health insurance	4.3%	36
Percent rural enrollment in public preschool	32.5%	24
Percent of rural gifted/talented who are female	51.1%	30



Priority Ranking

25

Major

Alaska

Nearly one in five of Alaska's students attends a rural school, and seven in ten rural districts in Alaska are small. Rural school communities have some of the highest rates of poverty in the United States. Rural districts in Alaska receive around \$4 from the state for every \$1 raised locally. Alaska's rural graduation rate is more than 10 percentage points lower than the non-rural graduation rate—

the largest disparity of any state. While Alaska's teachers receive some of the highest salaries in the United States, student access to school psychologists or school counselors is a critical need in the state with ratios approaching 450 students per professional. The state urgently needs more attention to access to supports for learning and development.

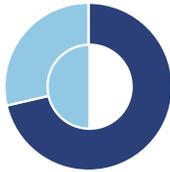
GAUGE 1

Importance of Rural Education

NOTABLE	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	CRUCIAL
---------	-----------	----------------	---------

RANK
20

Percent small rural districts



AK
71.4%
US
50.0%

	AK	RANK
Percent rural schools	59.8%	6
Percent small rural districts	71.4%	10
Percent rural students	19.2%	25
Number of rural students	24,900	45
Percent of state education funds to rural districts	28.1%	18



GAUGE 2

Student and Family Diversity

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT
------	---------	----------	--------

RANK
26

Poverty level in rural school communities



AK
233%
US
291%

	AK	RANK
Diversity index	26.7%	25
Poverty level in rural school communities	233%	6
Percent of rural students with IEP	12.9%	43
Percent of rural school-aged children experiencing poverty	14.2%	18
Percent of rural household mobility	8.1%	36



GAUGE 3

Educational Policy Context

NOTABLE	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	CRUCIAL
---------	-----------	----------------	---------

RANK
49

Ratio of instructional to transportation expenditures



AK
\$29.98
US
\$11.09

	AK	RANK
Rural instructional expenditures per pupil	\$13,397	48
Ratio of instructional to transportation expenditures	\$29.98	49
Median organizational scale (x100)	530	44
State revenue to schools per local dollar	\$4.14	48
Adjusted salary expenditures per instructional FTE	\$108,778	48



GAUGE 4

Educational Outcomes

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT
------	---------	----------	--------

RANK
N/A

HS grad rate rural advantage



AK
-10.6%
US
2.6%

	AK	RANK
Rural poverty difference in math (Gr 8)	NA	NA
Rural poverty difference in reading (Gr 8)	NA	NA
Rural NAEP composite math (Gr 4 and 8)	NA	NA
Rural NAEP composite reading (Gr 4 and 8)	NA	NA
HS grad rate rural advantage	-10.6%	1



GAUGE 5

Access to Supports for Learning and Development

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT
------	---------	----------	--------

RANK
4

Students per psychologist/school counselor



AK
433
US
310

	AK	RANK
Students per psychologist/school counselor	443	4
Percent of rural households without broadband access	13.2%	22
Percent of rural school-aged children without health insurance	9.3%	8
Percent rural enrollment in public preschool	37.5%	32
Percent of rural gifted/talented who are female	40.0%	1



Priority Ranking

2

Leading

Arizona

Arizona's rural students are more racially diverse on average compared to other rural students in the United States. The state ranks in the top 10 of all states for its diversity. Rural school communities in Arizona are characterized by high poverty rates, high rates of uninsured children, and high student mobility. More than one in eight students change residences each year and only rural students in Alaska experience a higher disparity in graduation rates compared to their

non-rural peers. The *Educational Policy Context* gauge indicates a crucial need for attention. Arizona has the seventh lowest per pupil spending on instruction in rural schools among all states. Specifically, rural students receive about \$1,200 on average less per student than their peers in other states. Only four states spend proportionally more on transportation relative to instructional costs. Achievement in both math and reading is among the lowest in the United States.

GAUGE 1

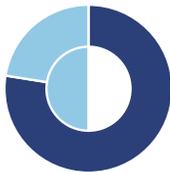
Importance of Rural Education

NOTABLE	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	CRUCIAL
---------	-----------	----------------	---------

RANK

41

Percent small rural districts



AZ
77.5%
US
50.0%

	AZ	RANK
Percent rural schools	19.0%	39
Percent small rural districts	77.5%	4
Percent rural students	5.7%	46
Number of rural students	50,807	39
Percent of state education funds to rural districts	6.0%	44



GAUGE 2

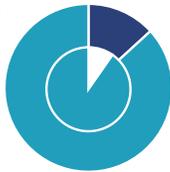
Student and Family Diversity

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT
------	---------	----------	--------

RANK

1

Percent of rural household mobility



AZ
13.2%
US
9.7%

	AZ	RANK
Diversity index	47.6%	8
Poverty level in rural school communities	231%	5
Percent of rural students with IEP	16.3%	18
Percent of rural school-aged children experiencing poverty	17.6%	8
Percent of rural household mobility	13.2%	2



GAUGE 3

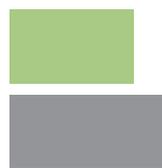
Educational Policy Context

NOTABLE	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	CRUCIAL
---------	-----------	----------------	---------

RANK

5

Rural instructional expenditures per pupil



AZ
\$5,643
US
\$7,174

	AZ	RANK
Rural instructional expenditures per pupil	\$5,643	7
Ratio of instructional to transportation expenditures	\$8.55	5
Median organizational scale (x100)	758	39
State revenue to schools per local dollar	\$0.92	15
Adjusted salary expenditures per instructional FTE	\$71,362	15



GAUGE 4

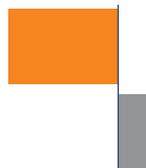
Educational Outcomes

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT
------	---------	----------	--------

RANK

8

HS grad rate rural advantage



AZ
-7.7%
US
2.6%

	AZ	RANK
Rural poverty difference in math (Gr 8)	9.7	40
Rural poverty difference in reading (Gr 8)	24.1	7
Rural NAEP composite math (Gr 4 and 8)	-0.176	9
Rural NAEP composite reading (Gr 4 and 8)	-0.087	12
HS grad rate rural advantage	-7.7%	2



GAUGE 5

Access to Supports for Learning and Development

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT
------	---------	----------	--------

RANK

1

Percent of school-aged children without health insurance coverage



AZ
11.8%
US
6.7%

	AZ	RANK
Students per psychologist/school counselor	385	12
Percent of rural households without broadband access	13.4%	20
Percent of rural school-aged children without health insurance	11.8%	3
Percent rural enrollment in public preschool	26.3%	13
Percent of rural gifted/talented who are female	46.9%	4



Priority Ranking

12

Leading

Arkansas

Almost half of Arkansas' schools are rural. On average, teachers working in those schools are paid the lowest salaries in the United States. Rural Arkansas teachers make about \$26,000 less than the average adjusted salary of rural teachers in other states and over \$31,000 less than non-rural teachers across the United States, who make a little more than \$81,000 per year. NAEP rural math achievement for Arkansas' fourth and eighth graders is particularly low, but reading and math

test scores for rural eighth graders who live in lower income households compared to other rural eighth graders who live in higher-income households is a strength. Arkansas' per pupil spending is very low compared to other states. On average, Arkansas spends about \$1,500 less than other states to educate each rural student. Arkansas ranks among the top 10 states needing urgent attention on both our household level and school level poverty measures.

GAUGE 1

Importance of Rural Education



RANK
12

Percent state education funds to rural districts



AR
32.6%
US
16.2%

	AR	RANK
Percent rural schools	47.9%	14
Percent small rural districts	19.5%	33
Percent rural students	31.7%	11
Number of rural students	147,207	22
Percent of state education funds to rural districts	32.6%	11



GAUGE 2

Student and Family Diversity



RANK
10

Poverty level in rural school communities



AR
236%
US
291%

	AR	RANK
Diversity index	29.3%	22
Poverty level in rural school communities	236%	8
Percent of rural students with IEP	14.4%	28
Percent of rural school-aged children experiencing poverty	18.0%	7
Percent of rural household mobility	10.2%	18



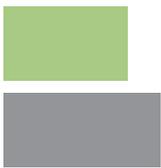
GAUGE 3

Educational Policy Context



RANK
10

Rural instructional expenditures per pupil



AR
\$5,655
US
\$7,174

	AR	RANK
Rural instructional expenditures per pupil	\$5,655	8
Ratio of instructional to transportation expenditures	\$12.18	35
Median organizational scale (x100)	2,744	24
State revenue to schools per local dollar	\$1.34	30
Adjusted salary expenditures per instructional FTE	\$50,848	1



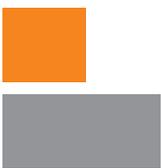
GAUGE 4

Educational Outcomes



RANK
26

Rural poverty difference in reading (Gr 8)



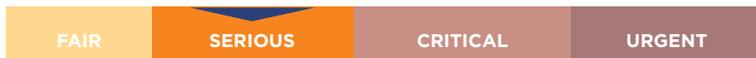
AR
9.6
US
18.2

	AR	RANK
Rural poverty difference in math (Gr 8)	15.8	35
Rural poverty difference in reading (Gr 8)	9.6	39
Rural NAEP composite math (Gr 4 and 8)	-0.238	6
Rural NAEP composite reading (Gr 4 and 8)	-0.045	19
HS grad rate rural advantage	2.2%	22



GAUGE 5

Access to Supports for Learning and Development



RANK
26

Percent of rural households without broadband access



AR
17.4%
US
13.4%

	AR	RANK
Students per psychologist/school counselor	273	27
Percent of rural households without broadband access	17.4%	5
Percent of rural school-aged children without health insurance	6.5%	18
Percent rural enrollment in public preschool	38.2%	34
Percent of rural gifted/talented who are female	55.1%	40



Priority Ranking

34

Significant

California

Over 180,000 children in California attend public school in a rural community, but only about 12% of all schools in the state are rural. State spending on rural education is strong as a proportion of the state's total spending on education, and state funding is almost double local funding. Only three states pay teachers better. Yet, California is among the top 10 priority states where rural high school students are less likely to graduate

than non-rural high school students. Only about one in five children in California is enrolled in public preschool and student access to school counselors or school psychologists is dire at one professional per more than 400 students. In rural California communities, one in eight students experiences poverty, one in ten has changed residences in the past year, and one in ten households has no broadband access.

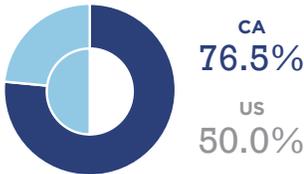
GAUGE 1

Importance of Rural Education



RANK
39

Percent small rural districts



	CA	RANK
Percent rural schools	11.7%	48
Percent small rural districts	76.5%	6
Percent rural students	3.4%	48
Number of rural students	183,050	16
Percent of state education funds to rural districts	3.7%	49



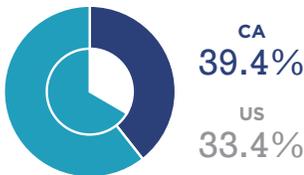
GAUGE 2

Student and Family Diversity



RANK
18

Rural diversity index



	CA	RANK
Diversity index	39.4%	15
Poverty level in rural school communities	281%	23
Percent of rural students with IEP	12.3%	45
Percent of rural school-aged children experiencing poverty	12.9%	22
Percent of rural household mobility	10.5%	11



GAUGE 3

Educational Policy Context



RANK
47

Median organizational scale (x 100)



	CA	RANK
Rural instructional expenditures per pupil	\$8,076	33
Ratio of instructional to transportation expenditures	\$14.57	43
Median organizational scale (x100)	644	42
State revenue to schools per local dollar	\$1.85	36
Adjusted salary expenditures per instructional FTE	\$96,618	46



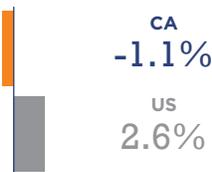
GAUGE 4

Educational Outcomes



RANK
N/A

HS grad rate rural advantage



	CA	RANK
Rural poverty difference in math (Gr 8)	NA	NA
Rural poverty difference in reading (Gr 8)	NA	NA
Rural NAEP composite math (Gr 4 and 8)	NA	NA
Rural NAEP composite reading (Gr 4 and 8)	NA	NA
HS grad rate rural advantage	-1.1%	9



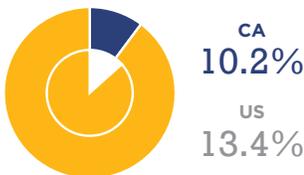
GAUGE 5

Access to Supports for Learning and Development



RANK
20

Percent of rural households without broadband access



	CA	RANK
Students per psychologist/school counselor	427	6
Percent of rural households without broadband access	10.2%	38
Percent of rural school-aged children without health insurance	4.1%	39
Percent rural enrollment in public preschool	20.9%	4
Percent of rural gifted/talented who are female	50.6%	26



Priority Ranking

32

Significant

Colorado

Over 50,000 students attend rural schools in Colorado, most of whom are in small districts. Teacher salaries in the state are very low; only three states pay less. Colorado's rural students are some of the most racially diverse in the United States. The percentage of rural students who experience poverty is low relative to most other states, but more than one in twenty school age children in the state are uninsured. Almost one in eight rural Colorado students changes residences each year, significantly higher than the U.S. norm

of one in ten. Achievement data suggests that the impact of poverty on learning is acute for Colorado's students. Rural math eighth-grade NAEP scores suggest pressing equity concerns. Colorado's students who live in lower income households were significantly outscored by rural eighth-grade students from more affluent households, and only Louisiana has a bigger gap. As a whole, Colorado's rural students tend to fare well on measures of high school graduation.

GAUGE 1

Importance of Rural Education

NOTABLE	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	CRUCIAL	RANK
				38
Percent state education funds to rural districts		CO	RANK	
		24.7%	35	
Percent rural schools		74.5%	7	
Percent small rural districts		6.0%	43	
Percent rural students		51,452	38	
Number of rural students		7.9%	41	
Percent of state education funds to rural districts				

Percent state education funds to rural districts



CO
7.9%
US
16.2%

GAUGE 2

Student and Family Diversity

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT	RANK
				16
Rural diversity index		CO	RANK	
		40.6%	13	
Diversity index		286%	24	
Poverty level in rural school communities		NA	NA	
Percent of rural students with IEP		7.6%	42	
Percent of rural school-aged children experiencing poverty		12.4%	5	
Percent of rural household mobility				

Rural diversity index



CO
40.6%
US
33.4%

GAUGE 3

Educational Policy Context

NOTABLE	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	CRUCIAL	RANK
				24
Rural adjusted salary expenditures per instructional FTE		CO	RANK	
		\$64,832	21	
Ratio of instructional to transportation expenditures		\$12.05	34	
Median organizational scale (x100)		460	45	
State revenue to schools per local dollar		\$0.95	16	
Adjusted salary expenditures per instructional FTE		\$64,832	4	

Rural adjusted salary expenditures per instructional FTE



CO
\$64,832
US
\$76,374

GAUGE 4

Educational Outcomes

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT	RANK
				31
Rural poverty difference in math (Gr 8)		CO	RANK	
		28.2	2	
Rural poverty difference in reading (Gr 8)		NA	NA	
Rural NAEP composite math (Gr 4 and 8)		0.039	23	
Rural NAEP composite reading (Gr 4 and 8)		0.236	42	
HS grad rate rural advantage		4.2%	37	

Rural poverty difference in math (Gr 8)



CO
28.2
US
22.0

GAUGE 5

Access to Supports for Learning and Development

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT	RANK
				36
Students per psychologist/school counselor		CO	RANK	
		246	38	
Percent of rural households without broadband access		7.5%	45	
Percent of rural school-aged children without health insurance		6.1%	21	
Percent rural enrollment in public preschool		36.6%	31	
Percent of rural gifted/talented who are female		48.1%	9	

Percent of rural households without broadband access



CO
7.5%
US
13.4%

Priority Ranking

45

Notable

Connecticut

Just seven states have a lower percentage of rural schools than Connecticut, and only 14 states educate fewer rural students. Connecticut's 56,000 rural students graduate high school at a much higher rate than their non-rural peers. When test scores for those who experience poverty are combined with those who do not, Connecticut students earn some of the highest scores in the United States on the grade 4 and 8 NAEP reading tests. However, on the eighth-grade test of reading,

rural Connecticut eighth-grade students living in lower income households score significantly lower than rural students from more affluent households above the poverty line. Only three states (Illinois, Mississippi, and Virginia) have a larger gap. A slightly smaller, but still noteworthy gap separates the scores of students from homes with lower incomes from their wealthier counterparts in the state on Connecticut's eighth-grade math tests, despite rural per pupil spending exceeding \$12,000.

GAUGE 1

Importance of Rural Education

NOTABLE	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	CRUCIAL
---------	-----------	----------------	---------

RANK
40

Percent state education funds to rural districts



	CT	RANK
Percent rural schools	16.2%	43
Percent small rural districts	52.2%	21
Percent rural students	12.0%	35
Number of rural students	56,520	35
Percent of state education funds to rural districts	11.1%	36



GAUGE 2

Student and Family Diversity

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT
------	---------	----------	--------

RANK
32

Percent of rural school-aged children experiencing poverty



	CT	RANK
Diversity index	34.9%	20
Poverty level in rural school communities	532%	49
Percent of rural students with IEP	16.7%	14
Percent of rural school-aged children experiencing poverty	9.1%	38
Percent of rural household mobility	9.9%	20



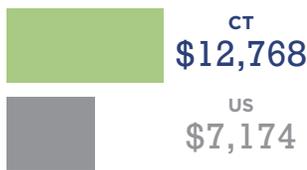
GAUGE 3

Educational Policy Context

NOTABLE	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	CRUCIAL
---------	-----------	----------------	---------

RANK
34

Rural instructional expenditures per pupil



	CT	RANK
Rural instructional expenditures per pupil	\$12,768	47
Ratio of instructional to transportation expenditures	\$10.38	22
Median organizational scale (x100)	3,190	21
State revenue to schools per local dollar	\$0.42	3
Adjusted salary expenditures per instructional FTE	\$93,492	44



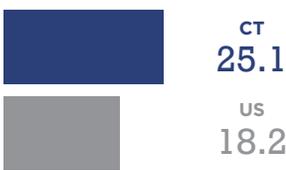
GAUGE 4

Educational Outcomes

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT
------	---------	----------	--------

RANK
41

Rural poverty difference in reading (Gr 8)



	CT	RANK
Rural poverty difference in math (Gr 8)	22.1	19
Rural poverty difference in reading (Gr 8)	25.1	4
Rural NAEP composite math (Gr 4 and 8)	0.419	47
Rural NAEP composite reading (Gr 4 and 8)	0.380	44
HS grad rate rural advantage	6.1%	45



GAUGE 5

Access to Supports for Learning and Development

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT
------	---------	----------	--------

RANK
46

Percent rural enrollment in public preschool



	CT	RANK
Students per psychologist/school counselor	167	47
Percent of rural households without broadband access	5.2%	50
Percent of rural school-aged children without health insurance	3.5%	45
Percent rural enrollment in public preschool	22.1%	6
Percent of rural gifted/talented who are female	53.5%	39



Delaware

Although the total number of rural students in Delaware is very small at 17,141, rural schools in Delaware are the most diverse in the United States. Delaware's diversity index is nearly double the average for all states. If you randomly choose a student in a rural Delaware district, then randomly select another student from this school, there is more than a 60% chance the students would be of different races or ethnicities. Since *Why Rural Matters* 2018-2019, Delaware grew even more diverse and saw its child poverty rate increase by

50%. NAEP achievement in Delaware is Urgent on most measures. On the eighth-grade NAEP math test in particular, rural students living in lower income households score much lower than rural students from more affluent households. Only three states (Louisiana, Colorado, and South Carolina) have a larger gap between economic classes on the math test. Delaware has the second lowest rate of public preschool enrollment and rural students are slightly less likely to graduate from high school than their non-rural peers.

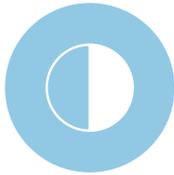
GAUGE 1

Importance of Rural Education

NOTABLE	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	CRUCIAL
---------	-----------	----------------	---------

RANK
45

Percent small rural districts



DE
0.0%
US
50.0%

	DE	RANK
Percent rural schools	17.8%	41
Percent small rural districts	0.0%	46
Percent rural students	14.0%	33
Number of rural students	17,141	47
Percent of state education funds to rural districts	12.5%	35



GAUGE 2

Student and Family Diversity

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT
------	---------	----------	--------

RANK
4

Rural diversity index



DE
61.3%
US
33.4%

	DE	RANK
Diversity index	61.3%	1
Poverty level in rural school communities	26.4%	18
Percent of rural students with IEP	18.5%	4
Percent of rural school-aged children experiencing poverty	12.8%	23
Percent of rural household mobility	NA	NA



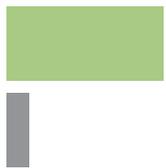
GAUGE 3

Educational Policy Context

NOTABLE	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	CRUCIAL
---------	-----------	----------------	---------

RANK
38

Median organizational scale (x 100)



DE
18,706
US
2,651

	DE	RANK
Rural instructional expenditures per pupil	\$8,433	37
Ratio of instructional to transportation expenditures	\$9.98	18
Median organizational scale (x100)	18,706	5
State revenue to schools per local dollar	\$3.31	45
Adjusted salary expenditures per instructional FTE	\$86,367	38



GAUGE 4

Educational Outcomes

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT
------	---------	----------	--------

RANK
6

HS grad rate rural advantage



DE
-0.9%
US
2.6%

	DE	RANK
Rural poverty difference in math (Gr 8)	26.1	4
Rural poverty difference in reading (Gr 8)	18.1	24
Rural NAEP composite math (Gr 4 and 8)	-0.122	13
Rural NAEP composite reading (Gr 4 and 8)	-0.080	13
HS grad rate rural advantage	-0.9%	11



GAUGE 5

Access to Supports for Learning and Development

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT
------	---------	----------	--------

RANK
39

Percent rural enrollment in public preschool



DE
14.7%
US
34.1%

	DE	RANK
Students per psychologist/school counselor	242	39
Percent of rural households without broadband access	8.9%	42
Percent of rural school-aged children without health insurance	4.2%	37
Percent rural enrollment in public preschool	14.7%	2
Percent of rural gifted/talented who are female	NA	NA



Priority Ranking

14

Major

Florida

Florida's 163,000 rural students attend some of the largest schools and school districts in the United States. Only Maryland, Georgia, and North Carolina have larger rural school organizations, and there are no rural school districts in Florida having an enrollment below the U.S. median. These large and very large schools and districts are some of the most diverse in the United States. Florida's rural students are the most mobile in the United States, with more than one in seven

students changing residences each year. Rural per pupil spending is extremely low at under \$5,500 (only two states spend less) and teachers are paid 7% less than the U.S. rural average. Only one in four students attends a public preschool and the rural high school graduation rate is lower than the non-rural rate, unlike most other states. Access to supports for learning and development, as well as student and family diversity measures are of urgent concern in Florida.

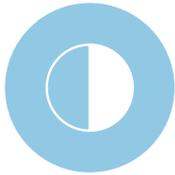
GAUGE 1

Importance of Rural Education

NOTABLE	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	CRUCIAL
---------	-----------	----------------	---------

RANK
44

Percent small rural districts



FL
0.0%
US
50.0%

	FL	RANK
Percent rural schools	14.0%	46
Percent small rural districts	0.0%	46
Percent rural students	5.8%	45
Number of rural students	162,290	19
Percent of state education funds to rural districts	6.6%	43



GAUGE 2

Student and Family Diversity

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT
------	---------	----------	--------

RANK
5

Percent rural household mobility



FL
15.3%
US
9.7%

	FL	RANK
Diversity index	48.8%	6
Poverty level in rural school communities	291%	27
Percent of rural students with IEP	16.4%	17
Percent of rural school-aged children experiencing poverty	15.3%	16
Percent of rural household mobility	15.3%	1



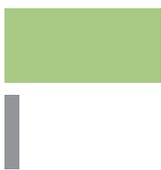
GAUGE 3

Educational Policy Context

NOTABLE	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	CRUCIAL
---------	-----------	----------------	---------

RANK
2

Median organizational scale (x 100)



FL
28,989
US
2,651

	FL	RANK
Rural instructional expenditures per pupil	\$5,484	3
Ratio of instructional to transportation expenditures	\$11.47	31
Median organizational scale (x100)	28,989	4
State revenue to schools per local dollar	\$1.03	20
Adjusted salary expenditures per instructional FTE	\$70,908	13



GAUGE 4

Educational Outcomes

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT
------	---------	----------	--------

RANK
30

HS grad rate rural advantage



FL
0.0%
US
2.6%

	FL	RANK
Rural poverty difference in math (Gr 8)	16.5	33
Rural poverty difference in reading (Gr 8)	17.1	26
Rural NAEP composite math (Gr 4 and 8)	0.103	29
Rural NAEP composite reading (Gr 4 and 8)	0.078	29
HS grad rate rural advantage	0.0%	12



GAUGE 5

Access to Supports for Learning and Development

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT
------	---------	----------	--------

RANK
8

Percent rural enrollment in public preschool



FL
25.0%
US
34.1%

	FL	RANK
Students per psychologist/school counselor	387	10
Percent of rural households without broadband access	10.0%	40
Percent of rural school-aged children without health insurance	8.0%	14
Percent rural enrollment in public preschool	25.0%	8
Percent of rural gifted/talented who are female	48.5%	15



Priority Ranking

16

Major

Georgia

Only Texas and North Carolina educate more rural students than Georgia. Rural Georgia schools and districts are among the largest and most diverse in the United States. Georgia teachers are paid slightly less than the U.S. rural adjusted average and teach in communities where nearly one in six school aged children lives in a household with an income below the federal poverty line. The ratio of state to local school funding in Georgia exceeds

the U.S. rural average. The state provides \$1.33 in funding to rural districts for every \$1.00 sourced from local tax revenue, which is a little more than 10% higher than the rural U.S. average. Georgia's rural students experience nearly double the U.S. rural advantage graduation rate and are enrolled in public preschool at rates more than 10 percentage points higher than the U.S. rural average.

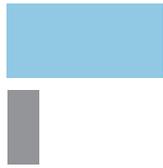
GAUGE 1

Importance of Rural Education

NOTABLE	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	CRUCIAL
---------	-----------	----------------	---------

RANK
19

Number of rural students



	GA	RANK
Percent rural schools	33.0%	28
Percent small rural districts	6.6%	36
Percent rural students	27.6%	16
Number of rural students	468,932	3
Percent of state education funds to rural districts	30.3%	16



GAUGE 2

Student and Family Diversity

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT
------	---------	----------	--------

RANK
13

Percent rural household mobility



	GA	RANK
Diversity index	48.5%	7
Poverty level in rural school communities	259%	17
Percent of rural students with IEP	13.6%	36
Percent of rural school-aged children experiencing poverty	15.9%	13
Percent of rural household mobility	9.9%	20



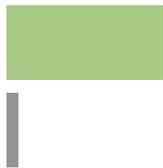
GAUGE 3

Educational Policy Context

NOTABLE	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	CRUCIAL
---------	-----------	----------------	---------

RANK
15

Median organizational scale (x 100)



	GA	RANK
Rural instructional expenditures per pupil	\$6,559	19
Ratio of instructional to transportation expenditures	\$11.53	32
Median organizational scale (x100)	36,766	2
State revenue to schools per local dollar	\$1.33	29
Adjusted salary expenditures per instructional FTE	\$74,094	24



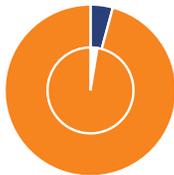
GAUGE 4

Educational Outcomes

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT
------	---------	----------	--------

RANK
18

HS grad rate rural advantage



	GA	RANK
Rural poverty difference in math (Gr 8)	24.2	11
Rural poverty difference in reading (Gr 8)	19.5	18
Rural NAEP composite math (Gr 4 and 8)	-0.074	16
Rural NAEP composite reading (Gr 4 and 8)	-0.038	20
HS grad rate rural advantage	4.2%	37



GAUGE 5

Access to Supports for Learning and Development

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT
------	---------	----------	--------

RANK
28

Percent rural enrollment in public preschool



	GA	RANK
Students per psychologist/school counselor	368	15
Percent of rural households without broadband access	14.7%	14
Percent of rural school-aged children without health insurance	6.3%	19
Percent rural enrollment in public preschool	44.8%	42
Percent of rural gifted/talented who are female	52.6%	37



Hawaii

Schools in Hawaii belong to one non-rural school district and so there is no district-level data. However, more than one in seven of Hawaii's schools are rural. Children attending Hawaii's rural schools experience some of the highest rates of poverty in the United States. Only Kentucky and New Mexico have a greater percent of their rural children between ages 5 and 17 living in households with incomes

below the poverty line. Rural NAEP scores are extremely low for math and reading in grades four and eight. Only students in New Mexico and West Virginia underperform Hawaii's rural children on these tests. Educational outcomes are urgent for the state's rural children. Hawaii is excluded from three of the five gauge rankings and is thus not part of the overall state ranking.

GAUGE 1

Importance of Rural Education

Percent rural schools



HI
15.3%
us
29.3%

	NOTABLE	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	CRUCIAL		
Percent rural schools					HI	RANK
Percent small rural districts					15.3%	45
Percent rural students					NA	NA
Number of rural students					NA	NA
Percent of state education funds to rural districts					NA	NA

RANK
N/A

GAUGE 2

Student and Family Diversity

Percent of rural school-aged children experiencing poverty



HI
22.2%
us
13.6%

	FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT		
Diversity index					HI	RANK
Poverty level in rural school communities					NA	NA
Percent of rural students with IEP					NA	NA
Percent of rural school-aged children experiencing poverty					22.2%	3
Percent of rural household mobility					NA	NA

RANK
N/A

GAUGE 3

Educational Policy Context

N/A

	NOTABLE	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	CRUCIAL		
Rural instructional expenditures per pupil					HI	RANK
Ratio of instructional to transportation expenditures					NA	NA
Median organizational scale (x100)					NA	NA
State revenue to schools per local dollar					NA	NA
Adjusted salary expenditures per instructional FTE					NA	NA

RANK
N/A

GAUGE 4

Educational Outcomes

Rural NAEP composite math (Gr 4 and 8)



HI
-0.546
us
0.0

	FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT		
Rural poverty difference in math (Gr 8)					HI	RANK
Rural poverty difference in reading (Gr 8)					7.8	41
Rural NAEP composite math (Gr 4 and 8)					21.5	12
Rural NAEP composite reading (Gr 4 and 8)					-0.546	2
HS grad rate rural advantage					-0.288	3
					NA	NA

RANK
9

GAUGE 5

Access to Supports for Learning and Development

Percent of school-aged children without health insurance coverage



HI
3.5%
us
6.7%

	FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT		
Students per psychologist/school counselor					HI	RANK
Percent of rural households without broadband access					NA	NA
Percent of rural school-aged children without health insurance					10.3%	37
Percent rural enrollment in public preschool					3.5%	45
Percent of rural gifted/talented who are female					27.7%	16
					NA	NA

RANK
43

Priority Ranking

23

Major

Idaho

Compared to spending on non-rural districts, Idaho allots disproportionately less funding to rural districts as a share of all state education revenue. At less than \$5,000 per rural student, the state's rural instructional expenditures for its 75,000 rural students are the lowest in the United States. Idaho's greatest challenge comes in the area of Access to Supports for

Learning and Development. With the exception of reasonable rates of broadband access, four of five the indicators are in the top 10 for priority. Idaho has one of the smallest differences between rural students in lower income households and their wealthier rural peers on eighth-grade reading NAEP scores.

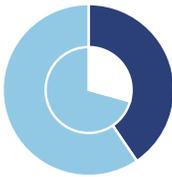
GAUGE 1

Importance of Rural Education

NOTABLE	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	CRUCIAL
---------	-----------	----------------	---------

RANK
21

Percent rural schools



ID
40.5%
US
29.3%

	ID	RANK
Percent rural schools	40.5%	20
Percent small rural districts	61.0%	19
Percent rural students	26.1%	18
Number of rural students	74,884	31
Percent of state education funds to rural districts	25.8%	19



GAUGE 2

Student and Family Diversity

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT
------	---------	----------	--------

RANK
21

Percent of rural school-aged children experiencing poverty



ID
9.6%
US
13.6%

	ID	RANK
Diversity index	30.9%	21
Poverty level in rural school communities	239%	10
Percent of rural students with IEP	11.2%	48
Percent of rural school-aged children experiencing poverty	9.6%	36
Percent of rural household mobility	12.2%	6



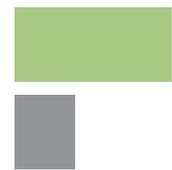
GAUGE 3

Educational Policy Context

NOTABLE	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	CRUCIAL
---------	-----------	----------------	---------

RANK
19

State revenue to schools per local dollar



ID
\$3.09
US
\$1.18

	ID	RANK
Rural instructional expenditures per pupil	\$4,908	1
Ratio of instructional to transportation expenditures	\$11.22	29
Median organizational scale (x100)	2,210	26
State revenue to schools per local dollar	\$3.09	44
Adjusted salary expenditures per instructional FTE	\$70,971	14



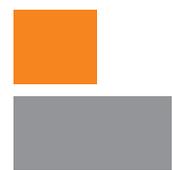
GAUGE 4

Educational Outcomes

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT
------	---------	----------	--------

RANK
38

Rural poverty difference in reading (Gr 8)



ID
9.6
US
18.2

	ID	RANK
Rural poverty difference in math (Gr 8)	21.4	22
Rural poverty difference in reading (Gr 8)	9.6	39
Rural NAEP composite math (Gr 4 and 8)	0.095	28
Rural NAEP composite reading (Gr 4 and 8)	-0.025	21
HS grad rate rural advantage	4.7%	39



GAUGE 5

Access to Supports for Learning and Development

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT
------	---------	----------	--------

RANK
2

Percent of rural gifted students who are female



ID
47.2%
US
50.4%

	ID	RANK
Students per psychologist/school counselor	387	10
Percent of rural households without broadband access	10.6%	33
Percent of rural school-aged children without health insurance	9.9%	5
Percent rural enrollment in public preschool	25.6%	10
Percent of rural gifted/talented who are female	47.2%	7



Priority Ranking

29

Significant

Illinois

Slightly more than one in five schools in Illinois are rural. Over 160,000 rural students attend rural schools in the state, but rural students represent only about 9% of all students in the state. Rural Illinois teachers are paid, on average, \$10,000 less than rural teachers in other states and about \$16,000 less than their non-rural peers. On the eighth-grade NAEP test of reading, rural Illinois students living in lower income households have the lowest scores compared

to their peers from wealthier households. The poverty gap in eighth-grade reading is 43% greater than the rural United States average, suggesting significant inequities in the extent to which eighth-grade children from lower income households are learning. Rural districts in Illinois receive only 86 cents of state funding for every dollar of local revenue they raise, ranking 12th in priority for inequitable school funding.

GAUGE 1

Importance of Rural Education

NOTABLE IMPORTANT VERY IMPORTANT CRUCIAL

RANK
34

Percent small rural districts



IL
62.3%
US
50.0%

	IL	RANK
Percent rural schools	20.9%	37
Percent small rural districts	62.3%	18
Percent rural students	8.6%	38
Number of rural students	160,902	20
Percent of state education funds to rural districts	8.5%	38



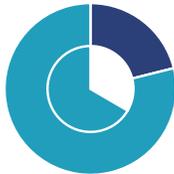
GAUGE 2

Student and Family Diversity

FAIR SERIOUS CRITICAL URGENT

RANK
39

Rural diversity index



IL
21.1%
US
33.4%

	IL	RANK
Diversity index	21.1%	36
Poverty level in rural school communities	318%	37
Percent of rural students with IEP	16.5%	15
Percent of rural school-aged children experiencing poverty	11.6%	27
Percent of rural household mobility	7.3%	42



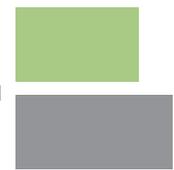
GAUGE 3

Educational Policy Context

NOTABLE IMPORTANT VERY IMPORTANT CRUCIAL

RANK
13

Rural adjusted salary expenditures per instructional FTE



IL
\$66,189
US
\$76,374

	IL	RANK
Rural instructional expenditures per pupil	\$7,969	32
Ratio of instructional to transportation expenditures	\$9.20	12
Median organizational scale (x100)	949	36
State revenue to schools per local dollar	\$0.86	12
Adjusted salary expenditures per instructional FTE	\$66,189	8



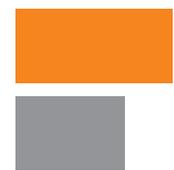
GAUGE 4

Educational Outcomes

FAIR SERIOUS CRITICAL URGENT

RANK
24

Rural poverty difference in reading (Gr 8)



IL
26.1
US
18.2

	IL	RANK
Rural poverty difference in math (Gr 8)	15.9	34
Rural poverty difference in reading (Gr 8)	26.1	1
Rural NAEP composite math (Gr 4 and 8)	0.109	30
Rural NAEP composite reading (Gr 4 and 8)	0.088	30
HS grad rate rural advantage	NA	NA



GAUGE 5

Access to Supports for Learning and Development

FAIR SERIOUS CRITICAL URGENT

RANK
23

Percent rural enrollment in public preschool



IL
47.6%
US
34.1%

	IL	RANK
Students per psychologist/school counselor	389	9
Percent of rural households without broadband access	13.7%	18
Percent of rural school-aged children without health insurance	4.5%	30
Percent rural enrollment in public preschool	47.6%	44
Percent of rural gifted/talented who are female	48.6%	17



Priority Ranking

11

Leading

Indiana

Indiana falls just outside of the top 10 in terms of priority. Almost one in four students in the state attends rural schools, and the state has one of the largest populations of rural students in absolute numbers. These students generally attend large schools and districts, with only one in 25 of the districts classified as small. At less than \$6,000 per rural student, instructional spending is very low. Only four states spend less to educate their rural learners, and Indiana districts' spending on

transportation is high relative to instructional costs, ranking third among states. The *Access to Supports for Learning and Development* gauge rank is Urgent, particularly the ratio of school counselors and school psychologists to the number of students served in rural schools. On average, there are 500 rural Indiana students to just one mental health professional—only rural Michigan students have less access.

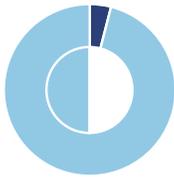
GAUGE 1

Importance of Rural Education

NOTABLE	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	CRUCIAL
---------	-----------	----------------	---------

RANK
22

Percent small rural districts



IN
4.0%
US
50.0%

	IN	RANK
Percent rural schools	38.2%	22
Percent small rural districts	4.0%	38
Percent rural students	24.2%	19
Number of rural students	238,590	8
Percent of state education funds to rural districts	23.2%	23



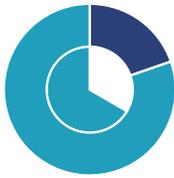
GAUGE 2

Student and Family Diversity

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT
------	---------	----------	--------

RANK
28

Rural diversity index



IN
19.7%
US
33.4%

	IN	RANK
Diversity index	19.7%	39
Poverty level in rural school communities	289%	26
Percent of rural students with IEP	17.5%	11
Percent of rural school-aged children experiencing poverty	10.7%	33
Percent of rural household mobility	9.6%	24



GAUGE 3

Educational Policy Context

NOTABLE	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	CRUCIAL
---------	-----------	----------------	---------

RANK
1

Rural instructional expenditures per pupil



IN
\$5,582
US
\$7,174

	IN	RANK
Rural instructional expenditures per pupil	\$5,582	5
Ratio of instructional to transportation expenditures	\$7.89	3
Median organizational scale (x100)	6,140	15
State revenue to schools per local dollar	\$1.85	36
Adjusted salary expenditures per instructional FTE	\$68,029	11



GAUGE 4

Educational Outcomes

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT
------	---------	----------	--------

RANK
29

Rural poverty difference in reading (Gr 8)



IN
22.3
US
18.2

	IN	RANK
Rural poverty difference in math (Gr 8)	20.2	24
Rural poverty difference in reading (Gr 8)	22.3	9
Rural NAEP composite math (Gr 4 and 8)	0.289	43
Rural NAEP composite reading (Gr 4 and 8)	0.106	32
HS grad rate rural advantage	1.3%	17



GAUGE 5

Access to Supports for Learning and Development

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT
------	---------	----------	--------

RANK
3

Students per psychologist/school counselor



IN
501
US
310

	IN	RANK
Students per psychologist/school counselor	501	2
Percent of rural households without broadband access	13.7%	18
Percent of rural school-aged children without health insurance	9.4%	7
Percent rural enrollment in public preschool	33.8%	27
Percent of rural gifted/talented who are female	48.4%	12



Priority Ranking

40

Notable

Iowa

Attention to Iowa's rural schools and communities is notably important. Slightly more than half of Iowa's schools are rural and nearly one in three of the state's public PK-12 learners lives in a rural community. The percent of Iowa children attending rural districts is more than double the U.S. average. The schools are some of the most racially homogeneous in the United States, and school community and child poverty levels are relatively

low in comparison to other states. The ratio of state support to local funding is nearly one-to-one, and per pupil funding for rural education ranks exactly in the middle of all states, though slightly below average. The state has one of the highest rural enrollments in public preschool but ranks well below the U.S. median for students' access to school psychologists and counselors.

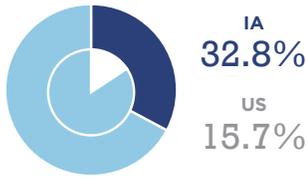
GAUGE 1

Importance of Rural Education

NOTABLE	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	CRUCIAL
---------	-----------	----------------	---------

RANK
10

Percent rural students



	IA	RANK
Percent rural schools	50.2%	11
Percent small rural districts	37.7%	28
Percent rural students	32.8%	9
Number of rural students	167,689	17
Percent of state education funds to rural districts	30.4%	15



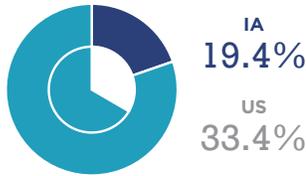
GAUGE 2

Student and Family Diversity

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT
------	---------	----------	--------

RANK
48

Rural diversity index



	IA	RANK
Diversity index	19.4%	41
Poverty level in rural school communities	319%	38
Percent of rural students with IEP	12.7%	44
Percent of rural school-aged children experiencing poverty	8.0%	41
Percent of rural household mobility	8.6%	29



GAUGE 3

Educational Policy Context

NOTABLE	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	CRUCIAL
---------	-----------	----------------	---------

RANK
37

Rural instructional expenditures per pupil



	IA	RANK
Rural instructional expenditures per pupil	\$6,911	25
Ratio of instructional to transportation expenditures	\$13.61	40
Median organizational scale (x100)	1,587	27
State revenue to schools per local dollar	\$0.98	17
Adjusted salary expenditures per instructional FTE	\$79,491	33



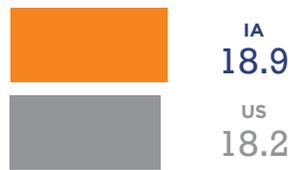
GAUGE 4

Educational Outcomes

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT
------	---------	----------	--------

RANK
36

Rural poverty difference in reading (Gr 8)



	IA	RANK
Rural poverty difference in math (Gr 8)	19.6	25
Rural poverty difference in reading (Gr 8)	18.9	22
Rural NAEP composite math (Gr 4 and 8)	0.177	37
Rural NAEP composite reading (Gr 4 and 8)	0.119	34
HS grad rate rural advantage	2.9%	30



GAUGE 5

Access to Supports for Learning and Development

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT
------	---------	----------	--------

RANK
41

Percent rural enrollment in public preschool



	IA	RANK
Students per psychologist/school counselor	345	18
Percent of rural households without broadband access	11.7%	29
Percent of rural school-aged children without health insurance	4.0%	40
Percent rural enrollment in public preschool	55.2%	48
Percent of rural gifted/talented who are female	49.6%	22



Priority Ranking

26

Significant

Kansas

At 46%, the percent of schools in Kansas that are rural is significantly above the U.S. average of about 30%, but the absolute number of rural public school students in the state ranks near the median. Kansas teachers make about \$10,000 less than their peers teaching in rural schools in other states, and educational outcomes for rural children are of urgent concern. On each

educational outcome indicator, Kansas scores in the most concerning half of all states. At rank six in importance, the rural poverty difference in eighth-grade math indicates a clear need for attention to the equitable education of the state's rural eighth graders. Rural girls are underrepresented in gifted education programs across the state.

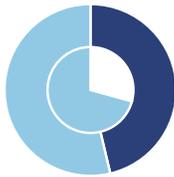
GAUGE 1

Importance of Rural Education



RANK
15

Percent rural schools



KS
46.3%
US
29.3%

	KS	RANK
Percent rural schools	46.3%	15
Percent small rural districts	68.2%	13
Percent rural students	23.7%	20
Number of rural students	114,746	24
Percent of state education funds to rural districts	24.3%	21



GAUGE 2

Student and Family Diversity



RANK
21

Percent of rural school-aged children experiencing poverty



KS
7.4%
US
13.6%

	KS	RANK
Diversity index	29.0%	23
Poverty level in rural school communities	294%	28
Percent of rural students with IEP	16.5%	15
Percent of rural school-aged children experiencing poverty	7.4%	44
Percent of rural household mobility	10.5%	11



GAUGE 3

Educational Policy Context



RANK
43

Median organizational scale (x 100)



KS
731
US
2,651

	KS	RANK
Rural instructional expenditures per pupil	\$7,367	28
Ratio of instructional to transportation expenditures	\$13.38	39
Median organizational scale (x100)	731	40
State revenue to schools per local dollar	\$2.44	40
Adjusted salary expenditures per instructional FTE	\$66,135	7



GAUGE 4

Educational Outcomes



RANK
13

Rural poverty difference in math (Gr 8)



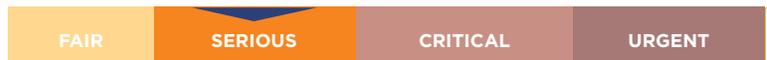
KS
25.3
US
22.0

	KS	RANK
Rural poverty difference in math (Gr 8)	25.3	6
Rural poverty difference in reading (Gr 8)	20.1	17
Rural NAEP composite math (Gr 4 and 8)	0.041	24
Rural NAEP composite reading (Gr 4 and 8)	-0.077	14
HS grad rate rural advantage	2.5%	25



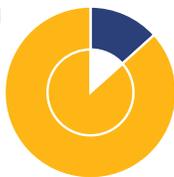
GAUGE 5

Access to Supports for Learning and Development



RANK
33

Percent of rural households without broadband access



KS
13.3%
US
13.4%

	KS	RANK
Students per psychologist/school counselor	254	34
Percent of rural households without broadband access	13.3%	21
Percent of rural school-aged children without health insurance	4.5%	30
Percent rural enrollment in public preschool	47.4%	43
Percent of rural gifted/talented who are female	48.2%	10



Priority Ranking

6

Leading

Kentucky

A strength of rural education in Kentucky is its relative success at equitably identifying girls for gifted education. This is not the case in some states, where rural girls make up as few as 40% of the students on gifted education rosters. Another bright spot is Kentucky's success in graduating rural students from high school relative to non-rural students. However, given that Kentucky ranks Crucial and Urgent on two

of five gauges, it's unsurprising that Kentucky ranks 6 overall in rural priority. The state has nearly double the U.S. average number of rural students, but these students receive just 35% of the state's education funding. Community poverty levels are dire and more than one in five students live in homes where the household income is below the federal poverty line of \$30,000 for a family of four.

GAUGE 1

Importance of Rural Education

NOTABLE	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	CRUCIAL
---------	-----------	----------------	---------

RANK

12

Percent rural students



KY
31.1%
US
15.7%

	KY	RANK
Percent rural schools	42.0%	19
Percent small rural districts	5.8%	37
Percent rural students	31.1%	12
Number of rural students	203,149	13
Percent of state education funds to rural districts	35.1%	10



GAUGE 2

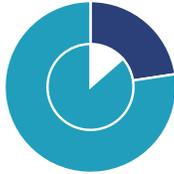
Student and Family Diversity

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT
------	---------	----------	--------

RANK

6

Percent of rural school-aged children experiencing poverty



KY
22.6%
US
13.6%

	KY	RANK
Diversity index	18.2%	42
Poverty level in rural school communities	217%	2
Percent of rural students with IEP	17.8%	9
Percent of rural school-aged children experiencing poverty	22.6%	2
Percent of rural household mobility	10.1%	19



GAUGE 3

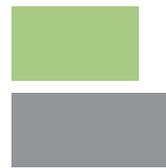
Educational Policy Context

NOTABLE	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	CRUCIAL
---------	-----------	----------------	---------

RANK

17

Ratio of instructional to transportation expenditures



KY
\$8.96
US
\$11.09

	KY	RANK
Rural instructional expenditures per pupil	\$6,217	16
Ratio of instructional to transportation expenditures	\$8.96	9
Median organizational scale (x100)	9,143	12
State revenue to schools per local dollar	\$2.88	42
Adjusted salary expenditures per instructional FTE	\$77,925	31



GAUGE 4

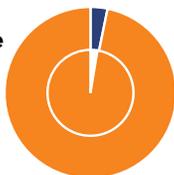
Educational Outcomes

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT
------	---------	----------	--------

RANK

16

HS grad rate rural advantage



KY
3.2%
US
2.6%

	KY	RANK
Rural poverty difference in math (Gr 8)	21.5	21
Rural poverty difference in reading (Gr 8)	21.5	12
Rural NAEP composite math (Gr 4 and 8)	-0.160	10
Rural NAEP composite reading (Gr 4 and 8)	-0.051	18
HS grad rate rural advantage	3.2%	32



GAUGE 5

Access to Supports for Learning and Development

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT
------	---------	----------	--------

RANK

25

Percent of rural households without broadband access



KY
16.1%
US
13.4%

	KY	RANK
Students per psychologist/school counselor	314	22
Percent of rural households without broadband access	16.1%	8
Percent of rural school-aged children without health insurance	5.0%	28
Percent rural enrollment in public preschool	34.3%	28
Percent of rural gifted/talented who are female	52.3%	36



Priority Ranking

6

Leading

Louisiana

Louisiana's school population is characterized by high diversity and especially high poverty. Of all states with available data, Louisiana has the most concerning performance in math education for eighth-grade students eligible for free or reduced meals. Transportation costs are an outsized expense in rural districts in the

state, with only three states having less favorable ratios than Louisiana. One of the state's most promising indicators is the high adjusted rural teacher salaries, but at almost 500 children to each mental health professional, rural children lack equitable access to school counselors and school psychologists.

GAUGE 1

Importance of Rural Education

NOTABLE	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	CRUCIAL	RANK
				35
		LA	RANK	
Percent rural schools		34.3%	26	
Percent small rural districts		3.7%	39	
Percent rural students		13.8%	34	
Number of rural students		83,991	26	
Percent of state education funds to rural districts		15.1%	34	

Percent rural schools



LA
34.3%
US
29.3%

GAUGE 2

Student and Family Diversity

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT	RANK
				8
		LA	RANK	
Diversity index		39.9%	14	
Poverty level in rural school communities		219%	4	
Percent of rural students with IEP		13.3%	39	
Percent of rural school-aged children experiencing poverty		21.7%	4	
Percent of rural household mobility		10.4%	14	

Poverty level in rural school communities



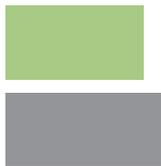
LA
219%
US
291%

GAUGE 3

Educational Policy Context

NOTABLE	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	CRUCIAL	RANK
				7
		LA	RANK	
Rural instructional expenditures per pupil		\$6,434	17	
Ratio of instructional to transportation expenditures		\$8.09	4	
Median organizational scale (x100)		13,933	10	
State revenue to schools per local dollar		\$1.26	26	
Adjusted salary expenditures per instructional FTE		\$77,770	30	

Rural instructional expenditures per pupil



LA
\$6,434
US
\$7,174

GAUGE 4

Educational Outcomes

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT	RANK
				4
		LA	RANK	
Rural poverty difference in math (Gr 8)		30.8	1	
Rural poverty difference in reading (Gr 8)		21.4	14	
Rural NAEP composite math (Gr 4 and 8)		-0.260	5	
Rural NAEP composite reading (Gr 4 and 8)		-0.056	17	
HS grad rate rural advantage		1.1%	14	

Rural poverty difference in math (Gr 8)



LA
30.8
US
22.0

GAUGE 5

Access to Supports for Learning and Development

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT	RANK
				22
		LA	RANK	
Students per psychologist/school counselor		489	3	
Percent of rural households without broadband access		17.2%	6	
Percent of rural school-aged children without health insurance		4.4%	32	
Percent rural enrollment in public preschool		36.0%	29	
Percent of rural gifted/talented who are female		59.7%	47	

Students per psychologist/school counselor



LA
489
US
310

Priority Ranking

21

Major

Maine

Maine ranks first in the *Importance* gauge and 21st overall. Nearly one in two students in Maine lives in a rural community. Only three states have proportionally more rural schools: South Dakota, Montana, and Vermont. Although 68% of Maine's schools are rural, less than 50% of the state's education funds goes to rural districts, making Maine a top priority for equitable state funding for

rural schools. Likewise, the ratio of state funding to local funding for rural schools skews far to local sources of funds, contributing to the issue of unequal school funding. Maine ranks just outside the top 10 states where transportation costs are high relative to spending on instruction. Poverty-based performance gaps in grade 8 math and reading fall around the middle of all 50 states.

GAUGE 1

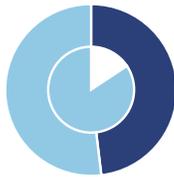
Importance of Rural Education

NOTABLE	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	CRUCIAL
---------	-----------	----------------	---------

RANK

1

Percent rural students



ME
48.1%
US
15.7%

	ME	RANK
Percent rural schools	67.5%	4
Percent small rural districts	71.5%	8
Percent rural students	48.1%	3
Number of rural students	81,911	28
Percent of state education funds to rural districts	49.4%	3



GAUGE 2

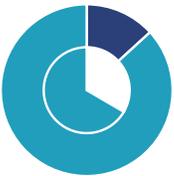
Student and Family Diversity

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT
------	---------	----------	--------

RANK

31

Rural diversity index



ME
13.2%
US
33.4%

	ME	RANK
Diversity index	13.2%	48
Poverty level in rural school communities	299%	31
Percent of rural students with IEP	18.3%	6
Percent of rural school-aged children experiencing poverty	13.2%	20
Percent of rural household mobility	8.4%	31



GAUGE 3

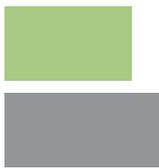
Educational Policy Context

NOTABLE	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	CRUCIAL
---------	-----------	----------------	---------

RANK

18

Ratio of instructional to transportation expenditures



ME
\$9.20
US
\$11.09

	ME	RANK
Rural instructional expenditures per pupil	\$8,123	34
Ratio of instructional to transportation expenditures	\$9.20	12
Median organizational scale (x100)	1,527	28
State revenue to schools per local dollar	\$0.70	9
Adjusted salary expenditures per instructional FTE	\$77,665	29



GAUGE 4

Educational Outcomes

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT
------	---------	----------	--------

RANK

15

Rural NAEP composite reading (Gr 4 and 8)



ME
-0.119
US
0.0

	ME	RANK
Rural poverty difference in math (Gr 8)	19.3	27
Rural poverty difference in reading (Gr 8)	17.7	25
Rural NAEP composite math (Gr 4 and 8)	-0.104	14
Rural NAEP composite reading (Gr 4 and 8)	-0.119	9
HS grad rate rural advantage	1.2%	16



GAUGE 5

Access to Supports for Learning and Development

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT
------	---------	----------	--------

RANK

35

Percent rural enrollment in public preschool



ME
28.4%
US
34.1%

	ME	RANK
Students per psychologist/school counselor	260	32
Percent of rural households without broadband access	10.2%	38
Percent of rural school-aged children without health insurance	6.1%	21
Percent rural enrollment in public preschool	28.4%	18
Percent of rural gifted/talented who are female	51.4%	32



Priority Ranking

45

Notable

Maryland

Every rural school district in Maryland is large and just under one in six schools are rural. No state has larger rural schools and districts than Maryland, and its rural students are some of the most diverse in the United States. Maryland's almost 60,000 rural students rank 33rd as compared to total enrollment numbers of rural students in other states, and they account for about 7% of the state's total population

of school-aged children. As compared to the graduation rates of their non-rural peers, the state is one of the best at graduating rural students from high school—students in rural Maryland schools are almost 6 percentage points more likely to graduate than their non-rural peers, an advantage that is significantly above the rural graduation advantage U.S. average of 2.6 percentage points.

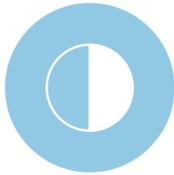
GAUGE 1

Importance of Rural Education

NOTABLE	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	CRUCIAL
---------	-----------	----------------	---------

RANK
46

Percent small rural districts



MD
0.0%
US
50.0%

	MD	RANK
Percent rural schools	16.1%	44
Percent small rural districts	0.0%	46
Percent rural students	6.8%	42
Number of rural students	59,577	33
Percent of state education funds to rural districts	7.1%	42



GAUGE 2

Student and Family Diversity

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT
------	---------	----------	--------

RANK
42

Percent rural household mobility



MD
8.4%
US
9.7%

	MD	RANK
Diversity index	49.1%	5
Poverty level in rural school communities	419%	44
Percent of rural students with IEP	12.2%	46
Percent of rural school-aged children experiencing poverty	8.5%	39
Percent of rural household mobility	8.4%	31



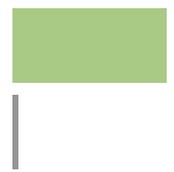
GAUGE 3

Educational Policy Context

NOTABLE	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	CRUCIAL
---------	-----------	----------------	---------

RANK
20

Median organizational scale (x 100)



MD
71,488
US
2,651

	MD	RANK
Rural instructional expenditures per pupil	\$8,816	38
Ratio of instructional to transportation expenditures	\$9.89	16
Median organizational scale (x100)	71,488	1
State revenue to schools per local dollar	\$1.11	21
Adjusted salary expenditures per instructional FTE	\$86,516	39



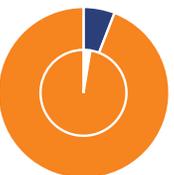
GAUGE 4

Educational Outcomes

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT
------	---------	----------	--------

RANK
45

HS grad rate rural advantage



MD
5.9%
US
2.6%

	MD	RANK
Rural poverty difference in math (Gr 8)	NA	NA
Rural poverty difference in reading (Gr 8)	NA	NA
Rural NAEP composite math (Gr 4 and 8)	0.111	31
Rural NAEP composite reading (Gr 4 and 8)	0.232	41
HS grad rate rural advantage	5.9%	44



GAUGE 5

Access to Supports for Learning and Development

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT
------	---------	----------	--------

RANK
40

Percent rural enrollment in public preschool



MD
25.1%
US
34.1%

	MD	RANK
Students per psychologist/school counselor	252	36
Percent of rural households without broadband access	10.9%	31
Percent of rural school-aged children without health insurance	3.7%	42
Percent rural enrollment in public preschool	25.1%	9
Percent of rural gifted/talented who are female	51.7%	33



Priority Ranking

48

Notable

Massachusetts

Although there are few rural schools in Massachusetts, rural schools serve around 74,000 rural students. The state is marked by very low rates of poverty, both on measures of poverty rates in rural school communities as well as on measures of the percentage of the state's school age children who live in homes with incomes below the poverty line. No state

has fewer uninsured rural children. NAEP scores for rural fourth and eighth graders are some of the best in the United States. Rural students in the state benefit from the rural graduation advantage and are almost 6 percentage points more likely to graduate from high school than their non-rural peers. This is more than double the rural U.S. average of 2.6 percentage points.

GAUGE 1

Importance of Rural Education



RANK
42

Percent rural schools



MA
11.3%
US
29.3%

	MA	RANK
Percent rural schools	11.3%	49
Percent small rural districts	37.7%	28
Percent rural students	8.6%	38
Number of rural students	73,828	32
Percent of state education funds to rural districts	8.5%	38



GAUGE 2

Student and Family Diversity



RANK
38

Percent rural students with IEP



MA
18.5%
US
15.0%

	MA	RANK
Diversity index	26.7%	25
Poverty level in rural school communities	526%	48
Percent of rural students with IEP	18.5%	4
Percent of rural school-aged children experiencing poverty	6.6%	45
Percent of rural household mobility	8.6%	29



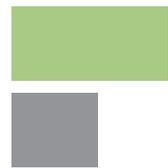
GAUGE 3

Educational Policy Context



RANK
33

Median organizational scale (x 100)



MA
4,290
US
2,651

	MA	RANK
Rural instructional expenditures per pupil	\$11,165	43
Ratio of instructional to transportation expenditures	\$10.44	23
Median organizational scale (x100)	4,290	18
State revenue to schools per local dollar	\$0.64	6
Adjusted salary expenditures per instructional FTE	\$93,499	45



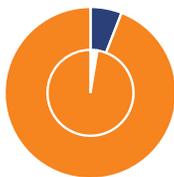
GAUGE 4

Educational Outcomes



RANK
47

HS grad rate rural advantage



MA
5.8%
US
2.6%

	MA	RANK
Rural poverty difference in math (Gr 8)	NA	NA
Rural poverty difference in reading (Gr 8)	NA	NA
Rural NAEP composite math (Gr 4 and 8)	0.305	44
Rural NAEP composite reading (Gr 4 and 8)	0.579	47
HS grad rate rural advantage	5.8%	43



GAUGE 5

Access to Supports for Learning and Development



RANK
48

Percent of rural gifted students who are female



MA
49.4%
US
50.4%

	MA	RANK
Students per psychologist/school counselor	210	43
Percent of rural households without broadband access	6.5%	47
Percent of rural school-aged children without health insurance	1.1%	50
Percent rural enrollment in public preschool	42.0%	40
Percent of rural gifted/talented who are female	49.4%	21



Michigan

At nearly a quarter million students, Michigan serves a very large absolute number of rural students, but they make up less than one in five of the total student population. Only six states have a greater disparity between the proportional size of the rural enrollment and the proportional funding that goes toward educating rural students—18.2% of Michigan’s students are in rural districts, but only 16.9% of the state funding goes to rural districts. The most pressing indicator for Michigan

in this report is rural student access to school psychologists and school counselors. Across rural school districts in the state, on average, one school counselor or school psychologist serves 571 students. This is 84% worse than the rural average and the lowest professional-to-student ratio among all states. Achievement data for fourth and eighth-grade rural students experiencing poverty and all rural students ranks in the middle compared to other U.S. states.

GAUGE 1

Importance of Rural Education

NOTABLE	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	CRUCIAL	RANK
				28
				

Percent small rural districts



MI
38.3%
US
50.0%

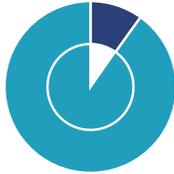
	MI	RANK
Percent rural schools	28.7%	31
Percent small rural districts	38.3%	27
Percent rural students	18.2%	27
Number of rural students	226,003	10
Percent of state education funds to rural districts	16.9%	33

GAUGE 2

Student and Family Diversity

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT	RANK
				36
				

Percent rural household mobility



MI
9.0%
US
9.7%

	MI	RANK
Diversity index	22.3%	33
Poverty level in rural school communities	277%	22
Percent of rural students with IEP	13.5%	38
Percent of rural school-aged children experiencing poverty	11.4%	29
Percent of rural household mobility	9.0%	28

GAUGE 3

Educational Policy Context

NOTABLE	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	CRUCIAL	RANK
				35
				

Rural instructional expenditures per pupil



MI
\$6,613
US
\$7,174

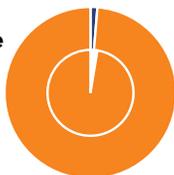
	MI	RANK
Rural instructional expenditures per pupil	\$6,613	20
Ratio of instructional to transportation expenditures	\$12.41	36
Median organizational scale (x100)	2,651	25
State revenue to schools per local dollar	\$1.65	34
Adjusted salary expenditures per instructional FTE	\$75,431	25

GAUGE 4

Educational Outcomes

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT	RANK
				22
				

HS grad rate rural advantage



MI
1.3%
US
2.6%

	MI	RANK
Rural poverty difference in math (Gr 8)	20.5	23
Rural poverty difference in reading (Gr 8)	15.3	30
Rural NAEP composite math (Gr 4 and 8)	0.033	22
Rural NAEP composite reading (Gr 4 and 8)	0.013	25
HS grad rate rural advantage	1.3%	17

GAUGE 5

Access to Supports for Learning and Development

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT	RANK
				34
				

Students per psychologist/school counselor



MI
574
US
310

	MI	RANK
Students per psychologist/school counselor	574	1
Percent of rural households without broadband access	12.5%	26
Percent of rural school-aged children without health insurance	4.4%	32
Percent rural enrollment in public preschool	38.7%	35
Percent of rural gifted/talented who are female	58.6%	46

Priority Ranking

38

Notable

Minnesota

The percentage of Minnesota's children who attend rural schools is above the U.S. average. Minnesota provides proportionally less funding to rural districts relative to the size of its rural student enrollment and is one of 14 states with the most disparity. The state is marked by low rates of poverty, both on measures of poverty rates in rural school communities as well as on measures of the percentage of the state's school age

children who live in homes with incomes below the poverty line. Students living in lower income households face particularly strong educational barriers as evidenced by their lower NAEP scores in reading and math compared to their rural peers who live in higher-income households. Rural student access to school counselors and school psychologists is critical at an average ratio of 400 students to one professional.

GAUGE 1

Importance of Rural Education

NOTABLE	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	CRUCIAL
---------	-----------	----------------	---------

RANK
27

Percent rural students



MN
19.2%
US
15.7%

	MN	RANK
Percent rural schools	34.2%	27
Percent small rural districts	40.8%	26
Percent rural students	19.2%	25
Number of rural students	152,930	21
Percent of state education funds to rural districts	19.1%	27



GAUGE 2

Student and Family Diversity

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT
------	---------	----------	--------

RANK
41

Rural diversity index



MN
24.1%
US
33.4%

	MN	RANK
Diversity index	24.1%	30
Poverty level in rural school communities	322%	40
Percent of rural students with IEP	17.1%	13
Percent of rural school-aged children experiencing poverty	7.5%	43
Percent of rural household mobility	8.3%	33



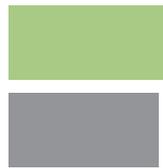
GAUGE 3

Educational Policy Context

NOTABLE	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	CRUCIAL
---------	-----------	----------------	---------

RANK
41

Rural instructional expenditures per pupil



MN
\$7,712
US
\$7,174

	MN	RANK
Rural instructional expenditures per pupil	\$7,712	30
Ratio of instructional to transportation expenditures	\$9.76	15
Median organizational scale (x100)	1,507	29
State revenue to schools per local dollar	\$2.71	41
Adjusted salary expenditures per instructional FTE	\$82,814	35



GAUGE 4

Educational Outcomes

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT
------	---------	----------	--------

RANK
19

Rural poverty difference in reading (Gr 8)



MN
22.6
US
18.2

	MN	RANK
Rural poverty difference in math (Gr 8)	23.5	14
Rural poverty difference in reading (Gr 8)	22.6	8
Rural NAEP composite math (Gr 4 and 8)	0.143	36
Rural NAEP composite reading (Gr 4 and 8)	0.031	26
HS grad rate rural advantage	2.2%	22



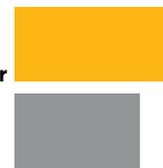
GAUGE 5

Access to Supports for Learning and Development

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT
------	---------	----------	--------

RANK
36

Students per psychologist/school counselor



MN
400
US
310

	MN	RANK
Students per psychologist/school counselor	400	7
Percent of rural households without broadband access	10.8%	32
Percent of rural school-aged children without health insurance	4.4%	32
Percent rural enrollment in public preschool	47.9%	46
Percent of rural gifted/talented who are female	50.7%	27



Priority Ranking

1

Leading

Mississippi

For two decades of this report, Mississippi has been the leading priority state in *Why Rural Matters* except for 2009 when it ranked number three. Over half of the public schools in Mississippi are located in a rural area, and over half of public-school students in Mississippi attend school in a rural school district. Resource equity is a serious issue given that Mississippi spends on average \$2,000 less on the education of a rural student than other states. Teacher salaries are \$13,000 below the U.S. rural average and over \$17,000 below the average

for all teachers in the United States, even after adjusting for local wage differences. Compounding disadvantage, over one in five rural Mississippi households lack basic internet access, and almost 7% of rural school aged children are uninsured. While these conditions should be balanced by greater mental health support to Mississippi's rural children, there is only one psychologist or counselor for every 436 children, the fifth most concerning ratio in the United States.

GAUGE 1

Importance of Rural Education

	NOTABLE	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	CRUCIAL		
					MS	RANK
Percent rural schools					50.2%	11
Percent small rural districts					1.3%	45
Percent rural students					50.3%	2
Number of rural students					219,613	12
Percent of state education funds to rural districts					51.0%	2

Percent state education funds to rural districts



MS
51.0%
US
16.2%

RANK

7



GAUGE 2

Student and Family Diversity

	FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT		
					MS	RANK
Diversity index					38.1%	17
Poverty level in rural school communities					256%	14
Percent of rural students with IEP					15.3%	22
Percent of rural school-aged children experiencing poverty					21.7%	4
Percent of rural household mobility					6.1%	45

Poverty level in rural school communities



MS
256%
US
291%

RANK

14



GAUGE 3

Educational Policy Context

	NOTABLE	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	CRUCIAL		
					MS	RANK
Rural instructional expenditures per pupil					\$5,278	2
Ratio of instructional to transportation expenditures					\$10.80	26
Median organizational scale (x100)					12,837	11
State revenue to schools per local dollar					\$1.35	31
Adjusted salary expenditures per instructional FTE					\$63,562	3

Rural instructional expenditures per pupil



MS
\$5,278
US
\$7,174

RANK

3



GAUGE 4

Educational Outcomes

	FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT		
					MS	RANK
Rural poverty difference in math (Gr 8)					22.7	15
Rural poverty difference in reading (Gr 8)					25.7	2
Rural NAEP composite math (Gr 4 and 8)					-0.125	12
Rural NAEP composite reading (Gr 4 and 8)					-0.025	21
HS grad rate rural advantage					2.5%	25

Rural poverty difference in reading (Gr 8)



MS
25.7
US
18.2

RANK

10



GAUGE 5

Access to Supports for Learning and Development

	FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT		
					MS	RANK
Students per psychologist/school counselor					436	5
Percent of rural households without broadband access					20.6%	2
Percent of rural school-aged children without health insurance					6.6%	17
Percent rural enrollment in public preschool					33.6%	25
Percent of rural gifted/talented who are female					50.8%	28

Percent of rural households without broadband access



MS
20.6%
US
13.4%

RANK

5



Priority Ranking

5

Leading

Missouri

Over 180,000 rural students attend public PK-12 schools in Missouri. This number is almost double the rural U.S. average. Exactly 44% of the state's schools are rural and they serve more than one in five of Missouri's students. Missouri spends less than \$6,000 per rural pupil, which is only 81% of the rural U.S. average. Rural Missouri students attend schools in communities with high poverty rates. Only seven states have higher rates of school community poverty. Even though

rural school communities are likely to have high rates of poverty, schools are disproportionately funded by local sources of revenue. Rural teacher salaries are critically low. Missouri teachers make almost \$14,000 less than their rural peers in other states—only Arkansas pays teachers less. Rural NAEP scores for fourth and eighth graders are low for reading (ranking 15) and middle for math (ranking 25).

GAUGE 1

Importance of Rural Education

NOTABLE	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	CRUCIAL
---------	-----------	----------------	---------

RANK
15

Percent rural schools



	MO	RANK
Percent rural schools	44.0%	17
Percent small rural districts	64.4%	16
Percent rural students	21.2%	23
Number of rural students	183,200	15
Percent of state education funds to rural districts	23.8%	22



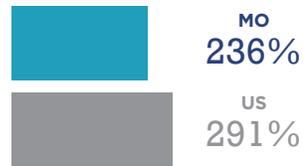
GAUGE 2

Student and Family Diversity

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT
------	---------	----------	--------

RANK
18

Poverty level in rural school communities



	MO	RANK
Diversity index	16.8%	44
Poverty level in rural school communities	236%	8
Percent of rural students with IEP	14.7%	27
Percent of rural school-aged children experiencing poverty	15.0%	17
Percent of rural household mobility	9.9%	20



GAUGE 3

Educational Policy Context

NOTABLE	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	CRUCIAL
---------	-----------	----------------	---------

RANK
4

Rural instructional expenditures per pupil



	MO	RANK
Rural instructional expenditures per pupil	\$5,852	10
Ratio of instructional to transportation expenditures	\$10.04	19
Median organizational scale (x100)	921	37
State revenue to schools per local dollar	\$0.75	10
Adjusted salary expenditures per instructional FTE	\$62,487	2



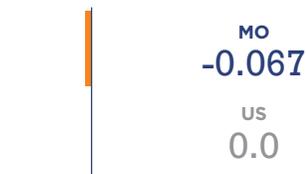
GAUGE 4

Educational Outcomes

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT
------	---------	----------	--------

RANK
25

Rural NAEP composite reading (Gr 4 and 8)



	MO	RANK
Rural poverty difference in math (Gr 8)	15.5	37
Rural poverty difference in reading (Gr 8)	19.5	18
Rural NAEP composite math (Gr 4 and 8)	0.048	25
Rural NAEP composite reading (Gr 4 and 8)	-0.067	15
HS grad rate rural advantage	2.4%	24



GAUGE 5

Access to Supports for Learning and Development

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT
------	---------	----------	--------

RANK
13

Percent of school-aged children without health insurance coverage



	MO	RANK
Students per psychologist/school counselor	287	23
Percent of rural households without broadband access	15.8%	9
Percent of rural school-aged children without health insurance	7.5%	15
Percent rural enrollment in public preschool	44.6%	41
Percent of rural gifted/talented who are female	48.3%	11



Priority Ranking

24

Major

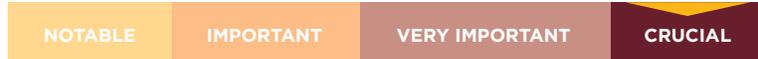
Montana

Only South Dakota has a higher proportional share of rural schools than Montana, but only nine states have fewer rural students than Montana's total of just under 50,000. Montana's rural student population is about half of the median for all 50 states (94,593). While the percentage of rural children who live in homes with household incomes below the poverty line is relatively low at just over one in ten, student mobility is high with one in ten students changing residences per year. Rural

student NAEP scores for reading and math rank about in the middle of all 50 states, but the scores of Montana's rural eighth graders living in lower-income households are far less robust, ranking 10th in priority for math achievement and 20th for reading. Access to key supports is mixed, with the ninth highest rate of uninsured children along with two other indicators above the midpoint of states and the other two indicators below.

GAUGE 1

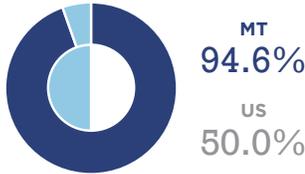
Importance of Rural Education



RANK

5

Percent small rural districts



	MT	RANK
Percent rural schools	73.8%	2
Percent small rural districts	94.6%	1
Percent rural students	33.0%	8
Number of rural students	49,168	40
Percent of state education funds to rural districts	36.4%	9



GAUGE 2

Student and Family Diversity



RANK

35

Percent rural household mobility



	MT	RANK
Diversity index	21.7%	35
Poverty level in rural school communities	267%	19
Percent of rural students with IEP	13.2%	42
Percent of rural school-aged children experiencing poverty	11.1%	30
Percent of rural household mobility	10.3%	17



GAUGE 3

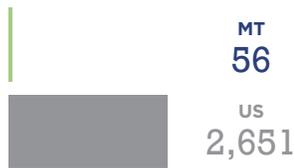
Educational Policy Context



RANK

36

Median organizational scale (x 100)



	MT	RANK
Rural instructional expenditures per pupil	\$7,918	31
Ratio of instructional to transportation expenditures	\$10.36	21
Median organizational scale (x100)	56	49
State revenue to schools per local dollar	\$0.98	17
Adjusted salary expenditures per instructional FTE	\$74,047	23



GAUGE 4

Educational Outcomes



RANK

21

Rural poverty difference in math (Gr 8)



	MT	RANK
Rural poverty difference in math (Gr 8)	24.5	10
Rural poverty difference in reading (Gr 8)	19.4	20
Rural NAEP composite math (Gr 4 and 8)	0.049	26
Rural NAEP composite reading (Gr 4 and 8)	0.038	27
HS grad rate rural advantage	3.1%	31



GAUGE 5

Access to Supports for Learning and Development



RANK

17

Percent of school-aged children without health insurance coverage



	MT	RANK
Students per psychologist/school counselor	253	35
Percent of rural households without broadband access	12.8%	24
Percent of rural school-aged children without health insurance	9.1%	9
Percent rural enrollment in public preschool	28.3%	17
Percent of rural gifted/talented who are female	49.1%	19



Priority Ranking

44

Notable

Nebraska

Just over half of Nebraska's schools are rural and most are small. These schools serve about 77,000 public PK-12 students which is substantially less than the median of about 95,000 for all U.S. states. Nebraska has the highest percentage of rural children enrolled in public preschool of any state. Fewer than 6% of rural school-aged children live in homes with incomes below the federal poverty line; only Rhode Island and Utah have lower rates. Poverty rates in rural school

communities are relatively low as well, ranking 35th. Nebraska has the greatest disparity of funding given the percent of rural students in the state relative to the percent of state expenditures that goes to rural districts. Likewise, the ratio of state-to-local funding to educate rural students is critical at \$0.28 of state support to \$1.00 of local funding. No other state relies as heavily on local funding to educate its rural students.

GAUGE 1

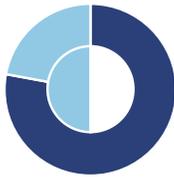
Importance of Rural Education

NOTABLE | IMPORTANT | VERY IMPORTANT | CRUCIAL

RANK

11

Percent small rural districts



NE
77.9%
US
50.0%

	NE	RANK
Percent rural schools	51.5%	8
Percent small rural districts	77.9%	3
Percent rural students	23.6%	21
Number of rural students	77,163	29
Percent of state education funds to rural districts	17.8%	29



GAUGE 2

Student and Family Diversity

FAIR | SERIOUS | CRITICAL | URGENT

RANK

46

Percent of rural school-aged children experiencing poverty



NE
5.7%
US
13.6%

	NE	RANK
Diversity index	20.2%	38
Poverty level in rural school communities	311%	35
Percent of rural students with IEP	14.3%	31
Percent of rural school-aged children experiencing poverty	5.7%	48
Percent of rural household mobility	7.9%	38



GAUGE 3

Educational Policy Context

NOTABLE | IMPORTANT | VERY IMPORTANT | CRUCIAL

RANK

44

State revenue to schools per local dollar



NE
\$0.28
US
\$1.18

	NE	RANK
Rural instructional expenditures per pupil	\$8,970	39
Ratio of instructional to transportation expenditures	\$16.69	45
Median organizational scale (x100)	421	46
State revenue to schools per local dollar	\$0.28	1
Adjusted salary expenditures per instructional FTE	\$82,523	34



GAUGE 4

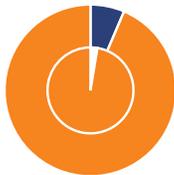
Educational Outcomes

FAIR | SERIOUS | CRITICAL | URGENT

RANK

44

HS grad rate rural advantage



NE
6.4%
US
2.6%

	NE	RANK
Rural poverty difference in math (Gr 8)	19.2	28
Rural poverty difference in reading (Gr 8)	12.8	36
Rural NAEP composite math (Gr 4 and 8)	0.306	45
Rural NAEP composite reading (Gr 4 and 8)	0.133	36
HS grad rate rural advantage	6.4%	46



GAUGE 5

Access to Supports for Learning and Development

FAIR | SERIOUS | CRITICAL | URGENT

RANK

42

Percent rural enrollment in public preschool



NE
57.8%
US
34.1%

	NE	RANK
Students per psychologist/school counselor	236	40
Percent of rural households without broadband access	12.8%	24
Percent of rural school-aged children without health insurance	5.9%	23
Percent rural enrollment in public preschool	57.8%	50
Percent of rural gifted/talented who are female	50.0%	25



Priority Ranking

19

Major

Nevada

Nevada has the lowest absolute number of rural students among all states with available data. Its rural students are some of the most racially diverse and more than one in ten rural students have changed residences in the past year. The ratio of transportation expenses to instructional expenditures is at a critical level; only West Virginia has a more burdensome transportation cost. About one in five of Nevada's preschool aged children is enrolled in public preschool—only two states

have lower public preschool enrollment. Eighth-grade NAEP scores for rural students who live in lower income households are very low relative to the scores of their wealthier peers. This economic disparity shows up in reading, ranking 5th in priority, and in math, ranking 13th. In Nevada, rural high school students are 3 percentage points less likely to graduate from high school than their non-rural peers in the state.

GAUGE 1

Importance of Rural Education



RANK
48

Percent small rural districts



NV
50.0%
US
50.0%

	NV	RANK
Percent rural schools	18.0%	40
Percent small rural districts	50.0%	22
Percent rural students	1.9%	49
Number of rural students	8,048	49
Percent of state education funds to rural districts	3.8%	48



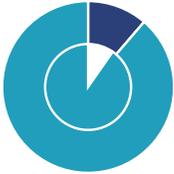
GAUGE 2

Student and Family Diversity



RANK
11

Percent rural household mobility



NV
11.3%
US
9.7%

	NV	RANK
Diversity index	51.7%	4
Poverty level in rural school communities	256%	14
Percent of rural students with IEP	14.8%	26
Percent of rural school-aged children experiencing poverty	11.0%	32
Percent of rural household mobility	11.3%	8



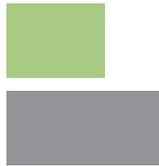
GAUGE 3

Educational Policy Context



RANK
10

Ratio of instructional to transportation expenditures



NV
\$6.96
US
\$11.09

	NV	RANK
Rural instructional expenditures per pupil	\$7,453	29
Ratio of instructional to transportation expenditures	\$6.96	2
Median organizational scale (x100)	1,338	32
State revenue to schools per local dollar	\$0.98	17
Adjusted salary expenditures per instructional FTE	\$72,202	18



GAUGE 4

Educational Outcomes



RANK
10

HS grad rate rural advantage



NV
-3.0%
US
2.6%

	NV	RANK
Rural poverty difference in math (Gr 8)	23.9	13
Rural poverty difference in reading (Gr 8)	24.7	5
Rural NAEP composite math (Gr 4 and 8)	-0.036	19
Rural NAEP composite reading (Gr 4 and 8)	0.132	35
HS grad rate rural advantage	-3.0%	3



GAUGE 5

Access to Supports for Learning and Development



RANK
18

Percent rural enrollment in public preschool



NV
20.3%
US
34.1%

	NV	RANK
Students per psychologist/school counselor	NA	NA
Percent of rural households without broadband access	10.5%	35
Percent of rural school-aged children without health insurance	8.9%	11
Percent rural enrollment in public preschool	20.3%	3
Percent of rural gifted/talented who are female	52.9%	38



Priority Ranking

37

Significant

New Hampshire

Over half of New Hampshire's schools are rural, serving about a third of the state's children. New Hampshire's rural schools are disproportionately funded by local sources of income—only three other states rely more on the local tax bases for school funding. Likewise, the state ranks eighth in priority regarding the share of the state's budget (about 37%) that is spent to educate New Hampshire's rural children. Per pupil

instructional spending, however, is relatively high at almost \$12,000, well above the United States average of \$7,174. Of critical importance is the underrepresentation of girls in gifted education programs in rural schools. The participation rate of rural New Hampshire girls in gifted education programming is more than 9 percentage points lower than the rate for boys.

GAUGE 1

Importance of Rural Education

NOTABLE	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	CRUCIAL
---------	-----------	----------------	---------

RANK

9

Percent rural students



NH
32.4%
US
15.7%

	NH	RANK
Percent rural schools	50.4%	10
Percent small rural districts	66.1%	14
Percent rural students	32.4%	10
Number of rural students	53,247	36
Percent of state education funds to rural districts	36.8%	8



GAUGE 2

Student and Family Diversity

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT
------	---------	----------	--------

RANK

45

Rural diversity index



NH
14.6%
US
33.4%

	NH	RANK
Diversity index	14.6%	46
Poverty level in rural school communities	435%	45
Percent of rural students with IEP	17.9%	8
Percent of rural school-aged children experiencing poverty	8.1%	40
Percent of rural household mobility	7.7%	40



GAUGE 3

Educational Policy Context

NOTABLE	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	CRUCIAL
---------	-----------	----------------	---------

RANK

39

State revenue to schools per local dollar



NH
\$0.45
US
\$1.18

	NH	RANK
Rural instructional expenditures per pupil	\$11,624	45
Ratio of instructional to transportation expenditures	\$11.38	30
Median organizational scale (x100)	1,406	30
State revenue to schools per local dollar	\$0.45	4
Adjusted salary expenditures per instructional FTE	\$84,935	37



GAUGE 4

Educational Outcomes

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT
------	---------	----------	--------

RANK

39

Rural poverty difference in math (Gr 8)



NH
24.1
US
22.0

	NH	RANK
Rural poverty difference in math (Gr 8)	24.1	12
Rural poverty difference in reading (Gr 8)	15.1	33
Rural NAEP composite math (Gr 4 and 8)	0.120	33
Rural NAEP composite reading (Gr 4 and 8)	0.207	40
HS grad rate rural advantage	3.8%	33



GAUGE 5

Access to Supports for Learning and Development

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT
------	---------	----------	--------

RANK

30

Percent of rural gifted students who are female



NH
45.4%
US
50.4%

	NH	RANK
Students per psychologist/school counselor	149	48
Percent of rural households without broadband access	7.9%	44
Percent of rural school-aged children without health insurance	5.0%	28
Percent rural enrollment in public preschool	24.1%	7
Percent of rural gifted/talented who are female	45.4%	2



Priority Ranking

47

Notable

New Jersey

Given New Jersey's proximity to some of the largest urban centers in the United States, it is no surprise that only one in 12 schools is located in a rural area and only one in 17 students attends school in a rural district. These districts are more likely than not to be small, racially diverse, and serve a relatively affluent population. Over one in

five rural students qualifies for special education services, and per pupil spending on instruction is among the highest in the United States. Overall, New Jersey's rural students receive some of the best access to supports for learning and development and perform well on standardized tests in both reading and math.

GAUGE 1

Importance of Rural Education

NOTABLE	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	CRUCIAL
---------	-----------	----------------	---------

RANK
43

Percent rural schools



NJ
8.5%
US
29.3%

	NJ	RANK
Percent rural schools	8.5%	50
Percent small rural districts	56.2%	20
Percent rural students	5.9%	44
Number of rural students	75,248	30
Percent of state education funds to rural districts	5.9%	45



GAUGE 2

Student and Family Diversity

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT
------	---------	----------	--------

RANK
28

Percent rural students with IEP



NJ
20.3%
US
15.0%

	NJ	RANK
Diversity index	43.8%	11
Poverty level in rural school communities	502%	47
Percent of rural students with IEP	20.3%	2
Percent of rural school-aged children experiencing poverty	6.5%	46
Percent of rural household mobility	9.5%	27



GAUGE 3

Educational Policy Context

NOTABLE	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	CRUCIAL
---------	-----------	----------------	---------

RANK
31

Ratio of instructional to transportation expenditures



NJ
\$10.94
US
\$11.09

	NJ	RANK
Rural instructional expenditures per pupil	\$12,399	46
Ratio of instructional to transportation expenditures	\$10.94	27
Median organizational scale (x100)	3,642	20
State revenue to schools per local dollar	\$0.69	8
Adjusted salary expenditures per instructional FTE	\$79,376	32



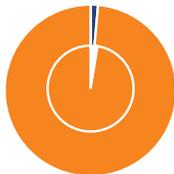
GAUGE 4

Educational Outcomes

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT
------	---------	----------	--------

RANK
43

HS grad rate rural advantage



NJ
1.4%
US
2.6%

	NJ	RANK
Rural poverty difference in math (Gr 8)	NA	NA
Rural poverty difference in reading (Gr 8)	NA	NA
Rural NAEP composite math (Gr 4 and 8)	0.409	46
Rural NAEP composite reading (Gr 4 and 8)	0.413	45
HS grad rate rural advantage	1.4%	19



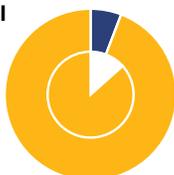
GAUGE 5

Access to Supports for Learning and Development

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT
------	---------	----------	--------

RANK
50

Percent of rural households without broadband access



NJ
5.8%
US
13.4%

	NJ	RANK
Students per psychologist/school counselor	193	44
Percent of rural households without broadband access	5.8%	48
Percent of rural school-aged children without health insurance	2.6%	47
Percent rural enrollment in public preschool	41.8%	39
Percent of rural gifted/talented who are female	55.1%	40



Priority Ranking

14

Major

New Mexico

New Mexico's rural school districts are characterized by their small size, extreme levels of poverty at both the student and school community level, and an ongoing connectivity crisis where one in five students still lack basic internet access. Given these substantial barriers, it is no surprise that these rural students finish last in the United States on standardized math and reading tests. Although educational

outcomes are low in general, poverty compounds the challenges in math and reading for New Mexico's rural students—many of whom identify as Native American. Students in such conditions are in the most need of support and yet there are over 350 students sharing each psychologist or counselor and one in 13 rural students lacks health insurance coverage.

GAUGE 1

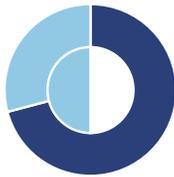
Importance of Rural Education

NOTABLE IMPORTANT VERY IMPORTANT CRUCIAL

RANK

32

Percent small rural districts



NM
70.9%
US
50.0%

	NM	RANK
Percent rural schools	37.8%	23
Percent small rural districts	70.9%	11
Percent rural students	15.0%	32
Number of rural students	44,820	42
Percent of state education funds to rural districts	16.9%	31



GAUGE 2

Student and Family Diversity

FAIR SERIOUS CRITICAL URGENT

RANK

9

Percent of rural school-aged children experiencing poverty



NM
24.4%
US
13.6%

	NM	RANK
Diversity index	26.7%	25
Poverty level in rural school communities	185%	1
Percent of rural students with IEP	15.6%	20
Percent of rural school-aged children experiencing poverty	24.4%	1
Percent of rural household mobility	8.3%	33



GAUGE 3

Educational Policy Context

NOTABLE IMPORTANT VERY IMPORTANT CRUCIAL

RANK

40

Rural instructional expenditures per pupil



NM
\$6,197
US
\$7,174

	NM	RANK
Rural instructional expenditures per pupil	\$6,197	14
Ratio of instructional to transportation expenditures	\$10.67	25
Median organizational scale (x100)	624	43
State revenue to schools per local dollar	\$3.34	46
Adjusted salary expenditures per instructional FTE	\$73,897	21



GAUGE 4

Educational Outcomes

FAIR SERIOUS CRITICAL URGENT

RANK

1

Rural NAEP composite math (Gr 4 and 8)



NM
-0.591
US
0.0

	NM	RANK
Rural poverty difference in math (Gr 8)	22.6	16
Rural poverty difference in reading (Gr 8)	24.6	6
Rural NAEP composite math (Gr 4 and 8)	-0.591	1
Rural NAEP composite reading (Gr 4 and 8)	-0.440	1
HS grad rate rural advantage	0.6%	13



GAUGE 5

Access to Supports for Learning and Development

FAIR SERIOUS CRITICAL URGENT

RANK

7

Percent of rural households without broadband access



NM
21.4%
US
13.4%

	NM	RANK
Students per psychologist/school counselor	359	16
Percent of rural households without broadband access	21.4%	1
Percent of rural school-aged children without health insurance	6.9%	16
Percent rural enrollment in public preschool	36.4%	30
Percent of rural gifted/talented who are female	49.2%	20



Priority Ranking

43

Notable

New York

Although only one in nine students in New York attends school in a rural district, this still results in nearly 300,000 rural students. Instructional spending on these students is the highest in the U.S. but transportation costs are also high, and one in seven of these students lives in a household with an income below the federal poverty line. Rural students living in lower income households appear to need more

support in reading than they do in math, at least relative to their rural peers in other states. New York's rural students receive some of the best access to supports for learning and development in the country—this may explain in part why their rural students graduate at a rate over 5 percentage points higher than New York's non-rural students.

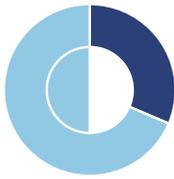
GAUGE 1

Importance of Rural Education

NOTABLE	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	CRUCIAL
---------	-----------	----------------	---------

RANK
31

Percent small rural districts



NY
34.1%
US
50.0%

	NY	RANK
Percent rural schools	16.6%	42
Percent small rural districts	34.1%	30
Percent rural students	11.6%	36
Number of rural students	276,293	6
Percent of state education funds to rural districts	22.0%	24



GAUGE 2

Student and Family Diversity

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT
------	---------	----------	--------

RANK
32

Percent rural students with IEP



NY
17.4%
US
15.0%

	NY	RANK
Diversity index	25.4%	29
Poverty level in rural school communities	343%	43
Percent of rural students with IEP	17.4%	12
Percent of rural school-aged children experiencing poverty	13.3%	19
Percent of rural household mobility	7.9%	38



GAUGE 3

Educational Policy Context

NOTABLE	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	CRUCIAL
---------	-----------	----------------	---------

RANK
41

State revenue to schools per local dollar



NY
\$1.19
US
\$1.18

	NY	RANK
Rural instructional expenditures per pupil	\$14,731	49
Ratio of instructional to transportation expenditures	\$8.85	7
Median organizational scale (x100)	3,086	22
State revenue to schools per local dollar	\$1.19	23
Adjusted salary expenditures per instructional FTE	\$109,665	49



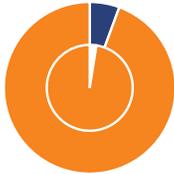
GAUGE 4

Educational Outcomes

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT
------	---------	----------	--------

RANK
35

HS grad rate rural advantage



NY
5.6%
US
2.6%

	NY	RANK
Rural poverty difference in math (Gr 8)	15.6	36
Rural poverty difference in reading (Gr 8)	21.1	16
Rural NAEP composite math (Gr 4 and 8)	-0.035	20
Rural NAEP composite reading (Gr 4 and 8)	0.098	31
HS grad rate rural advantage	5.6%	42



GAUGE 5

Access to Supports for Learning and Development

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT
------	---------	----------	--------

RANK
45

Percent of rural gifted students who are female



NY
55.2%
US
50.4%

	NY	RANK
Students per psychologist/school counselor	186	45
Percent of rural households without broadband access	10.6%	33
Percent of rural school-aged children without health insurance	4.4%	32
Percent rural enrollment in public preschool	31.8%	23
Percent of rural gifted/talented who are female	55.2%	42



Priority Ranking

10

Leading

North Carolina

Even with changes from our last report in the indicators measuring the health of its rural education system, North Carolina continues to rank among the states most in need of critical examination. With over one in three students attending school in a rural district, North Carolina's total rural student enrollment is second only to Texas. Compared to their rural peers in other states, these students are much more likely to live in a household with an income below the federal

poverty line, attend a racially diverse school in a poorer community, and move residences often. Schools and districts are large, instructional spending on students is low, and the state is one of the few places where rural students graduate high school at a lower rate than their non-rural peers. Access to supports is on par with peers in other states, except for low enrollment in public preschool and inadequate internet connectivity.

GAUGE 1

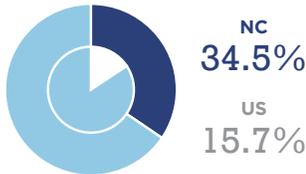
Importance of Rural Education

NOTABLE	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	CRUCIAL
---------	-----------	----------------	---------

RANK

8

Percent rural students



	NC	RANK
Percent rural schools	42.1%	18
Percent small rural districts	2.7%	41
Percent rural students	34.5%	7
Number of rural students	481,044	2
Percent of state education funds to rural districts	37.3%	7



GAUGE 2

Student and Family Diversity

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT
------	---------	----------	--------

RANK

6

Percent rural household mobility



	NC	RANK
Diversity index	52.7%	3
Poverty level in rural school communities	257%	16
Percent of rural students with IEP	14.2%	32
Percent of rural school-aged children experiencing poverty	17.2%	9
Percent of rural household mobility	10.4%	14



GAUGE 3

Educational Policy Context

NOTABLE	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	CRUCIAL
---------	-----------	----------------	---------

RANK

29

Rural instructional expenditures per pupil



	NC	RANK
Rural instructional expenditures per pupil	\$6,099	12
Ratio of instructional to transportation expenditures	\$15.14	44
Median organizational scale (x100)	33,884	3
State revenue to schools per local dollar	\$2.90	43
Adjusted salary expenditures per instructional FTE	\$76,041	27



GAUGE 4

Educational Outcomes

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT
------	---------	----------	--------

RANK

20

HS grad rate rural advantage



	NC	RANK
Rural poverty difference in math (Gr 8)	18.0	31
Rural poverty difference in reading (Gr 8)	15.3	30
Rural NAEP composite math (Gr 4 and 8)	-0.032	21
Rural NAEP composite reading (Gr 4 and 8)	-0.064	16
HS grad rate rural advantage	-1.1%	9



GAUGE 5

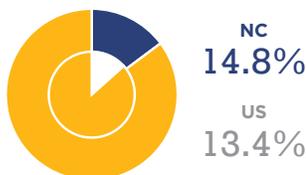
Access to Supports for Learning and Development

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT
------	---------	----------	--------

RANK

16

Percent of rural households without broadband access



	NC	RANK
Students per psychologist/school counselor	281	24
Percent of rural households without broadband access	14.8%	13
Percent of rural school-aged children without health insurance	5.3%	27
Percent rural enrollment in public preschool	27.5%	15
Percent of rural gifted/talented who are female	49.8%	24



North Dakota

Despite having a relatively small total rural student population, North Dakota is one of the most rural states. Two out of three schools are located in a rural area, and five out of six rural districts are smaller than the median U.S. rural district. These smaller districts do not have the level of diversity and poverty as the rural areas of many other states, but nearly one in seven rural North Dakota students has moved within the last

year—presenting challenges to both students and teachers. Reasonable amounts of funding are provided for student instruction, but North Dakota's rural teachers are among the lowest paid in the United States. Educational outcomes and access to key supports are all on par with other states, except for the high number of rural children who are uninsured.

GAUGE 1

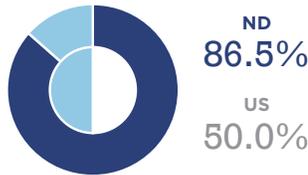
Importance of Rural Education



RANK

6

Percent small rural districts



	ND	RANK
Percent rural schools	67.5%	4
Percent small rural districts	86.5%	2
Percent rural students	36.4%	6
Number of rural students	42,473	43
Percent of state education funds to rural districts	39.5%	6



GAUGE 2

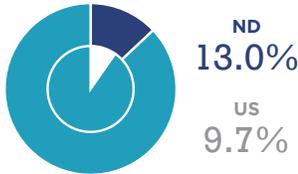
Student and Family Diversity



RANK

39

Percent rural household mobility



	ND	RANK
Diversity index	19.5%	40
Poverty level in rural school communities	326%	41
Percent of rural students with IEP	13.3%	39
Percent of rural school-aged children experiencing poverty	10.5%	34
Percent of rural household mobility	13.0%	3



GAUGE 3

Educational Policy Context



RANK

29

Rural adjusted salary expenditures per instructional FTE



	ND	RANK
Rural instructional expenditures per pupil	\$8,244	35
Ratio of instructional to transportation expenditures	\$9.37	14
Median organizational scale (x100)	268	47
State revenue to schools per local dollar	\$1.28	27
Adjusted salary expenditures per instructional FTE	\$65,887	6



GAUGE 4

Educational Outcomes



RANK

33

HS grad rate rural advantage



	ND	RANK
Rural poverty difference in math (Gr 8)	19.5	26
Rural poverty difference in reading (Gr 8)	15.2	32
Rural NAEP composite math (Gr 4 and 8)	0.113	32
Rural NAEP composite reading (Gr 4 and 8)	-0.024	23
HS grad rate rural advantage	1.8%	20



GAUGE 5

Access to Supports for Learning and Development



RANK

19

Percent of school-aged children without health insurance coverage



	ND	RANK
Students per psychologist/school counselor	276	25
Percent of rural households without broadband access	13.1%	23
Percent of rural school-aged children without health insurance	10.1%	4
Percent rural enrollment in public preschool	40.9%	37
Percent of rural gifted/talented who are female	49.7%	23



Priority Ranking

31

Significant

Ohio

More than 360,000 Ohio students are enrolled in rural school districts, the fourth largest absolute rural student enrollment in the U.S. The rural student population is relatively homogeneous, ranking below or near the U.S. median on every diversity indicator. Educational policy issues are a concern, with inequitable funding, large schools and districts, and high transportation costs. Equity in the distribution of educational outcomes

of rural students is near or below the median on all measures (with the rural poverty difference in grade 8 math meriting concern at a rank of 20th). Access to learning and development supports is an urgent concern, with among the highest state rates of uninsured rural children (10th highest), rural families without broadband access (16th highest), and ratio of students per psychologist/school counselor (19th highest).

GAUGE 1

Importance of Rural Education

NOTABLE	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	CRUCIAL	RANK
				23
Number of rural students		OH	361,682	
		US	94,593	(MEDIAN)
Percent rural schools		OH	30.2%	RANK 30
Percent small rural districts			8.1%	35
Percent rural students			23.5%	22
Number of rural students			361,682	4
Percent of state education funds to rural districts			24.9%	20

GAUGE 2

Student and Family Diversity

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT	RANK
				44
Rural diversity index		OH	16.8%	
		US	33.4%	
Diversity index		OH	16.8%	RANK 44
Poverty level in rural school communities			306%	33
Percent of rural students with IEP			15.3%	22
Percent of rural school-aged children experiencing poverty			11.6%	27
Percent of rural household mobility			6.9%	44

GAUGE 3

Educational Policy Context

NOTABLE	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	CRUCIAL	RANK
				21
State revenue to schools per local dollar		OH	\$0.86	
		US	\$1.18	
Rural instructional expenditures per pupil		OH	\$7,051	RANK 26
Ratio of instructional to transportation expenditures			\$10.20	20
Median organizational scale (x100)			4,356	17
State revenue to schools per local dollar			\$0.86	12
Adjusted salary expenditures per instructional FTE			\$88,542	41

GAUGE 4

Educational Outcomes

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT	RANK
				42
Rural poverty difference in math (Gr 8)		OH	21.7	RANK 20
Rural poverty difference in reading (Gr 8)			14.9	34
Rural NAEP composite math (Gr 4 and 8)			0.237	40
Rural NAEP composite reading (Gr 4 and 8)			0.199	39
HS grad rate rural advantage			2.6%	27

GAUGE 5

Access to Supports for Learning and Development

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT	RANK
				12
Percent of rural school-aged children without health insurance coverage		OH	9.0%	
		US	6.7%	
Students per psychologist/school counselor		OH	339	RANK 19
Percent of rural households without broadband access			14.3%	16
Percent of rural school-aged children without health insurance			9.0%	10
Percent rural enrollment in public preschool			41.0%	38
Percent of rural gifted/talented who are female			48.4%	12

Priority Ranking

8

Leading

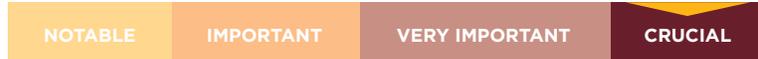
Oklahoma

Oklahoma's rural districts are ranked as our eighth highest overall priority in the United States—down from fourth in *Why Rural Matters 2018-2019*. More than half of all public schools serve rural communities, and its students are among the most diverse in the United States in terms of race, special education needs, poverty, and residential instability. Only five states spend less than the state's \$5,614 per rural pupil on instruction, and adjusted teacher salaries are nearly \$11,000 below

the U.S. average. Academic performance is mixed, with rural NAEP grade 4 and 8 composites among the 10 most urgent states on math and reading. Access to learning and development supports is a critical concern, with among the highest state rates of rural families without broadband access (11th highest), uninsured rural children (12th highest), and ratio of students per psychologist/school counselor (17th).

GAUGE 1

Importance of Rural Education



RANK

3

Percent rural schools



OK
53.4%
us
29.3%

	OK	RANK
Percent rural schools	53.4%	7
Percent small rural districts	71.5%	8
Percent rural students	29.2%	14
Number of rural students	186,457	14
Percent of state education funds to rural districts	31.4%	14



GAUGE 2

Student and Family Diversity



RANK

2

Percent rural students with IEP



OK
19.0%
us
15.0%

	OK	RANK
Diversity index	55.5%	2
Poverty level in rural school communities	245%	13
Percent of rural students with IEP	19.0%	3
Percent of rural school-aged children experiencing poverty	15.5%	15
Percent of rural household mobility	10.4%	14



GAUGE 3

Educational Policy Context



RANK

27

Rural adjusted salary expenditures per instructional FTE



OK
\$65,514
us
\$76,374

	OK	RANK
Rural instructional expenditures per pupil	\$5,614	6
Ratio of instructional to transportation expenditures	\$18.51	47
Median organizational scale (x100)	671	41
State revenue to schools per local dollar	\$1.22	24
Adjusted salary expenditures per instructional FTE	\$65,514	5



GAUGE 4

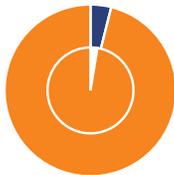
Educational Outcomes



RANK

26

HS grade rate rural advantage



OK
3.9%
us
2.6%

	OK	RANK
Rural poverty difference in math (Gr 8)	13.1	38
Rural poverty difference in reading (Gr 8)	11.0	37
Rural NAEP composite math (Gr 4 and 8)	-0.181	8
Rural NAEP composite reading (Gr 4 and 8)	-0.200	4
HS grad rate rural advantage	3.9%	34



GAUGE 5

Access to Supports for Learning and Development



RANK

20

Percent of rural households without broadband access



OK
15.4%
us
13.4%

	OK	RANK
Students per psychologist/school counselor	349	17
Percent of rural households without broadband access	15.4%	11
Percent of rural school-aged children without health insurance	8.8%	12
Percent rural enrollment in public preschool	47.7%	45
Percent of rural gifted/talented who are female	50.8%	28



Priority Ranking

13

Leading

Oregon

Ranking in the most concerning quartile on two of five gauges and in the next highest quartile on two others, Oregon is the 13th highest priority state in this year's report. The state's rural student population represents less than 10% of all students, but they are diverse and experience higher than average levels of poverty. The policy context is less than favorable, with lower than average instructional expenditures and teacher salaries along with the sixth heaviest transportation

expenditure burden in the United States. Oregon ranks in the highest priority quartile on each of the three outcome indicators for which data were available. Access to supports for learning and development is of greater concern than in all but nine other states—including the lowest rate of participation in public preschool, 12th lowest representation of female students receiving gifted services, and 13th highest ratio of students to school psychologists/counselors.

GAUGE 1

Importance of Rural Education

NOTABLE	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	CRUCIAL
---------	-----------	----------------	---------

RANK
37

Percent small rural districts



OR
63.1%
US
50.0%

	OR	RANK
Percent rural schools	26.1%	33
Percent small rural districts	63.1%	17
Percent rural students	9.6%	37
Number of rural students	52,143	37
Percent of state education funds to rural districts	10.6%	37



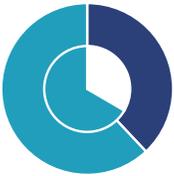
GAUGE 2

Student and Family Diversity

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT
------	---------	----------	--------

RANK
15

Rural diversity index



OR
38.0%
US
33.4%

	OR	RANK
Diversity index	38.0%	18
Poverty level in rural school communities	268%	20
Percent of rural students with IEP	15.3%	22
Percent of rural school-aged children experiencing poverty	13.2%	20
Percent of rural household mobility	9.6%	24



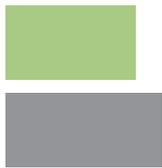
GAUGE 3

Educational Policy Context

NOTABLE	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	CRUCIAL
---------	-----------	----------------	---------

RANK
21

Ratio of instructional to transportation expenditures



OR
\$8.59
US
\$11.09

	OR	RANK
Rural instructional expenditures per pupil	\$6,666	22
Ratio of instructional to transportation expenditures	\$8.59	6
Median organizational scale (x100)	1,364	31
State revenue to schools per local dollar	\$1.68	35
Adjusted salary expenditures per instructional FTE	\$74,003	22



GAUGE 4

Educational Outcomes

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT
------	---------	----------	--------

RANK
3

HS grad rate rural advantage



OR
-1.4%
US
2.6%

	OR	RANK
Rural poverty difference in math (Gr 8)	NA	NA
Rural poverty difference in reading (Gr 8)	NA	NA
Rural NAEP composite math (Gr 4 and 8)	-0.156	11
Rural NAEP composite reading (Gr 4 and 8)	-0.102	11
HS grad rate rural advantage	-1.4%	7



GAUGE 5

Access to Supports for Learning and Development

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT
------	---------	----------	--------

RANK
10

Percent rural enrollment in public preschool



OR
11.8%
US
34.1%

	OR	RANK
Students per psychologist/school counselor	375	13
Percent of rural households without broadband access	10.4%	36
Percent of rural school-aged children without health insurance	5.4%	26
Percent rural enrollment in public preschool	11.8%	1
Percent of rural gifted/talented who are female	48.4%	12



Priority Ranking

30

Significant

Pennsylvania

Over a quarter of a million Pennsylvania students are enrolled in rural school districts, the seventh largest absolute rural student enrollment in the United States. The rural student population is relatively homogeneous, ranking below the U.S. median on every diversity indicator except for the percentage of rural students with an IEP—at more than one in five, a higher proportion of rural students qualify for special education services than in any other state. Instructional spending and teacher salaries are high, but rural schools and

districts face steep transportation costs, are large, and rely heavily on the local tax base for funding. Educational outcomes are better than the U.S. average on all but the rural poverty difference on NAEP reading, where the state ranks 20th. Supports for learning and development are not widely accessible, with health insurance for rural children (6th highest rate of uninsured) and public preschool (14th lowest rate of participation) both prominent concerns.

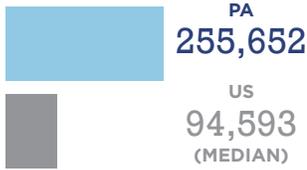
GAUGE 1

Importance of Rural Education

NOTABLE	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	CRUCIAL
---------	-----------	----------------	---------

RANK
29

Number of rural students



	PA	RANK
Percent rural schools	25.5%	34
Percent small rural districts	8.9%	34
Percent rural students	16.9%	29
Number of rural students	255,652	7
Percent of state education funds to rural districts	19.7%	26



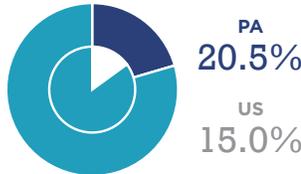
GAUGE 2

Student and Family Diversity

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT
------	---------	----------	--------

RANK
36

Percent rural students with IEP



	PA	RANK
Diversity index	20.4%	37
Poverty level in rural school communities	320%	39
Percent of rural students with IEP	20.5%	1
Percent of rural school-aged children experiencing poverty	11.1%	30
Percent of rural household mobility	7.0%	43



GAUGE 3

Educational Policy Context

NOTABLE	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	CRUCIAL
---------	-----------	----------------	---------

RANK
24

Ratio of instructional to transportation expenditures



	PA	RANK
Rural instructional expenditures per pupil	\$9.616	41
Ratio of instructional to transportation expenditures	\$9.19	11
Median organizational scale (x100)	6,238	14
State revenue to schools per local dollar	\$0.88	14
Adjusted salary expenditures per instructional FTE	\$87,043	40



GAUGE 4

Educational Outcomes

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT
------	---------	----------	--------

RANK
40

Rural poverty difference in reading (Gr 8)



	PA	RANK
Rural poverty difference in math (Gr 8)	18.0	31
Rural poverty difference in reading (Gr 8)	19.4	20
Rural NAEP composite math (Gr 4 and 8)	0.123	34
Rural NAEP composite reading (Gr 4 and 8)	0.138	37
HS grad rate rural advantage	3.9%	34



GAUGE 5

Access to Supports for Learning and Development

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT
------	---------	----------	--------

RANK
6

Percent of rural school-aged children without health insurance coverage



	PA	RANK
Students per psychologist/school counselor	263	31
Percent of rural households without broadband access	14.4%	15
Percent of rural school-aged children without health insurance	9.7%	6
Percent rural enrollment in public preschool	26.9%	14
Percent of rural gifted/talented who are female	48.5%	15



Priority Ranking

49

Notable

Rhode Island

The lowest priority state in the United States based on the *Why Rural Matters* ranking system, Rhode Island ranks in the quartile of least concern on four of five gauges. Although 8% of Rhode Island's students are enrolled in a rural district, these districts receive only 5.4% of state funding for PK-12 education. The state's rural students attend school mostly with students of the same race, in neighborhoods where the average household income is nearly 4.5 times the federal poverty threshold. Instructional spending

per rural pupil is 57.4% higher than the U.S. average, although state funding support is weak relative to local support. Educational outcomes are strong based on the three indicators for which data are available. There is high access to learning and development supports in Rhode Island (second highest rate of broadband access, highest percent of female students receiving gifted services, and third lowest rate of rural uninsured children). One exception is the fifth lowest public preschool participation in the U.S.

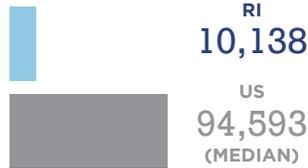
GAUGE 1

Importance of Rural Education

NOTABLE	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	CRUCIAL
---------	-----------	----------------	---------

RANK
49

Number of rural students



	RI	RANK
Percent rural schools	12.8%	47
Percent small rural districts	33.3%	31
Percent rural students	8.0%	40
Number of rural students	10,138	48
Percent of state education funds to rural districts	5.4%	47



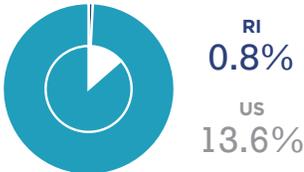
GAUGE 2

Student and Family Diversity

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT
------	---------	----------	--------

RANK
49

Percent of rural school-aged children experiencing poverty



	RI	RANK
Diversity index	17.4%	43
Poverty level in rural school communities	441%	46
Percent of rural students with IEP	13.9%	34
Percent of rural school-aged children experiencing poverty	0.8%	50
Percent of rural household mobility	NA	NA



GAUGE 3

Educational Policy Context

NOTABLE	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	CRUCIAL
---------	-----------	----------------	---------

RANK
28

State revenue to schools per local dollar



	RI	RANK
Rural instructional expenditures per pupil	\$11,293	44
Ratio of instructional to transportation expenditures	\$9.96	17
Median organizational scale (x100)	3,710	19
State revenue to schools per local dollar	\$0.36	2
Adjusted salary expenditures per instructional FTE	\$91,121	42



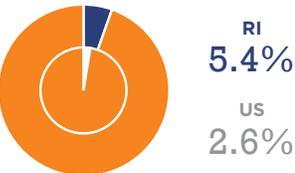
GAUGE 4

Educational Outcomes

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT
------	---------	----------	--------

RANK
46

HS grad rate rural advantage



	RI	RANK
Rural poverty difference in math (Gr 8)	NA	NA
Rural poverty difference in reading (Gr 8)	NA	NA
Rural NAEP composite math (Gr 4 and 8)	0.188	38
Rural NAEP composite reading (Gr 4 and 8)	0.430	46
HS grad rate rural advantage	5.4%	41



GAUGE 5

Access to Supports for Learning and Development

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT
------	---------	----------	--------

RANK
47

Percent rural enrollment in public preschool



	RI	RANK
Students per psychologist/school counselor	221	41
Percent of rural households without broadband access	5.7%	49
Percent of rural school-aged children without health insurance	1.6%	48
Percent rural enrollment in public preschool	21.7%	5
Percent of rural gifted/talented who are female	62.4%	48



Priority Ranking

8

Leading

South Carolina

Four of every ten schools in South Carolina are located in a rural area, serving just under 17% of the state's public-school students. More than one in five of those 120,000 rural students lives below the federal poverty threshold, and households in the average rural school district neighborhood earn barely double the poverty threshold (third lowest in the United States). South Carolina's rural districts are some of the most racially diverse in the United States, and only six states have higher rural household mobility rates. Instructional spending

and adjusted teacher salaries are well below U.S. averages, and rural South Carolina schools and districts are larger than in nearly all other states. Academic outcomes are among the 10 most urgent across states on four of five indicators. Access to learning and development supports varies, with broadband access the indicator of greatest concern with the seventh highest rate of rural households lacking broadband. Only four states have a higher representation of female students receiving gifted services.

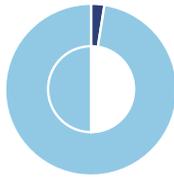
GAUGE 1

Importance of Rural Education

NOTABLE	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	CRUCIAL
---------	-----------	----------------	---------

RANK
33

Percent small rural districts



SC
2.5%
US
50.0%

	SC	RANK
Percent rural schools	40.0%	21
Percent small rural districts	2.5%	42
Percent rural students	16.7%	30
Number of rural students	123,096	23
Percent of state education funds to rural districts	17.1%	30



GAUGE 2

Student and Family Diversity

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT
------	---------	----------	--------

RANK
3

Poverty level in rural school communities



SC
218%
US
291%

	SC	RANK
Diversity index	47.0%	9
Poverty level in rural school communities	218%	3
Percent of rural students with IEP	15.1%	25
Percent of rural school-aged children experiencing poverty	20.5%	6
Percent of rural household mobility	11.5%	7



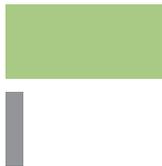
GAUGE 3

Educational Policy Context

NOTABLE	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	CRUCIAL
---------	-----------	----------------	---------

RANK
14

Median organizational scale (x 100)



SC
17,574
US
2,651

	SC	RANK
Rural instructional expenditures per pupil	\$6,213	15
Ratio of instructional to transportation expenditures	\$14.27	42
Median organizational scale (x100)	17,574	8
State revenue to schools per local dollar	\$1.29	28
Adjusted salary expenditures per instructional FTE	\$67,314	9



GAUGE 4

Educational Outcomes

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT
------	---------	----------	--------

RANK
2

Rural poverty difference in math (Gr 8)



SC
26.9
US
22.0

	SC	RANK
Rural poverty difference in math (Gr 8)	26.9	3
Rural poverty difference in reading (Gr 8)	16.4	28
Rural NAEP composite math (Gr 4 and 8)	-0.190	7
Rural NAEP composite reading (Gr 4 and 8)	-0.126	6
HS grad rate rural advantage	-2.2%	4



GAUGE 5

Access to Supports for Learning and Development

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT
------	---------	----------	--------

RANK
26

Percent of rural households without broadband access



SC
16.5%
US
13.4%

	SC	RANK
Students per psychologist/school counselor	267	30
Percent of rural households without broadband access	16.5%	7
Percent of rural school-aged children without health insurance	5.7%	25
Percent rural enrollment in public preschool	29.4%	19
Percent of rural gifted/talented who are female	56.4%	43



Priority Ranking

18

Major

South Dakota

South Dakota is the second most rural state in the United States, with the vast majority of schools located in a rural area and two in five students enrolled in a rural school district. Although there is not a high degree of racial diversity, rural South Dakota classrooms experience the disruption of one in six students experiencing poverty. As schools across the United States increase instructional spending on rural students, South

Dakota is one of only seven states to decrease spending. On educational outcomes, the gap between South Dakota's rural students from lower and higher income households is stark in both math and reading. Access to learning supports is fairly positive, with 40.6% (rank 36th) of South Dakota children enrolled in public preschool and 51.7% representation of female students receiving gifted services.

GAUGE 1

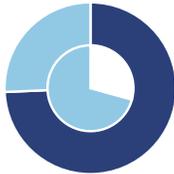
Importance of Rural Education

NOTABLE	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	CRUCIAL
---------	-----------	----------------	---------

RANK

2

Percent rural schools



SD
74.3%
US
29.3%

	SD	RANK
Percent rural schools	74.3%	1
Percent small rural districts	76.8%	5
Percent rural students	41.5%	4
Number of rural students	58,579	34
Percent of state education funds to rural districts	40.2%	4



GAUGE 2

Student and Family Diversity

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT
------	---------	----------	--------

RANK

30

Percent of rural school-aged children experiencing poverty



SD
16.3%
US
13.6%

	SD	RANK
Diversity index	22.8%	32
Poverty level in rural school communities	287%	25
Percent of rural students with IEP	15.8%	19
Percent of rural school-aged children experiencing poverty	16.3%	12
Percent of rural household mobility	5.8%	47



GAUGE 3

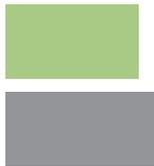
Educational Policy Context

NOTABLE	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	CRUCIAL
---------	-----------	----------------	---------

RANK

23

Rural adjusted salary expenditures per instructional FTE



SD
\$67,753
US
\$76,374

	SD	RANK
Rural instructional expenditures per pupil	\$6,482	18
Ratio of instructional to transportation expenditures	\$12.60	38
Median organizational scale (x100)	239	48
State revenue to schools per local dollar	\$0.55	5
Adjusted salary expenditures per instructional FTE	\$67,753	10



GAUGE 4

Educational Outcomes

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT
------	---------	----------	--------

RANK

12

HS grad rate rural advantage



SD
-1.7%
US
2.6%

	SD	RANK
Rural poverty difference in math (Gr 8)	24.6	9
Rural poverty difference in reading (Gr 8)	21.3	15
Rural NAEP composite math (Gr 4 and 8)	0.081	27
Rural NAEP composite reading (Gr 4 and 8)	0.005	24
HS grad rate rural advantage	-1.7%	6



GAUGE 5

Access to Supports for Learning and Development

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT
------	---------	----------	--------

RANK

29

Percent of rural school aged children without health insurance



SD
8.3%
US
6.7%

	SD	RANK
Students per psychologist/school counselor	269	29
Percent of rural households without broadband access	14.1%	17
Percent of rural school-aged children without health insurance	8.3%	13
Percent rural enrollment in public preschool	40.6%	36
Percent of rural gifted/talented who are female	51.7%	33



Priority Ranking

21

Major

Tennessee

More than one-third of Tennessee public schools are located in rural areas, and the state's 283,188 students make up just under 29% of the total public-school enrollment. Rural schools and districts are large, and rural students are more likely to live well below the federal poverty threshold than rural students in other states. Instructional spending is nearly \$1,500 per rural pupil lower than the U.S. average, and teacher salaries are lower than in all but 15 other states.

Educational outcomes are mostly near or above U.S. averages, and high school graduation rates are better than the non-rural U.S. average (rank 39th). Access to supports for learning and development is a crucial concern, with the state ranking in the top 15 on three indicators, including the fifth lowest rate of female students receiving gifted services, 15.7% of households with no access to broadband, and a ranking of 14th on a ratio of students to psychologist/school counselor.

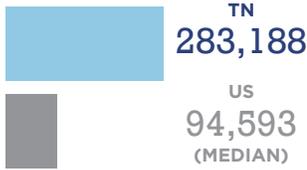
GAUGE 1

Importance of Rural Education



RANK
18

Number of rural students



	TN	RANK
Percent rural schools	36.1%	25
Percent small rural districts	2.9%	40
Percent rural students	28.8%	15
Number of rural students	283,188	5
Percent of state education funds to rural districts	32.2%	12



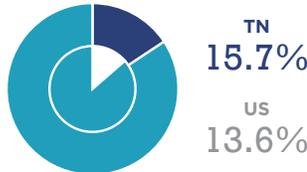
GAUGE 2

Student and Family Diversity



RANK
27

Percent of rural school-aged children experiencing poverty



	TN	RANK
Diversity index	26.1%	28
Poverty level in rural school communities	29.4%	28
Percent of rural students with IEP	13.6%	36
Percent of rural school-aged children experiencing poverty	15.7%	14
Percent of rural household mobility	9.8%	23



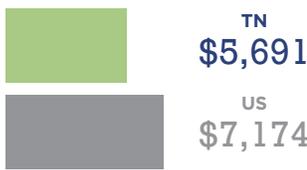
GAUGE 3

Educational Policy Context



RANK
16

Rural instructional expenditures per pupil



	TN	RANK
Rural instructional expenditures per pupil	\$5,691	9
Ratio of instructional to transportation expenditures	\$14.13	41
Median organizational scale (x100)	17,540	9
State revenue to schools per local dollar	\$1.49	33
Adjusted salary expenditures per instructional FTE	\$71,572	16



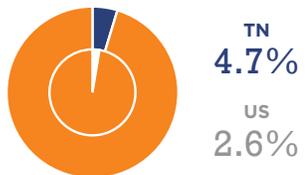
GAUGE 4

Educational Outcomes



RANK
31

HS grad rate rural advantage



	TN	RANK
Rural poverty difference in math (Gr 8)	25.4	5
Rural poverty difference in reading (Gr 8)	18.7	23
Rural NAEP composite math (Gr 4 and 8)	0.141	35
Rural NAEP composite reading (Gr 4 and 8)	0.065	28
HS grad rate rural advantage	4.7%	39



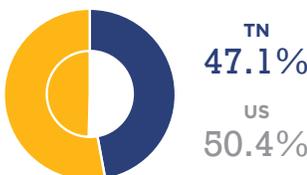
GAUGE 5

Access to Supports for Learning and Development



RANK
8

Percent of rural gifted students who are female



	TN	RANK
Students per psychologist/school counselor	373	14
Percent of rural households without broadband access	15.7%	10
Percent of rural school-aged children without health insurance	4.2%	37
Percent rural enrollment in public preschool	30.2%	21
Percent of rural gifted/talented who are female	47.1%	5



Priority Ranking

17

Major

Texas

More than three quarters of a million students are enrolled in rural school districts in Texas, by far the largest U.S. rural student enrollment and an increase of nearly 84,000 students since *Why Rural Matters 2018-2019*. Districts are racially diverse and more than one in ten rural students have changed residences in the past year, but very few students qualify for specialized education services. Instructional spending per pupil and teacher salaries are very low, and

state funding levels are inadequate to equalize differences in local wealth. Educational outcomes are mixed, with two indicators below the U.S. average and two above (along with one N/A). Access to learning and development supports is concerning, with the second highest rate of uninsured rural children in the United States and three other indicators where the state falls below the midpoint of states.

GAUGE 1

Importance of Rural Education



RANK
25

Number of rural students



	TX	RANK
Percent rural schools	27.2%	32
Percent small rural districts	48.0%	23
Percent rural students	15.4%	31
Number of rural students	777,540	1
Percent of state education funds to rural districts	16.9%	31



GAUGE 2

Student and Family Diversity



RANK
24

Percent rural household mobility



	TX	RANK
Diversity index	46.7%	10
Poverty level in rural school communities	314%	36
Percent of rural students with IEP	11.4%	47
Percent of rural school-aged children experiencing poverty	12.8%	23
Percent of rural household mobility	11.1%	9



GAUGE 3

Educational Policy Context



RANK
12

State revenue to schools per local dollar



	TX	RANK
Rural instructional expenditures per pupil	\$5,999	11
Ratio of instructional to transportation expenditures	\$18.42	46
Median organizational scale (x100)	2,850	23
State revenue to schools per local dollar	\$0.65	7
Adjusted salary expenditures per instructional FTE	\$68,368	12



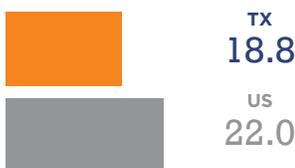
GAUGE 4

Educational Outcomes



RANK
23

Rural poverty difference in math (Gr 8)



	TX	RANK
Rural poverty difference in math (Gr 8)	18.8	29
Rural poverty difference in reading (Gr 8)	10.8	38
Rural NAEP composite math (Gr 4 and 8)	-0.045	17
Rural NAEP composite reading (Gr 4 and 8)	-0.108	10
HS grad rate rural advantage	NA	NA



GAUGE 5

Access to Supports for Learning and Development



RANK
10

Percent of rural school-aged children without health insurance coverage



	TX	RANK
Students per psychologist/school counselor	337	20
Percent of rural households without broadband access	11.7%	29
Percent of rural school-aged children without health insurance	13.5%	2
Percent rural enrollment in public preschool	29.6%	20
Percent of rural gifted/talented who are female	48.6%	17



Priority Ranking

41

Notable

Utah

The third least rural state in the U.S. after Rhode Island and Nevada, most of Utah's population (and students) live in densely populated areas. School neighborhoods experience high levels of poverty, and more than one in ten of Utah's rural families with school-aged children have changed residences in the previous year. Instructional spending is low, and schools and districts are large. Educational outcomes are mixed, with two

indicators in the least concerning quartile and one in the most concerning quartile (along with one N/A). Access to learning and development supports reveals high percentages of female representation receiving gifted services (rank 43rd) and access to broadband (rank 46th). However, 5.9% of school-aged children are not insured (rank 23rd).

GAUGE 1

Importance of Rural Education

NOTABLE	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	CRUCIAL
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RANK
46

Percent rural students



UT
4.2%
US
15.7%

	UT	RANK
Percent rural schools	20.8%	38
Percent small rural districts	30.8%	32
Percent rural students	4.2%	47
Number of rural students	25,609	44
Percent of state education funds to rural districts	5.8%	46



GAUGE 2

Student and Family Diversity

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT
------	---------	----------	--------

RANK
18

Percent rural household mobility



UT
10.5%
US
9.7%

	UT	RANK
Diversity index	27.5%	24
Poverty level in rural school communities	242%	12
Percent of rural students with IEP	15.6%	20
Percent of rural school-aged children experiencing poverty	5.4%	49
Percent of rural household mobility	10.5%	11



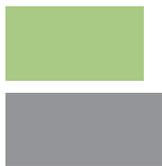
GAUGE 3

Educational Policy Context

NOTABLE	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	CRUCIAL
---------	-----------	----------------	---------

RANK
32

Rural instructional expenditures per pupil



UT
\$6,147
US
\$7,147

	UT	RANK
Rural instructional expenditures per pupil	\$6,147	13
Ratio of instructional to transportation expenditures	\$12.54	37
Median organizational scale (x100)	4,485	16
State revenue to schools per local dollar	\$1.48	32
Adjusted salary expenditures per instructional FTE	\$83,547	36



GAUGE 4

Educational Outcomes

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT
------	---------	----------	--------

RANK
37

HS grad rate rural advantage



UT
-2.2%
US
2.6%

	UT	RANK
Rural poverty difference in math (Gr 8)	NA	NA
Rural poverty difference in reading (Gr 8)	NA	NA
Rural NAEP composite math (Gr 4 and 8)	0.284	42
Rural NAEP composite reading (Gr 4 and 8)	0.244	43
HS grad rate rural advantage	-2.2%	4



GAUGE 5

Access to Supports for Learning and Development

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT
------	---------	----------	--------

RANK
44

Percent of rural school-aged children without health insurance coverage



UT
5.9%
US
6.7%

	UT	RANK
Students per psychologist/school counselor	271	28
Percent of rural households without broadband access	6.9%	46
Percent of rural school-aged children without health insurance	5.9%	23
Percent rural enrollment in public preschool	33.6%	25
Percent of rural gifted/talented who are female	56.4%	43



Priority Ranking

42

Notable

Vermont

With more than 54% of its students attending school in a rural district, Vermont has the highest percentage of rural students of any state. Rural schools and districts are almost all smaller than the U.S. median (although they have gotten larger in recent years because of consolidation—e.g., median organizational scale has nearly tripled from 400 in *Why Rural Matters 2018-2019* to 1,182 in this report). Poverty rates are low and there is

limited racial diversity, but the number of rural students with an IEP is high compared to the U.S. average. Instructional spending is high and the state's contribution to education is dramatically higher than other states. In terms of access to learning and development supports, Vermont ranks among the best of all states with the exception of access to broadband (rank 28th).

GAUGE 1

Importance of Rural Education

NOTABLE	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	CRUCIAL
---------	-----------	----------------	---------

RANK

4

Percent state education funds to rural districts



	VT	RANK
Percent rural schools	71.2%	3
Percent small rural districts	69.8%	12
Percent rural students	54.4%	1
Number of rural students	45,585	41
Percent of state education funds to rural districts	51.2%	1



GAUGE 2

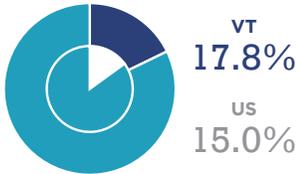
Student and Family Diversity

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT
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RANK

47

Percent rural students with IEP



	VT	RANK
Diversity index	13.9%	47
Poverty level in rural school communities	340%	42
Percent of rural students with IEP	17.8%	9
Percent of rural school-aged children experiencing poverty	6.4%	47
Percent of rural household mobility	5.9%	46



GAUGE 3

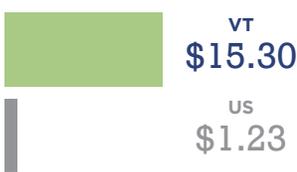
Educational Policy Context

NOTABLE	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	CRUCIAL
---------	-----------	----------------	---------

RANK

46

State revenue to schools per local dollar



	VT	RANK
Rural instructional expenditures per pupil	\$9,520	40
Ratio of instructional to transportation expenditures	\$23.66	48
Median organizational scale (x100)	1,182	35
State revenue to schools per local dollar	\$15.30	49
Adjusted salary expenditures per instructional FTE	\$73,260	19



GAUGE 4

Educational Outcomes

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT
------	---------	----------	--------

RANK

N/A

N/A

	VT	RANK
Rural poverty difference in math (Gr 8)	NA	NA
Rural poverty difference in reading (Gr 8)	NA	NA
Rural NAEP composite math (Gr 4 and 8)	NA	NA
Rural NAEP composite reading (Gr 4 and 8)	NA	NA
HS grad rate rural advantage	NA	NA



GAUGE 5

Access to Supports for Learning and Development

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT
------	---------	----------	--------

RANK

49

Percent of rural school-aged children without health insurance coverage



	VT	RANK
Students per psychologist/school counselor	169	46
Percent of rural households without broadband access	12.0%	28
Percent of rural school-aged children without health insurance	1.4%	49
Percent rural enrollment in public preschool	56.1%	49
Percent of rural gifted/talented who are female	57.0%	45



Priority Ranking

19

Major

Virginia

More than 227,000 students are enrolled in Virginia's rural school districts, representing nearly one in six of all public school students in the state. The rural student population is among the most diverse in the United States. Students attend large schools and districts that are burdened with high transportation costs that detract from instructional spending. Educational

outcomes are the fifth lowest in the country, with Virginia below the U.S. midpoint on four of five indicators (and among the 10 lowest performing states on three of those). Access to supports for learning and development is mixed, with low rates of uninsured rural children but high rates of rural families with no broadband access and low rates of rural participation in public preschool.

GAUGE 1

Importance of Rural Education

NOTABLE	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	CRUCIAL
---------	-----------	----------------	---------

RANK
30

Number of rural students



	VA	RANK
Percent rural schools	31.8%	29
Percent small rural districts	1.5%	44
Percent rural students	18.2%	27
Number of rural students	227,468	9
Percent of state education funds to rural districts	20.9%	25



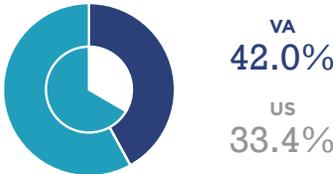
GAUGE 2

Student and Family Diversity

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT
------	---------	----------	--------

RANK
24

Rural diversity index



	VA	RANK
Diversity index	42.0%	12
Poverty level in rural school communities	298%	30
Percent of rural students with IEP	13.9%	34
Percent of rural school-aged children experiencing poverty	12.7%	25
Percent of rural household mobility	9.6%	24



GAUGE 3

Educational Policy Context

NOTABLE	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	CRUCIAL
---------	-----------	----------------	---------

RANK
7

Ratio of instructional to transportation expenditures



	VA	RANK
Rural instructional expenditures per pupil	\$6,875	24
Ratio of instructional to transportation expenditures	\$9.00	10
Median organizational scale (x100)	17,914	6
State revenue to schools per local dollar	\$1.11	21
Adjusted salary expenditures per instructional FTE	\$75,660	26



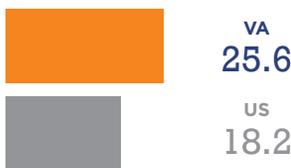
GAUGE 4

Educational Outcomes

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT
------	---------	----------	--------

RANK
5

Rural poverty difference in reading (Gr 8)



	VA	RANK
Rural poverty difference in math (Gr 8)	25.1	8
Rural poverty difference in reading (Gr 8)	25.6	3
Rural NAEP composite math (Gr 4 and 8)	-0.039	18
Rural NAEP composite reading (Gr 4 and 8)	-0.124	7
HS grad rate rural advantage	2.6%	27



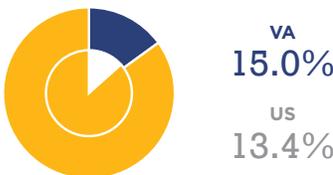
GAUGE 5

Access to Supports for Learning and Development

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT
------	---------	----------	--------

RANK
31

Percent rural households without broadband access



	VA	RANK
Students per psychologist/school counselor	255	33
Percent of rural households without broadband access	15.0%	12
Percent of rural school-aged children without health insurance	3.6%	44
Percent rural enrollment in public preschool	26.2%	12
Percent of rural gifted/talented who are female	51.2%	31



Priority Ranking

36

Significant

Washington

Nearly two-thirds of all rural students in Washington are enrolled in a school district with fewer students than the U.S. median for rural districts. Rural students are diverse and school neighborhoods in general are often below the federal poverty threshold, but extreme poverty among students is not as present as in other states. After showing a surge in residential mobility in *Why Rural Matters 2018-2019*, Washington's ranking on that indicator has dropped from 3 to 36. Revenue from state

sources is nearly four times the level of local revenue. Rural poverty differences on NAEP are smaller than the majority of states, but rural NAEP composite scores are low (15th lowest for math and 7th lowest for reading). Rural broadband access and healthcare coverage for children are relatively high, but preschool access is a challenge. The availability of psychologists/school counselors is limited in comparison with other states, and girls are underrepresented in gifted services.

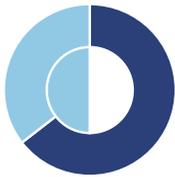
GAUGE 1

Importance of Rural Education

NOTABLE | **IMPORTANT** | VERY IMPORTANT | CRUCIAL

RANK
35

Percent small rural districts



WA
64.5%
US
50.0%

	WA	RANK
Percent rural schools	21.9%	36
Percent small rural districts	64.5%	15
Percent rural students	7.6%	41
Number of rural students	81,953	27
Percent of state education funds to rural districts	8.1%	40



GAUGE 2

Student and Family Diversity

FAIR | **SERIOUS** | CRITICAL | URGENT

RANK
32

Rural diversity index



WA
38.5%
US
33.4%

	WA	RANK
Diversity index	38.5%	16
Poverty level in rural school communities	270%	21
Percent of rural students with IEP	14.0%	33
Percent of rural school-aged children experiencing poverty	10.0%	35
Percent of rural household mobility	8.1%	36



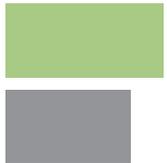
GAUGE 3

Educational Policy Context

NOTABLE | IMPORTANT | **VERY IMPORTANT** | CRUCIAL

RANK
48

Rural adjusted salary expenditures per instructional FTE



WA
\$97,535
US
\$76,374

	WA	RANK
Rural instructional expenditures per pupil	\$8,415	36
Ratio of instructional to transportation expenditures	\$11.67	33
Median organizational scale (x100)	798	38
State revenue to schools per local dollar	\$3.87	47
Adjusted salary expenditures per instructional FTE	\$97,535	47



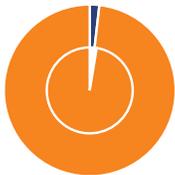
GAUGE 4

Educational Outcomes

FAIR | SERIOUS | **CRITICAL** | URGENT

RANK
17

HS grad rate rural advantage



WA
1.8%
US
2.6%

	WA	RANK
Rural poverty difference in math (Gr 8)	18.1	30
Rural poverty difference in reading (Gr 8)	16.1	29
Rural NAEP composite math (Gr 4 and 8)	-0.094	15
Rural NAEP composite reading (Gr 4 and 8)	-0.124	7
HS grad rate rural advantage	1.8%	20



GAUGE 5

Access to Supports for Learning and Development

FAIR | SERIOUS | **CRITICAL** | URGENT

RANK
24

Percent of rural gifted students who are female



WA
47.1%
US
50.4%

	WA	RANK
Students per psychologist/school counselor	334	21
Percent of rural households without broadband access	9.1%	41
Percent of rural school-aged children without health insurance	3.7%	42
Percent rural enrollment in public preschool	25.7%	11
Percent of rural gifted/tailed who are female	47.1%	5



Priority Ranking

4

Leading

West Virginia

Half of West Virginia's public schools and nearly one in four students are rural, with a student population characterized by high numbers of children experiencing poverty, high rates of identification of special education, and limited racial/ethnic diversity. West Virginia's history of large-scale consolidation has resulted in large schools, large districts, and burdensome transportation costs for rural districts. Rural teacher salaries are nearly \$4,500 below the U.S. average, even after adjusting for comparable

wages of the rural areas. West Virginia's rural students perform well below the U.S. average on NAEP math and reading composite, and their rural high schools have lower graduation rates than the state's non-rural high schools. Access to learning and development supports is mixed, with two indicators (rural broadband access and rural female representation receiving gifted services) in the most urgent quartile and one other (access to public preschool) in the next quartile.

GAUGE 1

Importance of Rural Education

NOTABLE	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	CRUCIAL
---------	-----------	----------------	---------

Percent rural students



WV
37.5%
US
15.7%

	WV	RANK
Percent rural schools	50.2%	11
Percent small rural districts	0.0%	46
Percent rural students	37.5%	5
Number of rural students	94,593	25
Percent of state education funds to rural districts	39.7%	5

RANK
14



GAUGE 2

Student and Family Diversity

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT
------	---------	----------	--------

Percent rural school-aged children experiencing poverty



WV
18.1%
US
15.0%

	WV	RANK
Diversity index	12.8%	49
Poverty level in rural school communities	234%	7
Percent of rural students with IEP	18.1%	7
Percent of rural school-aged children experiencing poverty	16.8%	11
Percent of rural household mobility	7.4%	41

RANK
17

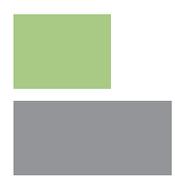


GAUGE 3

Educational Policy Context

NOTABLE	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	CRUCIAL
---------	-----------	----------------	---------

Ratio of instructional to transportation expenditures



WV
\$6.40
US
\$11.09

	WV	RANK
Rural instructional expenditures per pupil	\$6,668	23
Ratio of instructional to transportation expenditures	\$6.40	1
Median organizational scale (x100)	8,449	13
State revenue to schools per local dollar	\$2.03	38
Adjusted salary expenditures per instructional FTE	\$71,878	17

RANK
9



GAUGE 4

Educational Outcomes

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT
------	---------	----------	--------

HS grad rate rural advantage



WV
-1.3%
US
2.6%

	WV	RANK
Rural poverty difference in math (Gr 8)	12.9	39
Rural poverty difference in reading (Gr 8)	12.9	35
Rural NAEP composite math (Gr 4 and 8)	-0.478	3
Rural NAEP composite reading (Gr 4 and 8)	-0.363	2
HS grad rate rural advantage	-1.3%	8

RANK
14



GAUGE 5

Access to Supports for Learning and Development

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT
------	---------	----------	--------

Percent of rural households without broadband access



WV
17.5%
US
13.4%

	WV	RANK
Students per psychologist/school counselor	275	26
Percent of rural households without broadband access	17.5%	4
Percent of rural school-aged children without health insurance	3.8%	41
Percent rural enrollment in public preschool	30.7%	22
Percent of rural gifted/talented who are female	48.0%	8

RANK
14



Priority Ranking

39

Notable

Wisconsin

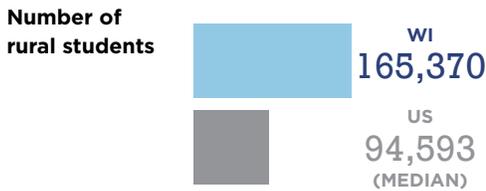
One in five of Wisconsin's students attends school in a rural district, and the state policy context is near the midpoint of state rankings on three of five indicators (state revenue to schools per local dollar is the exception; at just \$0.82, Wisconsin has the 11th lowest rate of state contribution). Educational outcomes are below average on poverty gap measures and above

average on composite scores. In terms of access to supports for learning and development, Wisconsin ranks below the midpoint for importance on four of five indicators. On the fifth indicator (percent of rural school-aged children without health insurance coverage), the state ranks 19th but is just slightly below the U.S. rate for uninsured rural children.

GAUGE 1

Importance of Rural Education

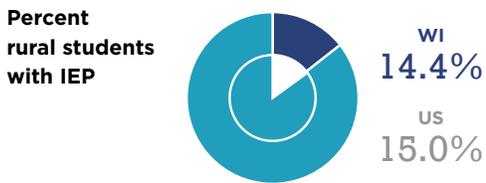
NOTABLE	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	CRUCIAL	RANK
				26
				



GAUGE 2

Student and Family Diversity

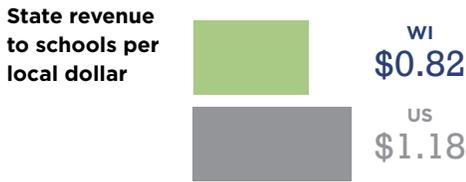
FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT	RANK
				43
				



GAUGE 3

Educational Policy Context

NOTABLE	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	CRUCIAL	RANK
				24
				



GAUGE 4

Educational Outcomes

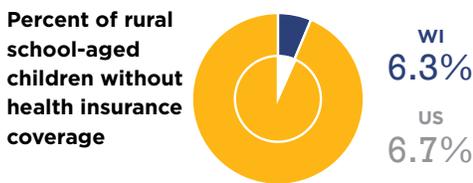
FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT	RANK
				34
				



GAUGE 5

Access to Supports for Learning and Development

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT	RANK
				38
				



Priority Ranking

33

Significant

Wyoming

More than half of Wyoming's public schools are rural, and more than 28% of the state's educational funds are directed to rural districts. Only three states have higher rural household mobility rates, and 12.3% of rural students experience poverty (with a rank of 26, nearly one and a half times the state rate in *Why Rural Matters 2018-2019*, when the rate was 8.2% and the state ranking was 43rd). The policy context is generally favorable, marked by high instructional

spending and high teacher salaries. Education outcomes are below average on poverty gap measures and above average on composite scores. Access to supports for learning and development is a story of extremes—Wyoming ranks in the highest category of concern on two indicators (access to healthcare coverage for rural children and female student representation in gifted services) and in the lowest category of concern on the other three indicators.

GAUGE 1

Importance of Rural Education

NOTABLE	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	CRUCIAL	RANK
				24
				WY
				RANK
Percent rural schools		50.7%		9
Percent small rural districts		43.3%		24
Percent rural students		26.2%		17
Number of rural students		24,269		46
Percent of state education funds to rural districts		28.3%		17

Percent rural schools



WY
50.7%
US
29.3%

GAUGE 2

Student and Family Diversity

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT	RANK
				21
				WY
				RANK
Diversity index		23.4%		31
Poverty level in rural school communities		302%		32
Percent of rural students with IEP		14.4%		28
Percent of rural school-aged children experiencing poverty		12.3%		26
Percent of rural household mobility		12.5%		4

Percent rural household mobility



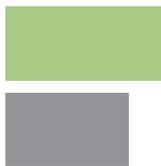
WY
12.5%
US
9.7%

GAUGE 3

Educational Policy Context

NOTABLE	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	CRUCIAL	RANK
				45
				WY
				RANK
Rural instructional expenditures per pupil		\$10,797		42
Ratio of instructional to transportation expenditures		\$10.48		24
Median organizational scale (x100)		1,325		33
State revenue to schools per local dollar		\$1.22		24
Adjusted salary expenditures per instructional FTE		\$92,265		43

Rural instructional expenditures per pupil



WY
\$10,797
US
\$7,174

GAUGE 4

Educational Outcomes

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT	RANK
				28
				WY
				RANK
Rural poverty difference in math (Gr 8)		25.2		7
Rural poverty difference in reading (Gr 8)		21.9		11
Rural NAEP composite math (Gr 4 and 8)		0.210		39
Rural NAEP composite reading (Gr 4 and 8)		0.171		38
HS grad rate rural advantage		2.7%		29

Rural poverty difference in math (Gr 8)



WY
25.2
US
22.0

GAUGE 5

Access to Supports for Learning and Development

FAIR	SERIOUS	CRITICAL	URGENT	RANK
				32
				WY
				RANK
Students per psychologist/school counselor		220		42
Percent of rural households without broadband access		8.8%		43
Percent of rural school-aged children without health insurance		13.9%		1
Percent rural enrollment in public preschool		53.9%		47
Percent of rural gifted/talented who are female		45.7%		3

Percent of rural school-aged children without health insurance coverage



WY
13.9%
US
6.7%

Endnotes

ⁱAlthough it is likely that student data was reported according to gender expression-focused categories of girl/woman and boy/man, the dataset uses language that refers to biological sex (i.e., male/female). It is also worth noting that schools were not given the option of submitting data on students identifying as non-binary.

ⁱⁱIn the Common Core of Data, race and ethnicity are divided into seven categories: American Indian/Alaska Native, Asian or Asian/Pacific Islander, Hispanic, Black or African American, White, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, Two or More Races. Although there are several problems with how these categories are divided and overlap, we maintain their use for a rough measure of racial diversity in our diversity index. We also acknowledge the ongoing discussion regarding the capitalization of “White,” but have chosen to capitalize here for consistency with the datasets used.

ⁱⁱⁱNational Rural Education Association. (2022). National Rural Education Association research agenda – 2022–2027. *The Rural Educator*, 37(3), 67–69. <https://journals.library.msstate.edu/index.php/ruraled/article/view/236/220>

^{iv}This is the U.S. average for rural districts on the grade 4 and grade 8 NAEP math tests. State-level values used throughout the report are standardized values based on this U.S.-level average.

^vThis is the U.S. average for rural districts on the grade 4 and grade 8 NAEP reading tests. State-level values used throughout the report are standardized values based on this U.S.-level average.

^{vi}This should be interpreted as a 2.6 *percentage point* difference. The high school graduation rate for rural districts was 89.8% and for non-rural districts was 87.6%.

^{vii}Hawaii is excluded from most of the indicators throughout this report because its organization as a single statewide district makes district-level data unavailable for rural communities.

^{viii}See <https://education.vermont.gov/vermont-schools/school-governance/act-46-state-board-final-plan#:~:text=206%20districts%20in%20185%20towns,of%20July%201%2C%202019> for an overview of the legislation and its impacts.

^{ix}The majority of this report is conducted at the district level, and so school inclusion or exclusion is based on the NCES locale classification of the entire district.

^xIn the Common Core of Data, race and ethnicity are divided into seven categories: American Indian/Alaska Native, Asian or Asian/Pacific Islander, Hispanic, Black or African American, White, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, Two or More Races. Although there are several problems with how these categories are divided and overlap, we maintain their use for a rough measure of racial diversity in our diversity index.

^{xi}Documentation and further explanation about the School Neighborhood Poverty index can be accessed on the National Center for Education Statistics’ section for Education Demographic and Geographic Estimates: <https://nces.ed.gov/programs/edge/Economic/NeighborhoodPoverty>

^{xii}This indicator is not adjusted for geographic cost, which is significant in the case of Alaska. However, the teacher salary indicator is adjusted by the Comparable Wage Index for Teachers.

^{xiii}Because the transportation expenditures are lumped together in a single sum, it is possible that some of these costs are related to extracurricular activities or field trips. Unfortunately, it is impossible to separate these out from the basic transportation costs.

^{xiv}See <http://www.ruraledu.org/articles.php?id=2043> for summary and links to a Charleston Gazette series on school consolidation that won the 2002 Education Writers Association award.

^{xv}See, for example, Jimerson’s (2006) synthesis on the opportunities afforded by small school size (<https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED497985>). Gershenson and Langbein (2015) found no overall effect based on school size but did find that larger schools were particularly disadvantageous for socioeconomically disadvantaged students and students with learning disabilities.

^{xvi}See, for example, Bickel & Howley’s (2000) study of school and district size in Georgia (<https://epaa.asu.edu/index.php/epaa/article/view/413>).

^{xvii}Vermont’s ratio of \$15.30 is dramatically higher than all other states (Alaska is second highest at \$4.14). The extreme value is most possibly an artifact of the way data is reported relative to Vermont’s state funding system, but other data and analyses suggest that state arguably has the most equitable system of school funding in the United States (thus, although the value might be exaggerated, the ranking is most likely correct). See <https://publicassets.org/library/publications/reports/20-years-ago-act-60-fundamentally-changed-the-way-vermont-pays-for-public-education/> for an overview of Vermont’s state education funding model.

^{xviii}Documentation and further explanation about the Comparable Wage Index For Teachers (CWIFT) can be accessed on the National Center for Education Statistics’ section for Education Demographic and Geographic Estimates: <https://nces.ed.gov/programs/edge/Economic/TeacherWage>

^{xix}U.S. Department of Education. Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), *2022 Assessments*.

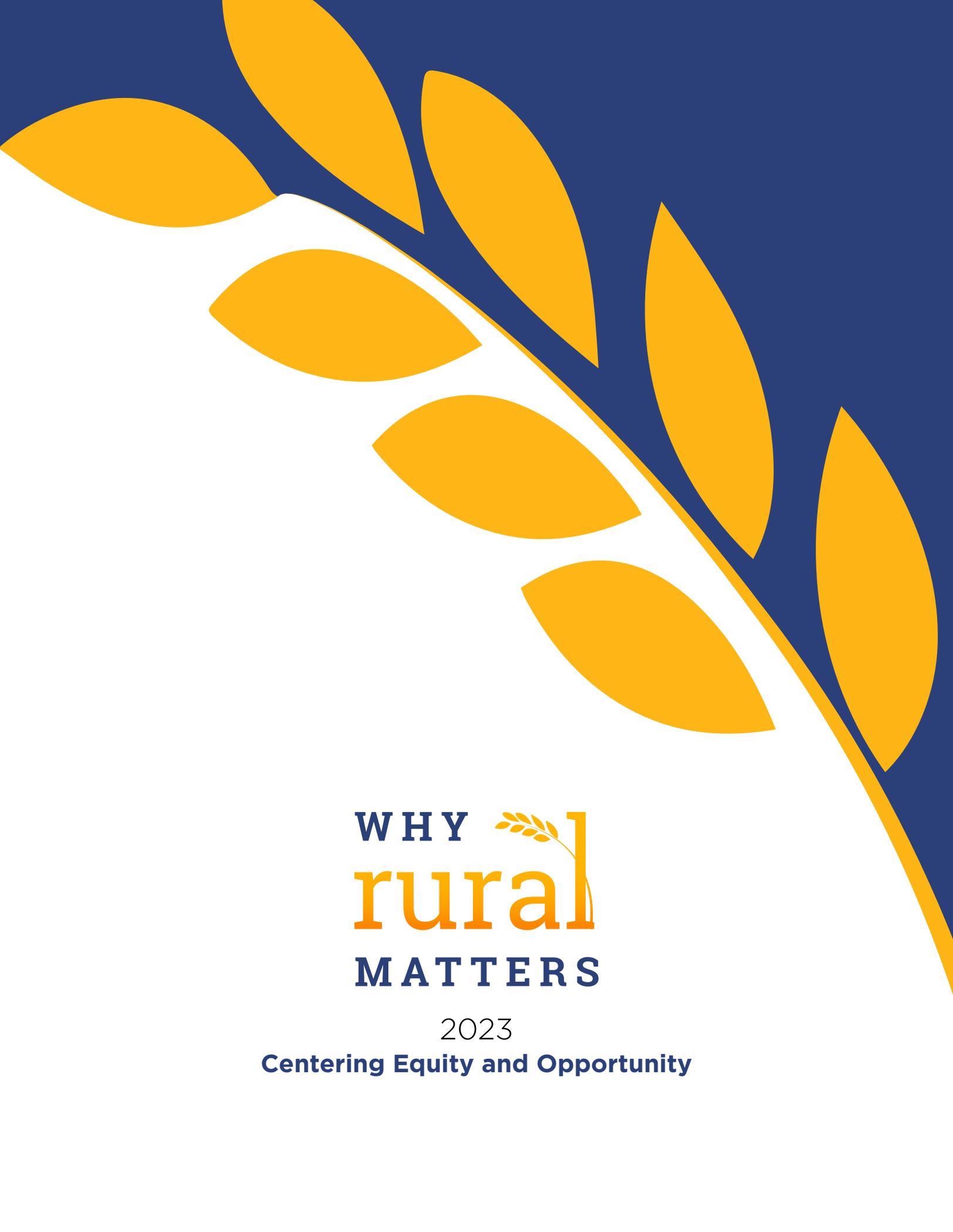
^{xx}In other words, students from all 12 of the NCES locale district types.

^{xxi}It may also impact economic stability measures as well given that families’ ability to apply for jobs or public support may require internet access.

^{xxii}We estimated this proportion by dividing the number of students attending a public preschool in a rural area by 40% of the total rural children between the ages of 0 and 4. This assumes a roughly uniform distribution across that age range and that there are similar numbers of 3-year-old children who are not yet eligible for preschool and 5-year-old children who are.

- ^{xxiii}Although it is likely that student data was reported according to gender expression-focused categories of girl/woman and boy/man, the dataset uses language that refers to biological sex (i.e., male/female). It is also worth noting that schools were not given the option of submitting data on students identifying as non-binary.
- ^{xxiv}U.S. Department of Education. Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), *2022 Assessments*.
- ^{xxv}Middleton, K. V. (2020). The longer term impact of COVID 19 on K-12 student learning and assessment. *Educational Measurement: Issues and Practice*, 39(3), 41-44. <https://doi.org/10.1111/emip.12368>
- ^{xxvi}Tornay, 2020, quoted in Middleton, 2020 p. 42.
- ^{xxvii}Kaffenberger, M. (2021). Modelling the long-run learning impact of the Covid-19 learning shock: Actions to (more than) mitigate loss. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 81, 1-8. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2020.102326>
- ^{xxviii}Kaffenberger, 2021, p. 2 (emphasis added).
- ^{xxix}Kaffenberger, 2021.
- ^{xxx}Ansorger, J. (2021). An analysis of education reforms and assessment in the core subjects using an adapted maslow's hierarchy: pre and post COVID-19. *Education Sciences*, 11(8), 376. <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci11080376>
- ^{xxxi}Ansorger, 2021, p. 11.
- ^{xxxii}Middleton, 2020, citing DeWitt, 2020.
- ^{xxxiii}National Center for Educational Statistics. (2022, July 6, p. 1). *More than 80 Percent of U.S. Public Schools Report Pandemic Has Negatively Impacted Student Behavior and Socio-Emotional Development*. https://nces.ed.gov/whatsnew/press_releases/07_06_2022.asp
- ^{xxxiv}Halloran, C., Jack, R., Okun, J. C., & Oster, E. (2021). *Pandemic schooling mode and student test scores: Evidence from US states* (No. w29497). National Bureau of Economic Research. https://www.nber.org/system/files/working_papers/w29497/w29497.pdf
- ^{xxxv}Halloran et al., 2021, p. 2.
- ^{xxxvi}Ansorger, 2021, p. 12.
- ^{xxxvii}Hartman, S.L. (2021). Identifying risks to the well-being of rural young children and families. The State Education Standard, 21(1), 33-37. https://nasbe.nyc3.digitaloceanspaces.com/2021/01/Hartman_Jan-2021-Standard.pdf
- ^{xxxiii}Ansorger, 2021, p. 11.
- ^{xxxix}NCES, 2022, p. 1.
- ^{xli}National Center for Educational Statistics. (2022, March 3, p. 2). *U.S. Schools Report Increased Teacher Vacancies Due to COVID-19 Pandemic, New NCES Data Show*. https://nces.ed.gov/whatsnew/press_releases/3_3_2022.asp
- ^{xlii}Hartman, S. L. (2021). Identifying risks to the well-being of rural young children and families. *State Education Standard*, 21(1), 33-37.
- ^{xliii}Hartman, 2021, p. 34
- ^{xliiii}Vilen, A. (2023, March 7, paragraph 6). Home-based care: Fixing the childcare drought in rural America. *The Daily Yonder*. <https://dailyyonder.com/home-based-care-fixing-the-childcare-drought-in-rural-america/2023/03/07/>
- ^{xliv}Hartman, 2021.
- ^{xlv}NCES, 2022, p. 1.
- ^{xlvi}Hartman, 2021, p. 17.
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WHY 
rural
MATTERS

2023

Centering Equity and Opportunity

Thankful Pumpkins

1. Brainstorm some ideas to be thankful for with the kids.
2. On the following slide click to reveal some things to be thankful for and see if you thought of any of them.
3. Draw or write on your pumpkin what you are thankful for.
4. Color/decorate your pumpkin if there is time.
5. Cut your pumpkin out.
6. We will make a Bennet Elementary Thankful Pumpkin Patch!



Did you think of these?

Click to reveal some brainstormed ideas.



family



friends



pets



home



food



nature



books/education



love



sports



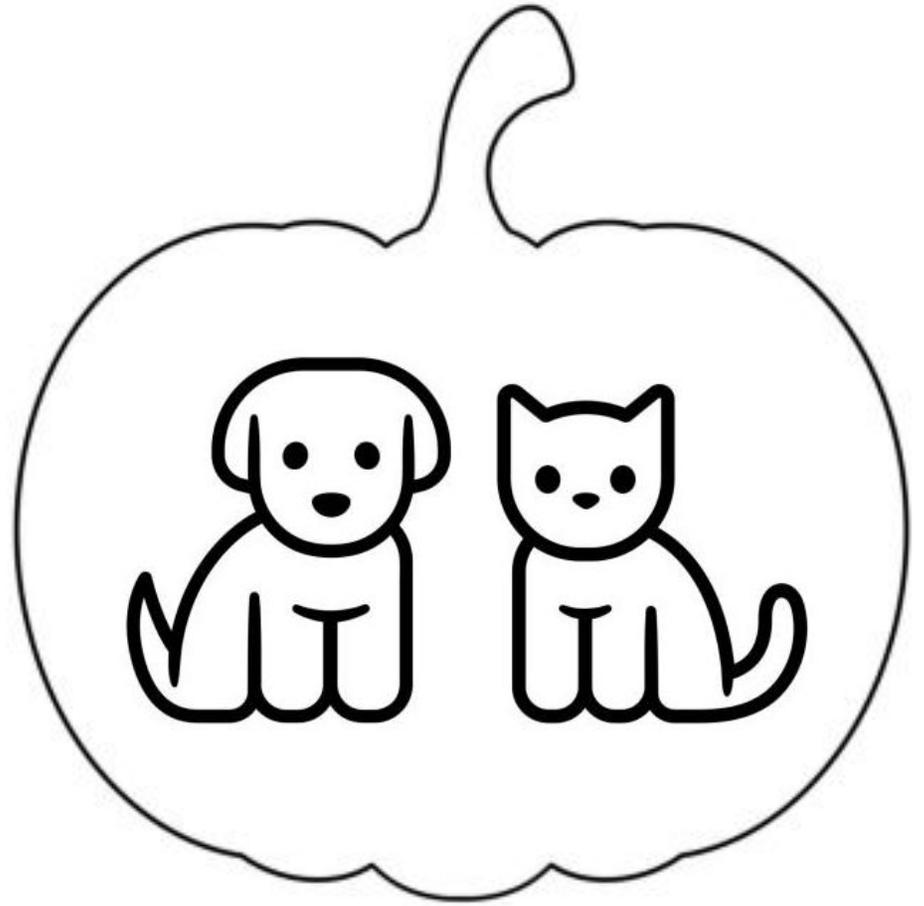
world



toys

Thankful Pumpkins

What are you thankful for?
Draw it on your pumpkin and decorate it.



Thankful Pumpkins

What are you thankful for?
Write it on your pumpkin and decorate it.



Community Unity Examples for HS Commons Area

The following examples are options for the community unity panel display at the high school.

OPTION A) Full Wall Interior Lobby Wall



OPTION B) Partial Wall Interior Lobby Wall



October 2024 Activities Board Report

- Bluez Marching Band & Drumline Contest--Superior Rating and 3rd Place. Plattsmouth was overall Grand Champion of the event.
- Apple Jack Parade-Palmyra Band Superior Rating
- Waverly Marching Band Contest-Palmyra Superior
- Audrey Erhart-1000 career assists milestone-recognized at last home contest
- Gannon Hubbard-School CC record 17:13.1
- HS CC Boys Team: ECNC Champions, JCC Champions, Falls City Champions, Raymond Central Champions, Ashland Greenwood Runner Ups
- HS CC Girls Team: ECNC Runner Ups, JCC Runner Ups, Raymond Central Runner Ups, Ashland Greenwood Champions
- JH CC Teams: Girls ECNC Runner Ups/Boys ECNC 3rd Place
- ECNC VB Tournament October 14th-17th Palmyra #3 Seed plays October 14th vs Elmwood Murdock @ JCC 6:30pm
- HS Girls Golf season has completed. Girls did not have any state qualifiers.
- Emily Moyer and Noah Lang-NSAA Believers and Achievers Local School Winners

Activity Calendar

- See PDF attachment.



Palmyra

October, 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 Homecoming Week @ Palmyra High School Youth Frontiers Retreat @ Kimmel Center 6:30am-7:45am Cheer Practice @ Palmyra High School Garden Level Weight Room 5:00pm Volleyball-Varsity Elmwood-Murdock vs. Multiple Schools vs. Elmwood-Murdock 6:00pm-9:00pm Youth VB Practice @ Palmyra High School Aux East Gym 6:30pm-8:00pm Youth Football Practice @ Olson Sports Complex	2 S.A.I.L Conference @ Syracuse FFA Land Judging Homecoming Week @ Palmyra High School FFA District Land Judging @ Nemaha NRD 6:30am-7:45am Cheer Practice @ Palmyra High School Garden Level Weight Room 6:00pm-9:00pm Youth Basketball Practice @ Bennet Elementary	3 Homecoming Week @ Palmyra High School 6:30am-7:45am Cheer Practice @ Palmyra High School Garden Level Weight Room 9:00am Golf-G/Varsity Lincoln Christian 10:00am Cross Country-Varsity Raymond Central 6:00pm Volleyball-Varsity Freeman vs. Multiple Schools vs. Freeman 6:00pm-8:00pm HS Football Team Meal @ Palmyra High School East Commons 6:00pm-9:00pm Youth VB Practice @ Palmyra High School Aux East Gym 6:00pm-9:00pm Youth Basketball Practice @ Bennet Elementary 6:30pm-8:00pm Youth Football Practice @ Olson Sports Complex	4 Homecoming Week @ Palmyra High School Pep Band 6:00pm-9:00pm Youth VB Practice @ Palmyra High School Aux East Gym 6:00pm-9:00pm Youth Basketball Practice @ Bennet Elementary 7:00pm Football-Varsity Raymond Central	5 8:00am-12:00pm Youth VB Practice @ Palmyra High School Aux East Gym 8:30am Volleyball-JV Syracuse 9:00am Volleyball-JH Lincoln Christian vs. Multiple Schools vs. Lincoln Christian 8:00pm-11:00pm Homecoming Dance @ Palmyra High School Aux East Gym
6 TBD Football-JH TBD FCCLA Pie Sale Forms Due 9:00am Golf-G/Varsity Lincoln Christian 5:00pm Volleyball-C Team Crete Public Schools 5:00pm Football-JV Milford 6:00pm Volleyball-JV Crete Public Schools 6:00pm-9:00pm Youth VB Practice @ Palmyra High School Aux East Gym 7:00pm Volleyball-Varsity Crete Public Schools	7 4:00pm Cross Country-Varsity Falls City vs. Multiple Schools vs. Falls City 4:00pm Volleyball-JH Weeping Water 5:00pm Volleyball-JV Weeping Water 6:00pm Volleyball-Varsity Weeping Water 6:00pm-9:00pm Youth VB Practice @ Palmyra High School Aux East Gym 6:30pm-8:00pm Youth Football Practice @ Olson Sports Complex	8 Bluez Marching Festival @ Olson Sports Complex 6:30am-7:45am Cheer Practice @ Palmyra High School Garden Level Weight Room 7:45am FCCLA Chapter Meeting @ Palmyra High School	9 5:00pm Volleyball-Varsity Lourdes Central Catholic vs. Multiple Schools vs. Lourdes Central Catholic 6:00pm-8:00pm HS Football Team Meal @ Palmyra High School East Commons 6:00pm-9:00pm Youth VB Practice @ Palmyra High School Aux East Gym 6:00pm-8:00pm Cheer Practice @ Palmyra High School Garden Level Weight Room 6:30pm-8:00pm Youth Football Practice @ Olson Sports Complex	10 6:00pm-9:00pm Youth VB Practice @ Palmyra High School Aux East Gym 7:00pm Football-Varsity Lincoln Lutheran	11 Elkhorn Sounds of Excellence Marching Festival 8:00am-12:00pm Youth VB Practice @ Palmyra High School Aux East Gym 9:00am Volleyball-JH Archbishop Bergan 10:00am-6:00pm Flag Football Game @ Palmyra High School Grass Football Field 10:00am Volleyball-JV Falls City	12

<p>13 TBD Golf-G/Varsity TBA vs. TBD Volleyball-Varsity TBA vs. TBA 4:30pm Football-JH Lincoln Christian 5:00pm Football-JV Conestoga Cougars 6:00pm-9:00pm Youth VB Practice @ Palmyra High School Aux East Gym 6:00pm-8:00pm Cheer Practice @ Palmyra High School Garden Level Weight Room</p>	<p>14 TBD Golf-G/Varsity TBA vs. TBD Volleyball-Varsity TBA vs. TBA 4:00pm Volleyball-JH Freeman 6:00pm-9:00pm Youth VB Practice @ Palmyra High School Aux East Gym 6:00pm-7:30pm Youth Wrestling Sign Up @ Palmyra High School East Commons</p>	<p>15 6:30am-7:45am Cheer Practice @ Palmyra High School Garden Level Weight Room 6:00pm Education Quest Financial Planning @ Palmyra High School East Commons 7:00pm Nebraska Wesleyan Student/Parent Presentation @ Palmyra High School East Commons</p>	<p>16 TBD Volleyball-Varsity TBA vs. TBA No School-Staff Collaborative PD/WD 2:00pm Cross Country-Varsity Malcolm 5:00pm Volleyball-JH Conestoga Cougars 6:00pm-8:00pm HS Football Team Meal @ Palmyra High School East Commons 6:00pm-9:00pm Youth VB Practice @ Palmyra High School Aux East Gym 6:00pm-8:00pm Cheer Practice @ Palmyra High School Garden Level Weight Room</p>	<p>17 Fall Break NO School 6:00pm-9:00pm Youth VB Practice @ Palmyra High School Aux East Gym 7:00pm Football-Varsity Malcolm</p>	<p>18 LPS Marching Invitational @ Lincoln, NE Oxbow Marching Invite @ Ashland Greenwood 8:00am-12:00pm Youth VB Practice @ Palmyra High School Aux East Gym 8:00am-4:00pm Flag Football Game @ Palmyra High School Grass Football Field</p>	<p>19</p>
<p>20 TBD Football-JV TBD vs. TBD Fall Break NO School 8:00am-10:00am Cheer Practice @ Palmyra High School Garden Level Weight Room 6:00pm-9:00pm Youth VB Practice @ Palmyra High School Aux East Gym</p>	<p>21 5:00pm Volleyball-JV Yutan 6:00pm Volleyball-Varsity Yutan 6:00pm-9:00pm Youth VB Practice @ Palmyra High School Aux East Gym 6:00pm-8:00pm Cheer Practice @ Palmyra High School Garden Level Weight Room</p>	<p>22 FFA National Convention @ Indianapolis, Indiana</p>	<p>23 FFA National Convention @ Indianapolis, Indiana 6:00pm-8:00pm HS Football Team Meal @ Palmyra High School East Commons 6:00pm-9:00pm Youth VB Practice @ Palmyra High School Aux East Gym 6:30pm Fall Vocal Concert @ Palmyra High School Main West Gym 8:00pm 7-12 Band Fall Concert @ Olson Sports Complex</p>	<p>24 TBD Cross Country-Varsity TBA vs. TBA Pep Band FFA National Convention @ Indianapolis, Indiana 6:00pm-9:00pm Youth VB Practice @ Palmyra High School Aux East Gym 7:00pm Football-Varsity Conestoga Cougars</p>	<p>25 Teammates Trunk or Treat @ Downtown Palmyra NSBA State Marching Band Festival @ Millard South HS FFA National Convention @ Indianapolis, Indiana 8:00am-12:00pm Youth VB Practice @ Palmyra High School Aux East Gym 8:00am-11:00am Palmyra Fire and Rescue Halloween Run @ Olson Sports Complex 9:00am Volleyball-JV Weeping Water vs. Multiple Schools vs. Weeping Water</p>	<p>26</p>
<p>27 12:00pm-4:00pm Youth VB Practice @ Palmyra High School Aux East Gym</p>	<p>28 TBD Volleyball-Varsity TBA vs. TBA 6:00pm-9:00pm Youth VB Practice @ Palmyra High School Aux East Gym 6:00pm-8:00pm Cheer Practice @ Palmyra High School Garden Level Weight Room 6:30pm-7:30pm FCCLA Halloween Partry</p>	<p>29 TBD Volleyball-Varsity TBA vs. TBA 6:00pm-9:00pm Youth VB Practice @ Palmyra High School Aux East Gym</p>	<p>30 FFA Livestock Judging @ SCC Beatrice FFA District Livestock Judging @ SCC Beatrice</p>	<p>31 9:00am-3:00pm Midland University College Visit @ Fremont, NE 6:00pm-9:00pm Youth VB Practice @ Palmyra High School Aux East Gym</p>		



District OR-1 Dual Credit Program

2024-2025

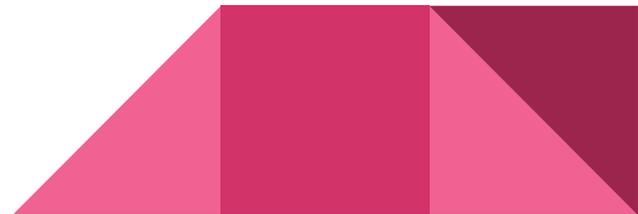
Dual Credit Purpose

- Offer college-credit courses that also count toward high school graduation
- Provide credit at reduced tuition that transfers to college and reduces overall college cost
- Provide college-credit courses in a variety of formats (online, distance learning & face-to-face)



Dual Credit Cooperating Institutions

- Nebraska Wesleyan University
 - Currently offers courses face-to-face with qualified District OR-1 instructor
- Southeast Community College
 - Currently offers courses online, through distance learning and face-to-face with a qualified District OR-1 instructor



PHS Educators Teaching Dual Credit

- Southeast Community College
 - Mr. Taylor Baumer
 - American Government (POLS 1000)
 - Mrs. Jonna Pester
 - Applied Statistics (MATH 2170)
 - Calculus I & Analytic Geometry (MATH 1600)
 - College Algebra (MATH 1150)
- Nebraska Wesleyan University
 - Mr. Mark James
 - Physics (PHYS 1700)



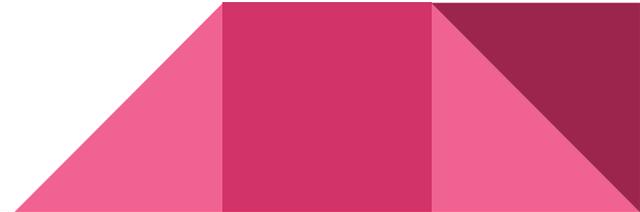
Why two colleges?

- ❖ Instructor requirements vary depending on the accrediting institution. While one college may require an advanced degree in a subject area in order to certify an instructor, the other may allow a teacher to leverage his or her experience in a subject in substitution of a master's degree.
- ❖ In order to offer the most in-person opportunities to our students, we have expanded our offerings to include both SCC and NWU.



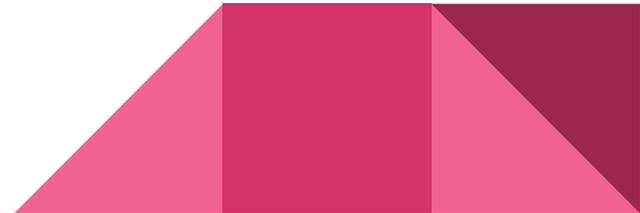
Current Online Courses

- Composition I (ENGL 1010)
- Energy Industry Fundamentals (ENER 1100)
- Introduction to Psychology (PSYC 1810)
- Personal Finance (ECON 1200)
- Public Speaking (COMM 1110)



Student Impact

- Fall 2024 Dual-Credit Course Enrollments
 - 103
- Fall 2024 Student Enrollments
 - 47
- Potential College Credits
 - 323
- Impact by Grade
 - 10th grade = 8% of students enrolled in at least one dual credit course
 - 11th grade = 42%
 - 12th grade = 66%



Student Services Report

Monday, October 14th, 2024

1. NSCAS reports were sent home with 4th, 5th and 6th graders. 7th, 8th and 9th graders will get their report with their report card. This information cannot be shared to the public until after the State releases it in November.
2. 5th and 6th grade HAL students went to Gifford Farms in Bellevue for an enrichment opportunity focusing on Science Olympiad. We will be hosting a 5th and 6th grade Quiz Bowl in November.

A plan for 7th and 8th students is still being finalized for the second semester. They will be participating in a field trip in December.

3. The Reading Curriculum (Journeys) will expire at the end of this school year. Committees have been formed and will be meeting at the October Professional Development Day.
4. Branching Minds update: The admin team is working on rostering all data into the database, so that we can begin using it for interventions and analyzing all student data for MTSS.
5. Mr. Haag, Mrs. Linke, Mr. Lahmon, Mrs. Vodicka, and Mr. Johnson all attended an MTSS conference in Kearney on September 25-27.
6. All teachers are in their rooms minus Mr. Linke. We are awaiting the final touch-ups of that room. Crews continue to hit punch list items.
7. Bluez Festival went very well and was well attended. (Thank you Mr. Hoeft/Furrow)

High Ability Learning Field Trip at Gifford Farms in Bellevue:







District OR-1 Admin Board Meeting
Monday, October 14th, 2024

- Graduation has been set for May 10th, 2025 at 2:00 PM
- “Safety Week” was October 7th-11th. Elementary and high school ran through multiple drills including fire, lockdown, shelter, and bus evacuation.
- Staff work day is scheduled for October 17th.
- The first quarter will end on October 11th. Report cards will be going home the week of October 14th.
- October is National Bullying Prevention Month and Red Ribbon Week. District OR 1 takes an active stance against bullying to create a climate that prevents bullying before it begins. Elementary students will participate in an activity with the Purple Hand Pledge which will be reviewed throughout the year. Students will participate in Red Ribbon week activities to promote positive choices.
- The week of October 7th is Fire Safety Week across the Country. The Bennet Fire and Rescue Department presented an assembly on fire safety to the Elementary students on Wednesday, October 9th.
- Mr. Haag, Mrs. Linke, Mr. Lahmon, Mrs. Vodicka, and Mr. Johnson all attended an MTSS conference in Kearney on September 25-27.
- All teachers are in their rooms minus Mr. Linke. We are awaiting the final touch-ups of that room. Crews continue to hit punch list items.
- Bluez Festival went very well and was well attended. (Thank you Mr. Hoeft/Furrow)
- Homecoming week was a success with student and staff participation in various dress up days culminating with building pep rallies at both schools. The Kindergarten students participated in a commemorative coin ceremony with the senior class.









District OR-1 Public Schools
2024 Board of Education: Committee Assignments:

Updated: January 10, 2024

- **Negotiations Committee:**
 - **Purpose:** Policy # 8152
 - **Meetings:** Several meetings in November -January
 - **Members:** Jaimi Calfee, Dean Busch, and Josh Penterman
- **Curriculum, Committee on American Civics:**
 - **Purpose:** Policy #8153
 - **Meetings:** At least twice a year -- one where public testimony is accepted:
 - **Members:** Jaimi Calfee, Dean Busch, and Dee Moore
- **Transportation/Facilities Committee:**
 - **Purpose:** Discuss and analyze the transportation and facility needs of the district, as well as vehicle replacements and maintenance proposals.
 - **Meetings:** At least quarterly; more frequently when needed:
 - **Members:** Dean Busch and Tim Cheney
- **Finance/Budget Committee:**
 - **Purpose:** Studies financial documents of the district, as well as finance and facilities proposals.
 - **Meetings:** At least quarterly; more frequently when needed
 - **Members:** Josh Penterman and Tim Cheney
- **Policy and Government Relations Committee:**
 - **Purpose:** Reviews proposed policy revisions and adoptions and makes recommendations to the full Board. Participates in government relations activities, such as NASB legislative meetings, visiting with senators, and testifying before the legislature if needed.
 - **Meetings:** As needed and potentially more frequent during legislative session
 - **Members:** Brandon Desh, Josh Penterman, and Dee Moore
- **Strategic Planning Committee:**
 - **Purpose:** Serve on the district strategic planning committee (when in the SP process) and report meeting progress back to the full board.
 - **Meetings:** As needed during the strategic planning process
 - **Members:** Brandon Desh, Tim Cheney, and Dee Moore
- **School Improvement Steering Committee:**
 - **Purpose:** *Assist in the SIP goal-setting process.*
 - **Meetings:** *As needed during the school accreditation and goal setting process.*
 - **Members:** Jaimi Calfee and Dee Moore
- **Administration Review Committee:**
 - **Purpose:** Completes the annual evaluation of the Superintendent, with input from the Board as a whole.
 - **Meetings:** 1-3 times prior to the Superintendent's evaluation.
 - **Member:** Board President
- **Foundation for Knowledge:**
 - **Purpose:** Serves as the BOE representative on the *Foundation for Knowledge* Board.
 - **Meetings:** As needed
 - **Member:** Jaimi Calfee
- **Proposed Adjunct Committees:**
 - As needed

District OR-1
Strategic Plan Prioritization Summary Draft:
For Board Retreat Discussion:

Created July, 12, 2023

Reviewed: June 3, 2024

1) Guiding Principle I: Culture and Connectedness:

Goal: Develop and sustain a healthy, respectful, caring, and safe learning environment for students, faculty, staff, and community for long-term improvements to support effective collaboration and positive connections with all stakeholders.

Creating opportunities for students and staff to establish and maintain a district culture that emphasizes the importance of respect, acceptance, social-emotional, mental health well-being, and school pride is vital to the success of students and staff of District OR-1.

- **Strategy 1.4: Foster a positive working partnership with parents/guardians and community members to improve and sustain effective and purposeful communications to establish a positive culture for the benefit of student success.**
- **Strategy 1.1: Implement a plan that enables all students and staff to connect through a culture that embraces accountability, inspires excellence, and promotes learning.**
- Strategy 1.3: Create a district culture that builds unity, between the Bennet and Palmyra communities, and ownership of our shared vision of “community ownership and responsibility.”
- Strategy 1.2: Establish a common school climate assessment and other opportunities to improve school culture and climate.

Possible Action Steps:

1. *Create a committee of internal and external stakeholders to identify opportunities that exist in the community and communicate with the business leaders regarding possible opportunities for students.*
2. *Encourage and sustain open dialogue with staff to address any obstacles as they arise.*
3. *Incorporate Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports districtwide.*
4. *Study and adopt a school climate assessment program for District OR-1.*

2) Guiding Principle III: Student Learning Opportunities

Goal: To ensure diversified learning experiences for all students through expanded learning opportunities, college, career, and technical training curriculum, high-quality instruction, and learning that accelerate the growth of each student.

Comprehensive and diverse learning experiences are critical to student growth. By offering diverse experiences (i.e., AP, HAL, STEM, CTE, non-athletic choices, etc.) students will be able

to achieve greater success. Furthermore, enhancing expanded learning opportunities will help foster students' problem-solving abilities to prepare for their future successes.

Relevant curriculum and effective instructional methods are critical to student learning and support District OR-1 goals and objectives that focus on achievement and provide for the needs of all students. Through vertical and horizontal alignment of consistent curriculum standards and expectations, the district promotes effective transitions for students at each grade and level throughout the PK-12 system.

- **Strategy 3.1: Set high expectations to ensure the integrity, quality, and rigor of the curriculum to provide diverse learning opportunities for the students at District OR-1.**
- Strategy 3.4: Challenge and engage students in learning experiences that enable personal growth and learning success.
- Strategy 3.3: Build district resource capacities that include the community, students, families, college/universities, and industries working together for college credit and readiness, academic growth, and overall diversity of curricular offerings.
- Strategy 3.2: Create improvements and increase student achievement opportunities for High-Ability Learners (HAL).

Possible Action Steps:

1. *Research, identify, and adopt a common curriculum in all subject areas to support consistent instruction and improved student academic learning.*
2. *Integrate career, college, and technical learning experiences throughout the district. Provide mentorships, internships, and job shadowing opportunities to support career-college readiness.*
3. *Collaborate with community partners and post-secondary institutions to explore opportunities for partnering to increase curricular offerings for students.*
4. *Provide technology resources and curriculum that support digital learning.*

3) Guiding Principle II: Facilities

Goal: To sustain effective and efficient use of resources focused on continuous improvement, expansion, and support of student learning, safe and effective learning facilities, and model fiscal responsibility.

We aspire and are committed to providing well-maintained and safe buildings and grounds to support an environment in which students can learn and staff can perform effectively.

To ensure that we continue to meet this priority, purposeful budget, planning, and management will sustain financial stability while continuing to improve our district. We will consider the

future growth in our district, the current buildings, and the expansion of new facilities as we meet this priority.

- **Strategy 2.1: Creation of a comprehensive facilities plan to address both short term and long-term goals including, but not limited to, new construction, renovation, and maintenance of facilities, and acquiring property to meet the future needs of the district.**
- Strategy 2.3: Plan effectively to address current needs, anticipate future needs, identify clear priorities, and prudently allocate resources to support those priorities.
- Strategy 2.2: Maintain best practices of our current spaces while designing safe, secure, and flexible educational/learning facilities.

Possible Action Steps:

1. *Plan effectively to address current needs, anticipate future needs, identify clear priorities, and prudently allocate resources to support those priorities.*
2. *Develop a short-term and long-term facility plan to support needs and enable the district to plan in a purposeful and efficient manner. Consider existing priorities identified in the strategic plan needs analysis, including but not limited to:*
 - *Capacity to Support Enrollment*
 - *Functionality of Learning Spaces*
 - *Building Maintenance*
 - *Future School Buildings*
 - *Olson Complex*
 - *Transportation*
 - *Playground Equipment*

4) Guiding Principle IV: Personnel Effectiveness and Staffing

Goal: To ensure the district provides educational leadership and highly effective staff to support our students academically, personally, and in their individual social growth, as well as building and sustaining cohesion and unity among the staff.

Fundamental to the success of District OR-1 is the ability of the district to recruit, develop, and retain high-quality educators. Investing in their skills, knowledge, and personal expertise will advance the content and instruction districtwide.

Providing purposeful and meaningful professional development for all staff builds collaboration and ensures a cohesive and growing school community.

- Strategy 4.1: Identify and implement a plan for administration and staff members to work cooperatively, to build trust, and the capacity to establish relationships to sustain long-term improvements while working together to improve student achievement.
- **Strategy 4.3: Provide meaningful professional development and training for staff to improve student learning and teacher success.**
- **Strategy 4.5: Utilize an employee onboarding and mentoring program to train, equip, and prepare highly qualified new staff for success and retention.**
- Strategy 4.2: Recruit, develop, retain, and recognize an exceptional, highly motivated, and diverse staff to optimize student engagement and learning.
- **Strategy 4.4: Utilize a teacher evaluation system to provide timely and authentic feedback to reinforce growth and identify opportunities to refine professional skills and knowledge.**

Possible Action Steps:

1. *Utilize a teacher evaluation system aligned to the instructional framework to provide timely and authentic feedback to reinforce growth, identify opportunities to refine professional skills and knowledge, and create pathways for leadership succession.*
2. *Develop the capacity of staff to effectively utilize purposeful data to guide instruction, revise school strategies and interventions, assess program effectiveness, and prioritize learning needs.*
3. *Provide SPED/504 training, resources, and support to ensure all students are receiving appropriate, high-quality accommodations.*
4. *Develop an employee and mentoring program for a three-year process.*
 - a. *Year-one will focus on developing skills, knowledge, and an understanding of teacher performance;*
 - b. *Year two will focus on the growth of the teacher’s instructional knowledge and classroom management; and*
 - c. *Year three will provide purposeful focus and engagement with the building administrator to ensure the teacher is meeting the teacher performance standards of OR-1 before granting tenure.*

5) Guiding Principle V: Board Governance:

Please note: This is a board goal.

Goal: *To ensure the mission and vision of District OR-1 aligns to the goals, community expectations, and outcomes utilized to measure improved learning for all students.*

As the board, we will commit resources to support the long-term goals of the school district. Through evaluation, accountability, and policy, we leverage the capacity to ensure the success of our goals. Our collective voice will be represented at the state level by developing a board advocacy committee to tell our district’s story.

- **Strategy 5.2: Establish effective communication with stakeholders through actively engaging parents, students, staff, and community members with the intent to promote the district’s image, build positive working relationships, and sustain long-term partnerships that will serve education.**
- Strategy 5.3: Advocate for children, public education, learning, and equity to support improved student achievement for all students.
- Strategy 5.5: Continuously monitor the progress of district goals utilizing data to support growth and promote shared accountability for maximizing student achievement.
- Strategy 5.4: Participate in continuous and appropriate training and professional development to build shared knowledge and values.
- Strategy 5.1: Annually review the district’s vision and mission statements and progress/updates of the strategic plan to support the mission.

Possible Action Steps:

- Develop more effective communication methods with community stakeholders
- Enhance the use of communication platforms (social media)
- Be active in the community
- Continue to focus on the needs of all students and families.

Summary Statement:

To ensure the success and implementation of the OR-1 Strategic Plan, district leadership will:

- Assign staff to manage and oversee action steps and strategies
- Monitor and assess the implementation, making necessary and appropriate adjustments as needed
- Collect evidence to illustrate the progress/success of the implementation of the strategies
- Commit resources needed to ensure the progress and success of the plan
- Align the plan to the board’s annual calendar and monthly meeting agenda to measure the progress and success of the plan
- Communicate the progress of the plan to internal and external stakeholders annually

NEBRASKA COMMISSION OF INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

DISTRICT OR-1 PUBLIC)
EDUCATION ASSOCIATION, an)
Unincorporated Association,)

Case No. 1455
Rep. Case No. 534

Petitioner,)

CERTIFICATION ORDER

v.)

SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 66-0501 OF)
OTOE COUNTY, NEBRASKA a/k/a)
PALMYRA DISTRICT OR-1, a)
Political Subdivision of the State of)
Nebraska,)

NEBRASKA COMMISSION
OF INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS
FILED

FEB 13 2018

Respondent.)

CLERK

This matter comes before the Commission pursuant to the Commission's Rules, following the Report of Election heretofore entered on February 6, 2018. The Commission, being fully advised in the premises, finds that more than five business days have elapsed since the Report of Election was filed herein; that no objections to said report have been filed. The Commission finds that District OR-1 Public Education Association should be certified as the exclusive collective bargaining agent for the following bargaining unit.

The positions of teacher, counselor, library/media specialist, speech pathologist, technology coordinator and preschool teacher performing their duties in Palmyra and Bennet, Nebraska.

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that District OR-1 Public Education Association be and hereby is certified as the exclusive collective bargaining agent for the bargaining unit described above.

Entered February 13, 2018.

NEBRASKA COMMISSION OF INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

Joel E. Carlson, Commissioner

By Annette Hord
Annette Hord, Clerk



DISTRICT OR-1 POLICY REVIEW SCHEDULE: 2024

Updated August 12, 2024

Policy Review Schedule for the 2024 calendar year

<u>Policy Series</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Date of Last Review</u>	<u>New Review Date</u>	<u>Status</u>
1000	Community Relations	April 10, 2023	April 8, 2024	Completed
2000	Administration	April 10, 2023	April 8, 2024	Completed
3000	Business Operations	April 10, 2023	April 8, 2024	Completed
4000	Personnel	August 14, 2023	August 12, 2024	Completed
5000	Students	August 14, 2023	August 12, 2024	Completed
6000	Instruction	November 13, 2023	November 11, 2024	Scheduled
7000	New Construction	November 13, 2023	November 11, 2024	Scheduled
8000	Internal Board Policies	February 13, 2023	February 12, 2024	Completed
9000	Bylaws of the Board	February 13, 2023	February 12, 2024	Completed

Business OperationsEmergency Response Mapping

District OR-1 Public Schools will provide mapping data to public safety agencies for use in response to emergencies. The mapping data will be provided in an electronic or digital format and will contain all information identified in state statute and as reasonably requested by the public safety agencies.

At least annually, the District will certify to the appropriate public safety agencies that the mapping data provided to the public safety agencies is accurate or, if the information has changed, provide the appropriate public safety agencies with updated mapping data.

Legal Reference: LB 1329 (2024)

Date of First Reading: October 144, 2024

Date of Adoption: [Insert Date]

**2024 STATE EDUCATION CONFERENCE
NOVEMBER 20-22
CHI HEALTH CENTER - DOWNTOWN OMAHA**

All Systems Go



**Co-Sponsored by the Nebraska Association of School Boards
and the Nebraska Association of School Administrators**



2 Registration & Reservations

REGISTRATION FOR THE 2024 STATE EDUCATION CONFERENCE WILL OPEN WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 2024

To register, go to www.NASBonline.org

Log in using your email and password, and click the 'Events' tab to register.



Registration fees for the conference are as follows:
 REGISTRATION SEPTEMBER 11 - NOVEMBER 8
 PRE-CONFERENCE REGISTRATION
 CANCELLATION FEE (PRIOR TO 11/8)
(No refunds after the registration deadline)

\$325	LATE-REGISTRATION NOVEMBER 9 - ON-SITE	\$375
\$100	BOARD MEMBER ELECT	\$175
\$150	NON-MEMBER	\$750

(Substitutions are done at no charge)

Hotel Reservations

TO RESERVE ACCOMMODATIONS AT THE CONFERENCE HOTELS YOU MUST FIRST REGISTER FOR THE CONFERENCE AS DESCRIBED ABOVE.

To qualify for a room, you must first register for the Conference.

Once your conference registration is complete, you will receive an email with your NASB Registration code and a Conference Hotel reservation link. The code will not be activated until 10:00 AM CT, Wednesday, September 25, 2024

SUBMIT YOUR CONFERENCE HOTEL ROOM REQUEST WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 2024.

THE OMAHA CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU WILL ACT AS THE HOUSING AGENT FOR ALL PROPERTIES.

Hilton Omaha - 1001 Cass Street
 \$151 per night
ROOM REQUESTS WILL BE ACCEPTED UNTIL OCTOBER 20, OR UNTIL FULL

Omaha Marriott Downtown - 222 North 10th Street
 \$171 per night
ROOM REQUESTS WILL BE ACCEPTED UNTIL NOVEMBER 8, OR UNTIL FULL

A RESERVATION AT ONE OF THE ABOVE IS NOT REQUIRED TO ATTEND THE STATE EDUCATION CONFERENCE



WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 20

Pre-Conference Sessions
1:00 to 4:00 PM

Exhibitor Reception
4:00 to 5:30 PM

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 21

Board Member/Mentor Collaboration
7:15 to 8:15 AM

Opening Keynote Speaker
8:15 to 9:30 AM

A - Breakout Sessions
9:45 to 10:45 AM

B - Breakout Sessions
11:15 AM to 12:15 PM

Thursday Luncheon Keynote Speaker
12:30 to 2:00 PM

C - Breakout Sessions
2:15 to 3:15 PM

D - Breakout Sessions
3:30 to 4:30 PM

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 22

Classroom Showcase
8:00 to 11:30 AM

NASB Delegate Assembly
8:00 to 9:30 AM

NASA Membership Meeting
8:00 to 9:30 AM

E - Breakout Sessions
9:15 to 10:15 AM

F - Breakout Sessions
10:30 to 11:30 AM

Friday Luncheon Keynote Speaker
11:45 AM to 1:15 PM

20th

DAY 1

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 2024

NASBO MEMBERSHIP MEETING

NASB LEGISLATION COMMITTEE MEETING

NASA EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING

PRE-CONFERENCE SESSIONS

EXHIBITOR RECEPTION

NASB BOARD MEETING

21st

DAY 2

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 21, 2024

BOARD MEMBER / MENTOR COLLABORATION

PRESENTATION OF COLORS / MUSICAL OPENING

OPENING & LUNCHEON KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER OF THE YEAR PRESENTED

BREAKOUT SESSIONS (A, B, C & D)

22nd

DAY 3

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 22, 2024

NASB DELEGATE ASSEMBLY

NASA MEMBERSHIP MEETING

CLASSROOM SHOWCASE

SUPERINTENDENT OF THE YEAR RECOGNIZED

CLOSING KEYNOTE SPEAKER

BREAKOUT SESSIONS (E & F)

ADJOURN

Register now at www.NASBonline.org



INSPIRING HOPE THROUGH THE POWER OF COMMITMENT AND POSITIVITY BEYOND THE GAME: APPLYING "ALL IN" TO LIFE

GIAN PAUL GONZALEZ

THURSDAY MORNING OPENING SPEAKER - 8:15 TO 9:30 AM

During the New York Giants' 2011 Super Bowl run, Gian Paul Gonzalez, a high school teacher from Union City, N.J., played a pivotal role in inspiring the team with his "ALL IN" rally cry. Before a crucial Christmas Eve game against the NY Jets, Gonzalez led a chapel service where he used poker chips to symbolize commitment, urging players to go "all in" with their dedication. The Giants, initially seen as unlikely playoff contenders, won that game 29-14 and carried their momentum through to victory in Super Bowl XLVI. Gonzalez, who turned down professional basketball opportunities to work with at-risk youth, is the founder of the Hope + Future Foundation. This organization provides health and wellness programs for youth in West New York, NJ, focusing on empowering students and fostering community unity. Gonzalez's "ALL IN" message, is not just a slogan it's a LIFEstyle.



RUNNING TOWARD CHAOS

DR. NATALIE STAVAS

THURSDAY LUNCHEON SPEAKER - 12:30 TO 2:00 PM

Dr. Natalie Stavas, a Nebraska native, and award-winning Harvard physician and humanitarian, epitomizes her life philosophy: "You Run Toward." This mantra was vividly demonstrated on April 15, 2013. As she approached the finish line of her fifth Boston Marathon, she faced the chaos of a bomb explosion. Instead of fleeing with the crowd, Dr. Stavas ran directly into the danger, providing critical aid and saved several lives that day. Natalie attacks every obstacle with the same attitude: "You run towards that which you fear, that which challenges you, that which is oppositional." Described as a healer, educator, and community leader, she was named "2013 Bostonian of the Year" by The Boston Globe.



WHAT'S ON THE HORIZON AT THE NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION?

BRIAN MAHER

FRIDAY LUNCHEON SPEAKER - 11:45 AM TO 1:15 PM

Join Commissioner Maher as he embarks on his second year at the helm of the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE), leading the charge in shaping the future of education across the state. In this pivotal year, he is poised to build upon the progress of his inaugural term, introducing a range of new developments and initiatives designed to enhance educational outcomes. As he outlines his strategic priorities, we will gain insight into his vision for fostering educational excellence, addressing key challenges, and driving meaningful change within Nebraska's schools. This comprehensive look at the goals and aspirations guiding Commissioner Maher's second year, highlighting the dynamic efforts underway to ensure that every student in Nebraska has access to high-quality education.

Pre

PRE-CONFERENCE SESSIONS WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 20 - 1:00 TO 4:00 PM

INSIDE OUT: NAVIGATING BOARD CONFLICT AND THE HIDDEN COSTS OF DYSFUNCTION

As Boards of Education evolve, long-standing teams often encounter new members with differing beliefs, styles, and agendas, which can challenge board dynamics. This session offers attendees a chance to delve into how respectful dialogue ensures diverse perspectives are heard and considered in the decision-making process. What can the board and superintendent do to prepare for change and explore strategies for managing communication and conflict when it occurs? Participants will learn to foster civility in governance and proactively address common challenges. Join us to enhance your skills in navigating board transitions and maintaining a productive, respectful environment that builds trust between the board and superintendent and ensures that decisions are made openly and with integrity.

PRESENTERS: David Kramer - Baird Holm Law Firm; Marcia Herring - NASB

HARNESSING THE POWER OF AI: PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS FOR SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS AND ADMINISTRATORS

Have you been hearing about the buzz around AI and wondering how it will impact your district? Join us for an engaging, hands-on workshop designed specifically for school board members and administrators. We'll start by showcasing how cutting-edge AI tools, like ChatGPT, can simplify daily tasks and enhance the efficiency of board work. From there, we'll explore real-world applications where AI is already benefiting educators—saving time, reducing burnout, and improving student support. Our session will wrap up with the latest research on AI in education, including how schools are crafting policies to leverage AI for better learning outcomes and streamlined operations. You'll leave with actionable insights and practical tools to help you navigate the evolving landscape of AI and make a meaningful difference in your district and community.

PRESENTERS: Lynne Herr - ESU 6; Andrew Easton - ESUCC; UNK AI Research Team



**JOIN US!!! EXHIBITOR RECEPTION
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 20 - 4:00 TO 5:30 PM**

Register now at www.NASBonline.org



ANN MACTIER - SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER OF THE YEAR WILL BE PRESENTED AT THE THURSDAY LUNCHEON

Previous Winners Include:

2023 - ALLISON WELCH, CONESTOGA	2016 - TERRI HAYNES, CHADRON	2009 - RON PEARSON, ESU #3
2022 - MARCIA MAHON, SOUTH SIOUX CITY	2015 - LINDA RICHARDS, RALSTON	2008 - SANDRA JENSEN, OMAHA
2021 - STEVE KOCH, HERSHEY	2014 - BRAD KRIVOHLAVEK, NORFOLK	2007 - JOHN HANSEN, BELLEVUE
2020 - MARIAN HOLSTEIN, WINNEBAGO	2013 - PATTY BENTZINGER, NORRIS	2006 - FRED TAFOYA, PAPILLON-LA VISTA
2019 - VALERIE FISHER, PAPILLON-LA VISTA	2012 - KATHY BARTEK, FALLS CITY	2005 - WAYNE ERICKSON, WISNER-PILGER
2018 - KATHY DANEK, LINCOLN	2011 - JULIE AGARD, KEARNEY	2004 - ANN MACTIER, OMAHA
2017 - BONNIE HINKLE, GRAND ISLAND	2010 - KIM FASSE, ELKHORN	



SUPERINTENDENT OF THE YEAR WILL BE RECOGNIZED AT THE FRIDAY LUNCHEON

Previous Winners Include:

2025 - MELISSA POLONCIC, DC WEST	2012 - BILL MOWINKEL, GRAND ISLAND NW	1999 - KENNETH ANDERSON, HASTINGS
2024 - ANDY RIKLI, PAPILLION LA VISTA	2011 - MIKE CUNNING, HERSHEY	1998 - KEN BIRD, WESTSIDE
2023 - MARK LENIHAN, WAYNE	2010 - KEITH LUTZ, MILLARD	1997 - RICK BLACK, CONESTOGA
2022 - TERRY HAACK, BENNINGTON	2009 - STEVE RECTOR, SOUTH SIOUX CITY	1996 - GARY HAMMACK, KEARNEY
2021 - JIM SUTFIN, MILLARD	2008 - LARRY RAMAEKERS, AURORA	1995 - MARTIN PETERSEN, ALLIANCE
2020 - MARK ADLER, RALSTON	2007 - ROGER BREED, ELKHORN	1994 - VANDLE PHILLIPS, SOUTH SIOUX CITY
2019 - MIKE TEAHON, GOTHENBURG	2006 - RICHARD EISENHAUER, LEXINGTON	1993 - FRED BELLUM, COLUMBUS
2018 - JOHN SKRETTA, NORRIS	2005 - ROY BAKER, NORRIS	1992 - GLENN LARSEN, ADAMS CENTRAL
2017 - CAROLINE WINCHESTER, CHADRON	2004 - DAN ERNST, WAVERLY	1991 - NORBERT SCHUERMAN, OMAHA
2016 - JAY BELLAR, BATTLE CREEK	2003 - RANDY NELSON, NORFOLK	1990 - DOUG CHRISTENSEN, NORTH PLATTE
2015 - BRIAN MAHER, KEARNEY	2002 - PHILIP SCHOO, LINCOLN	1989 - DONALD STROH, MILLARD
2014 - STEVE BAKER, ELKHORN	2001 - KEITH ROHWER, NEBRASKA CITY	
2013 - KEVIN RILEY, GRETNA	2000 - STEVE JOEL, BEATRICE	



BOARDSMANSHIP



CAREER & COLLEGE READINESS



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



CURRICULUM



ESU



FACILITIES



LEGAL & POLICY



LEGISLATIVE & ADVOCACY



MANAGEMENT/ADMINISTRATION



NEW BOARD MEMBER



SAFETY



STUDENTS/EARLY CHILDHOOD



TECHNOLOGY



WELLNESS

Breakout Sessions - Quick Glance 7

THURSDAY

- A1 LEGISLATIVE OUTLOOK: A "SPECIAL" KIND OF YEAR
- A2 BOARD GOVERNANCE: WHERE DO I BEGIN?
- A3 CONSTRUCTION FUNDING
- A4 STOP CALLING IT MARIJUANA
- A5 PAIN IN THE APP, V. 10.0
- A6 COMMUNICATION FOR DISTRICTS LARGE & SMALL
- A7 SPECIAL EDUCATION AND SECTION 504 ISSUES
- A8 NURTURING FUTURE EDUCATORS IN RURAL NEBRASKA
- A9 BANCROFT-ROSALIE EARLY COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOL
- A10 HARVESTING HOPE
- A11 PROFESSIONAL LEARNING AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

- B1 NSAA COMPETITIVE BALANCE UPDATE
- B2 EMPOWERING SBMS AS COMMUNITY CATALYSTS
- B3 HOLD YOUR FIRE - ISSUES IN TERMINATIONS
- B4 BUILDING SAFE AND SECURE SCHOOLS
- B5 SUPERINTENDENT CONTRACTS: WHAT DOES IT ALL MEAN?!
- B6 MAKING DOLLARS AND SENSE OF SCHOOL FINANCE
- B7 THE OPEN MEETINGS ACT: THE BASICS TO THE UNEXPECTED
- B8 BUILDING AND GROWING OUR FUTURE
- B9 HOW TO CREATIVELY FUND A SCHOOL FACILITIES UPDATE
- B10 NAVIGATING FUTURES
- B11 HIRING FOREIGN-TRAINED TEACHERS

- C1 STUDENT VOICES
- C2 AN INTERACTIVE MOCK BOARD MEETING
- C3 BUILDING, FACILITIES, AND REAL ESTATE
- C4 SUPPORT FOR EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
- C5 MEETING OF THE MINDS: LET'S GET CLOSED SESSION RIGHT!
- C6 INNOVATIVE PREPARATION FOR EDUCATORS
- C7 WAIVERS & RELEASES IN EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES
- C8 TAKING SCHOOL SAFETY TO THE NEXT LEVEL
- C9 LESSONS FROM BROKEN BOW BOND ELECTION
- C10 ESU BOARD MEMBER UPDATE
- C11 CONNECTING ED LEARNING TO WORKPLACE SUCCESS

- D1 MASTERING PAPERLESS BOARD MEETINGS & NEGOTIATIONS
- D2 EHA BENEFITS UPDATE
- D3 THE USE OF ADVISORY GROUPS TO ENGAGE STAKEHOLDERS
- D4 POWER OF STAY SURVEYS IN RETAINING HIGH-QUALITY STAFF
- D5 HOT TOPICS WITH JIM AND KAREN
- D6 RULE 10: HOW SBMS CAN SUPPORT THEIR SUPERINTENDENT
- D7 NAVIGATING TRANSGENDER STUDENT POLICIES IN SCHOOLS
- D8 DEVELOPING THE DISTRICT AND FOUNDATION RELATIONSHIP

FRIDAY

- E1 MENTAL HEALTH & WELLNESS RESOURCES
- E2 LEADERSHIP THROUGH LONG-TERM PLANNING
- E3 HOT LEGAL TOPICS FOR BOARD PRESIDENTS
- E4 CITIZEN'S ACADEMY CREATES DEEP PARTNERS
- E5 SOCIAL MEDIA AND THE BOARD MEMBER
- E6 ADDRESSING THE EDUCATOR WORKFORCE
- E7 OPEN MEETINGS AND PUBLIC RECORDS
- E8 CONSTRUCTION MANAGER AT RISK METHOD
- E9 BEHAVIOR INTERVENTION & TEACHER SUPPORT

- F1 SYSTEMS FOR SUPPORTING STUDENT BEHAVIOR
- F2 CAREER ACADEMIES - FIND YOUR PATH
- F3 NEGOTIATING FROM THE BOARD'S SIDE
- F4 STRENGTHENING YOUR BEEF IN SCHOOLS
- F5 TITLE IX: NEW OR IMPROVED?
- F6 CENTRAL NEBRASKA TEACHER RECRUITMENT
- F7 ATHLETICS, NIL, AND COPYRIGHT
- F8 A LISTENING SESSION WITH THE STATE BOARD



Register now at www.NASBonline.org

A

A - BREAKOUT SESSIONS THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 21 - 9:45 TO 10:45 AM



A1 A "SPECIAL" KIND OF YEAR

While the 2024 legislative session ended in April and included many provisions that impacted K-12 education, Senators were not done. Called back in July for a Special Session, K-12 education was once again a target for change. Come learn what the legislature did (and didn't do) through two sessions of 2024. We will also preview what education leaders should be thinking about as we head into 2025.

PRESENTERS: Colby Coash - NASB; Mike Dulaney - NCSA



A2 BOARD GOVERNANCE: WHERE DO I BEGIN? WHAT HAVE I GOTTEN MYSELF INTO?

Welcome to board service! What is the secret to preparing effectively to transition as a new board member? What are the demands of the role and responsibilities of the board? This session will cover frequently asked questions, highlight the NASB Board Governance Standards, and will engage you in interactive discussion, present scenarios to challenge your understanding of overstepping or proper board oversight.

PRESENTERS: Marcia Herring, Stacie Higgins & Stephanie Summers - NASB



A3 SCHOOL FUNDING FOR CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS, INCLUDING LEASE PURCHASE AGREEMENTS



This session will explore the alternatives to a bond election to finance school buildings and equipment, including lease-purchase agreements directly with banks, lease-purchase agreements for equipment, "QCPUF" financings which now permit financing for "school safety infrastructure concerns," and other financing ideas.

PRESENTERS: Mike Rogers - Gilmore & Bell Law Firm



A4 STOP CALLING IT MARIJUANA. WHAT SCHOOLS NEED TO KNOW ABOUT HIGH POTENCY THC, VAPING, & FENTANYL

It is not ditch weed in our schools. The marijuana industry has changed the script. High potency THC (the psychoactive ingredient in marijuana) is what students are using in vapes or edible cannabis products. Neighboring states and countries legalizing this new drug along with clever marketing by the cannabis industry has lowered our sense of risk with these products. Learn how the new gateway drug and vape industries are impacting a new generation of users leading them to other deadly substances like fentanyl. What can schools do to be more aware and aid students in curbing these drug trends?

PRESENTER: Jay Martin - Nebraska Department of Education



A5 PAIN IN THE APP, V. 10.0



It's the diamond anniversary of this topic, and Karen and Sara have a real gem in store! Come get the latest legal trends and troubles regarding student and staff use of social media and technology.

PRESENTERS: Karen Haase & Sara Hento - KSB School Law



A6 COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES & TOOLS FOR DISTRICTS LARGE & SMALL

Effective communication is the cornerstone of a successful school district. This how-to session is designed to empower school board members and superintendents with the tools and strategies they need to establish clear, consistent, and impactful communication within their districts. The session will cover the essential steps for building a robust communication plan, engaging the community, and ensuring that communication efforts resonate across districts of all sizes. Participants will leave this session with a clear, actionable plan for establishing effective communication in their districts, practical tools for implementation, and strategies for engaging their communities.

PRESENTER: Annette Eyman - Kordica Communications



A7 WAKE UP CALL: SPECIAL EDUCATION AND SECTION 504 ISSUES FOR BOARDS AND ADMINISTRATORS

The fastest developing areas for school litigation surround students with disabilities. The rights of parents with students that have disabilities are actively enforced by government agencies such as the Department of Education, the Office of Civil Rights, and the Department of Justice. We will go through best practices and common pitfalls under the IDEA and Section 504 to help your district develop specialized plans, respond to parent complaints, create plans for difficult behaviors, and more!

PRESENTER: Haleigh Carlson - Perry Law Firm



A8 GROW YOUR OWN: NURTURING FUTURE EDUCATORS IN RURAL NEBRASKA

Passionate about tackling Nebraska's educator shortage? Join us to explore the ESUs 6 & 9 Education Career Pathway pilot program, focusing on rural schools' needs with replicability statewide. Dive into details spanning 15 districts, and 66 high school students supported by NDE. Learn about the free curriculum, work-based learning, and dual-credit opportunities at Wayne State College. Discover Educators Rising CTSO's impact in fostering community among aspiring educators. Gain valuable insights into addressing teacher shortages and discuss implementation strategies.

PRESENTERS: Lynne Herr - ESU 6; Kristen Slechta & Katie Soto - ESU 9



A9 BANCROFT-ROSALIE EARLY COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOL

Bancroft-Rosalie School graduated their first class of six Associate Degree earning high school seniors in 2023. The students will share their Early College experience in a rural school and the transition from high school to a college junior curriculum. School administration will provide information on the process of identifying and supporting high ability in an accelerated academic program with limited resources.

PRESENTER: Jon Cerny - Bancroft-Rosalie Public Schools



A10 HARVESTING HOPE

UNPS Three Sisters Farm to School has embarked on an exciting venture to address the concern of food insecurity and sovereignty on the Omaha Reservation. This school-based 7-acre garden blends traditional and modern farming practices to produce over 16,000 pounds of fresh organic produce that is distributed to the school and community. This project offers vocational training, paid employment, and cultural experiences to the students of UNPS. This one-of-a-kind project has become a model for other schools and revitalized the cultural ties and customs of the Omaha people.

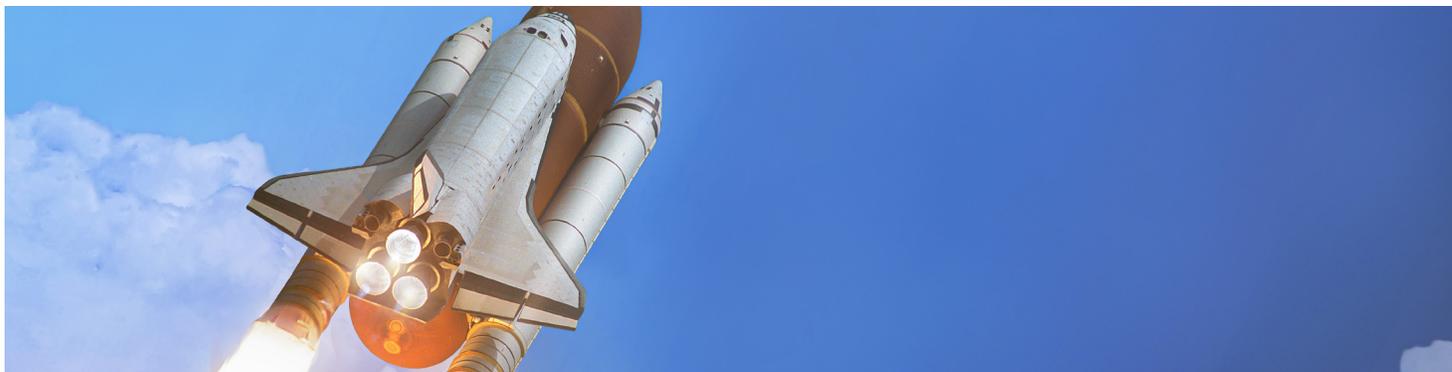
PRESENTERS: Stacie Hardy & Susan French - Umonhon Nation Public Schools



A11 A SYSTEMATIC APPROACH TO DELIVERING ON-GOING PROFESSIONAL LEARNING AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Millard Public Schools believes our People are our greatest resource. In order to best support our staff, Millard implements a systematic approach to deliver on-going and embedded professional learning and leadership development. In this session, Millard will share specific plans and strategies used to develop and retain staff. Examples that will be shared include action research, the Millard Graduate Program, and leadership development.

PRESENTERS: Kim Saum-Mills, John Schwartz & Todd Tripple - Millard Public Schools



B

B - BREAKOUT SESSIONS THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 21 - 11:15 AM TO 12:15 PM



B1 NSAA COMPETITIVE BALANCE UPDATE

This session will provide an overview of the NSAA's adoption of a Competitive Balance Committee and its implementation.

PRESENTERS: Jennifer Schwartz & Jeff Johnson - NSAA



B2 EMPOWERING SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS AS COMMUNITY CATALYSTS: STRATEGIES FOR EFFECTIVE CROSS-SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS

Explore the critical role of school board members as community leaders in fostering effective cross-sector partnerships. The session emphasizes the importance of partner identification, alignment of goals, and establishing a clear governance structure for decision-making. We will highlight the central role of relationship building, underpinned by trust and understanding of diverse organizational cultures. We will cover transparency in all processes and communication, along with strategies for project monitoring, evaluation, and continuous improvement.

PRESENTERS: Joe DiCostanzo - Nebraska Children & Families Foundation; Caden Frank - NASB



B3 HOLD YOUR FIRE - ISSUES IN TERMINATIONS

Everyone knows the Teacher Tenure Act provides numerous protections to certificated employees. But, various state and federal laws and rules also impact a school's ability to part ways with employees, including classified staff. In this session, attorneys from the Perry Law Firm will address and provide guidance on things to consider before firing, or even demoting or reassigning, any employee.

PRESENTER: Josh Schauer - Perry Law Firm



B4 BUILDING SAFE AND SECURE SCHOOLS

We know learning can only happen when students and staff feel safe in their educational environment. So, how do we build safe and secure schools? Become a Diamond Status member with NDE School Safety & Security Diamond Badge Certification. Schools across the state are completing the safety protocols and the Badge being displayed on buildings, social media platforms, and websites provides the confirmation to school communities that best practices and requirements are being met. Get the latest guidance and support from the Nebraska Department of Education, School Safety & Security Director on what is needed to put your school district in Diamond Badge Certification.

PRESENTER: Jay Martin - NDE



B5 SUPERINTENDENT CONTRACTS: WHAT DOES IT ALL MEAN?!

We get dozens of questions each fall about the same sections of the superintendent contract. How long is our contract, and how and when does the contract "renew"? Do we have to do anything at our meeting to approve the renewal or extension? What if we don't approve it? What about the pay transparency law--when does that apply if we're just adding a year? This presentation will cover these critical contract sections and decisions so that all board members and superintendents understand how they affect the contract length, costs, and obligations.

PRESENTERS: Bobby Truhe & Steve Williams - KSB School Law



B6 MAKING DOLLARS AND SENSE OF SCHOOL FINANCE

The learning curve for understanding school finance is never ending. Learn about long standing practices and recent changes that affect your district's financial position.

PRESENTERS: Bryce Wilson - NDE; Matt Fisher - Grand Island Public Schools; Carl Dietz - Northland Securities





B7 THE OPEN MEETINGS ACT: FROM THE BASICS TO THE UNEXPECTED

Most board meetings may run smoothly. But every once in awhile, a board member may make an unexpected motion, a member of the public may object to the board considering an item that was added to the agenda late. Occasionally, public comment can present challenges in the middle of the meeting. These scenarios can create confusion and contention among the board and community. We will walk through these types of situations and offer proactive advice under Nebraska's Open Meetings Act and real-world examples.

PRESENTER: Justin Knight - Perry Law Firm



B8 BUILDING AND GROWING OUR FUTURE: A BOARD VISION OF INVESTMENT

Gering Public Schools highlights two national priorities: Workforce development and early intervention. The Board and district leadership identified how to maximize programs effectively while leveraging resources efficiently. The growing school district has opened a new preschool center constructed by their own high school students. As a response to the expanding need for early childhood education in the community, GPS has embraced the "cradle-to-cap" concept by empowering their construction trade students to apply their skills of woodworking, machinery, electrical and masonry. The 4-year high school program offers a strong background in construction trades and apprenticeship experience for students.

PRESENTERS: Nicole Regan, Stacy Rodriguez, Brian Copsey & Greg Trautman - Gering Public Schools



B9 HOW TO CREATIVELY FUND A SCHOOL FACILITIES UPDATE

Wauneta-Palisade used creative funding options to complete an addition and renovation project creating a better learning environment. WP was faced with aging facilities in two locations and deciding how to improve them without passing a bond issue. We worked with business partners to find funding and design options to fit our budget and resources. WP utilized a lease purchase for new construction, QCPUF for ADA and HVAC improvements and leveraged our strong financial resources.

PRESENTERS: Allison Sandman & Randy Geier - Wauneta-Palisade Public Schools; Jacob Sertich - Wilkins ADP; Tobin Buchanan - Northland Securities



B10 NAVIGATING FUTURES: HAWK HERD & NEBRASKA CAREER CLUSTERS

Come and learn how one local producer's beef donation for the school lunch program has evolved into a hands-on "grow your own" beef program at Hampton Public School. The session will highlight the four key areas of the Nebraska Career Education Model - Core Academics/College and Career Readiness, Career Fields, Career Clusters, and Employability and Entrepreneurship. The Hawk Herd engages students in community partnerships within each of the six career clusters utilizing real-world experiences to help guide potential career choices while supporting "Farm to Fork" in our school lunch program two days a week.

PRESENTERS: Holly Herzberg, Carson Klute & Grant Dose - Hampton Public School



B11 WHAT EVERY SCHOOL DISTRICT NEEDS TO KNOW ABOUT HIRING FOREIGN-TRAINED TEACHERS

Hiring a Foreign-Trained Teacher has become a creative way for school districts to overcome the teacher shortage. Superintendents and board members will both benefit from learning the ends and outs of hiring a foreign-trained teacher.

PRESENTER: Decau Jean-Baptiste & Katelyn Larson - NDE



C - BREAKOUT SESSIONS

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 21 - 2:15 TO 3:15 PM



C1 STUDENT VOICES

Students from Nebraska high schools share their perspectives on issues that are important to the leaders of tomorrow.



C2 AT THE BOARD TABLE - AN INTERACTIVE MOCK BOARD MEETING

Join us at the boardroom table and experience the dynamics of a school board meeting. This session will provide a practical understanding of how board meetings are conducted, including the procedures, protocols, and decision-making processes. Through a simulated mock board meeting, participants will gain confidence in their ability to navigate real meetings, and the importance of what boards communicate through the public meeting.

PRESENTERS: Marcia Herring, Stacie Higgins & Stephanie Summers - NASB



C3 BUILDING, FACILITIES, AND REAL ESTATE – WHAT KEEPS A SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER UP AT NIGHT?



In this session, the Perry Law Firm will talk about various legal issues relating to school buildings, facilities, and real estate, including potential legal issues that can arise with facility maintenance, construction and other expenditure and revenue issues with school property.

PRESENTERS: Derek Aldridge - Perry Law Firm



C4 EMPOWERING DECISION SUPPORT FOR EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT IN NEBRASKA

Since the fall of 2020, the Nebraska Statewide Workforce & Educational Reporting System (NSWERS) has been working to create a state-of-the-art education and workforce information source. These efforts have culminated in the establishment of a unique and strategic asset designed to bolster decision making and empower decision makers by mitigating uncertainty surrounding education and workforce planning. This session will provide an overview of NSWERS and the innovative analytic tools being created to support schools.

PRESENTER: Matt Hastings - Seward Public Schools



C5 MEETING OF THE MINDS: LET'S GET CLOSED SESSION RIGHT!



Enough said. Leave your preconceptions at the door. If you are thinking, "I know all about closed session, so I don't need to attend that one," you're probably our target demographic for this presentation.

PRESENTERS: KSB School Law



C6 INNOVATIVE PREPARATION FOR EDUCATORS: HOW UNL IS MEETING THE CHALLENGE

Innovative educator preparation, including alternative certification and grow your own programs, are necessary to ensure we have qualified teachers and administrators as we work with the educator workforce challenge. Join me to learn about UNL's teacher apprenticeship program, school administrator preparation innovations, professional development for Career Education Permit teachers, alternative certification and accelerated programs, and how to grow your own school psychologist. These innovative approaches ensure the preparation of quality educators while meeting the immediate needs of school districts.

PRESENTER: Sara Skretta - UNL



C7 COACH & RELEASE - WAIVERS & RELEASES IN EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Extracurricular activities are a significant part of public education. They are also a potential source of significant liabilities for your district. From concussions to motor vehicle accidents, risks are everywhere. A recent decision from the Nebraska Supreme Court indicates that schools could mitigate some of these risks with releases and waivers. We will discuss everything from the implications of using waivers and releases to the standards of care applicable to coaches and volunteers.

PRESENTER: Josh Schauer - Perry Law Firm



C8 SCHOOL SAFETY 101: TAKING SCHOOL SAFETY TO THE NEXT LEVEL



Norris School District 160 has centralized and streamlined our safety and security efforts on our campus. While you can never be fully prepared for a critical incident, understanding and testing your District's Emergency Operation Plan is a starting point. This session will provide insight into updating and testing your District's EOP, community partnerships, grant opportunities, use of technology, and more to create a better understanding for staff, students, and parents/guardians.

PRESENTERS: Derrick Joel, Brian Maschmann & Gary Kubicek - Norris School District 160



C9 BUILDING BOW TOGETHER - LESSONS FROM BROKEN BOW BOND ELECTION

This session will be a panel presentation and Q&A on lessons learned from the Broken Bow Bond Elections - a bond failure that turned into a yes vote and win for the community. Panel participants will include representatives from Broken Bow Public Schools and the business partners that helped make the project a success.

PRESENTERS: Ashley Abramson & Steve Thiel - Hausmann Construction, Inc.; Darren Tobey - Broken Bow; Tobin Buchanan - Northland Securities; Jacob Sertich - Wilkins ADP



C10 ESU BOARD MEMBER UPDATE

Especially for our ESU attendees, get the latest from the ESUCC, NDE, and NASB about statewide ESU activities and issues.

PRESENTERS: Larianne Polk - ESUCC; Brad Dirksen - NDE; Colby Coash - NASB



C11 CONNECTING EDUCATIONAL LEARNING TO WORKPLACE SUCCESS

Today's careers have multiple entry and exit points, and it is important for young people to recognize how to navigate effectively to reach their fullest potential. Experiential learning opportunities assist youth with developing knowledge and skills that will lead to greater persistence in college and the workplace. This session provides a unique platform where education, business, and industry professionals collaborate through a variety of school enrichment and community programming. They will share personal perspectives and discuss strategies to collectively enhance college and career readiness for the next generation.

PRESENTERS: Dawn Lindsley, Jacie Milius, Kim Liebeg & Jonathan Schulte - ESU 7



Register now at www.NASBonline.org

D

D - BREAKOUT SESSIONS THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 21 - 3:30 TO 4:30 PM



D1 UNLOCKING EFFICIENCY: MASTERING PAPERLESS BOARD MEETINGS & STAFF NEGOTIATIONS



Embark on a transformative journey with paperless board meeting and teacher negotiations systems, redefining school board governance. Uncover the secrets to streamlined meetings, harnessing transparency for better decision-making, and unlocking invaluable data insights. Dive into tips and tricks to maximize your efficiency and effectiveness in managing school affairs. Join us in embracing this innovative approach to governance, where simplicity and productivity are paramount.

PRESENTERS: Chris Kuncel - Mullen; Darion Miller & Nicole Kobus - Sparq Data Solutions



D2 EHA BENEFITS UPDATE

In this session we will provide an up-to-date look at the benefits programs available to EHA members and allow time to address any questions attendees may have.

PRESENTER: Greg Long - EHA; Courtney Ray - Blue Cross Blue Shield of NE



D3 WE ARE FAMILY: THE USE OF ADVISORY GROUPS TO GATHER FEEDBACK AND ENGAGE STAKEHOLDERS



Papillion La Vista Community Schools is a suburban school district in the Omaha metro area with over 12,000 students. The purpose of this session is to describe how PLCS utilizes a variety of internal and external advisory groups to solicit feedback on critical topics and to engage its community members. A specific focus will be placed on the purpose, selection process, and structure of its Student Advisory Council and other groups including teacher, classified staff, and business/elected official advisories.

PRESENTERS: Valerie Fisher, Christopher Villarreal & Andy Rikli - Papillion La Vista Community Schools



D4 THE POWER OF STAY SURVEYS IN RETAINING HIGH QUALITY STAFF

Every school district is making plans to recruit and hire the next generation of teachers. We are considering hiring incentives, perks, and salary increases for these new staff members. What are we doing to keep our very best teachers in our school district? In this presentation, you will hear from practicing administrators regarding a "stay" survey that was implemented during the 2023-2024 school year, as well as ideas and thoughts regarding retaining staff from administrators and board members with emphasis on teacher voice, leadership, and culture.

PRESENTERS: Matt Dominy, Josh Fields, Paul Duer, Shawn Svoboda, Ryne Seaman, Matt Hastings, Jill Hochstein, Danielle Shipley & Jessica Dominy - Seward Public Schools



D5 HOT TOPICS WITH JIM AND KAREN



Veteran school attorneys Jim Gessford from the Perry Law Firm and Karen Haase from KSB School Law will cover a variety of "hot topics" that school board members from Nebraska should know. Come learn about the legal issues that your board will be (or maybe already is) dealing with, while you also get to listen to Jim and Karen bicker and banter.

PRESENTERS: Karen Haase - KSB School Law; Jim Gessford - Perry Law firm



D6 RULE 10: REQUIREMENTS, REGULATIONS, REPORTS AND COMPLIANCE. HOW BOARD MEMBERS CAN SUPPORT THEIR SUPERINTENDENT

Rule 10 has several sections, numerous statutes and over 200 regulations. This session is for board members who want to support their superintendent through having a better understanding of what it means to be accredited through Rule 10.

PRESENTER: Decau Jean-Baptiste, Todd Wolverton & Sandy Suiter - NDE



D7 NAVIGATING TRANSGENDER STUDENT POLICIES IN SCHOOLS



Can our school have a policy relating to transgender students? Should our school have a policy on transgender students? Which state and federal laws do we need to consider? Is this about bathrooms or athletics? Can we just ignore the discourse on this topic? Join attorneys from the Perry Law Firm where we will answer all of these questions and more!

PRESENTER: Haleigh Carlson - Perry Law Firm



D8 DEVELOPING THE SCHOOL DISTRICT AND SCHOOL FOUNDATION RELATIONSHIP

As public schools continue to be top of mind across the nation, the need for school districts and school foundations to work hand in hand increases. During this session you will learn how developing a relationship with the superintendent and communications department can move your foundation forward. You will learn how aligning success stories can increase goodwill for the district as well as giving to the foundation.

PRESENTER: Nicole Anderson - Columbus Public Schools



Register now at www.NASBonline.org

E

E - BREAKOUT SESSIONS
FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 22 - 9:15 TO 10:15 AM **E1 SUPPORTING AND ENGAGING YOUR COMMUNITY THROUGH MENTAL HEALTH & WELLNESS RESOURCES** It is critical to build the collective capacity of families and staff to align efforts and create consistency between school and home while also creating balance in the lives of school staff to ensure learners and families thrive! This district has worked to build out mental health, social-emotional, personal development, and family wellness resources in connection with community supports to engage families creating agency and ownership**PRESENTER: Summer Stephens - Grand Island Public Schools** **E2 ARE WE THERE YET? HOW DO WE KNOW IF WE HAVE ARRIVED, IF WE DO NOT KNOW WHERE WE ARE GOING?** Effective board governance and superintendent leadership requires the board to provide clarity of purpose and a vision for success for the school district. Through purposeful engagement of stakeholders, the board gathers valuable insights into the needs and expectations of the school district. Regular communication with stakeholders ensures that they are kept informed about the progress and direction of the district. This builds transparency and trust and ensures alignment between the district and the community. During this session, you will learn about three important characteristics of effective board and superintendent leadership through long-term planning.**PRESENTERS: Marcia Herring, Stacie Higgins & Stephanie Summers - NASB** **E3 HOT LEGAL TOPICS FOR BOARD PRESIDENTS**

This session will focus on current and forthcoming legal hot topics, with a specific focus on Board Presidents. This will include policy and handbook updates, constructing and managing the agenda, public comment, closed session, recent court decisions, legislative proposals, and other happenings in school law.

PRESENTER: Justin Knight - Perry Law Firm **E4 CITIZEN'S ACADEMY CREATES DEEP COMMUNITY PARTNERS**

Learn how the LPS Citizen's Academy works and walk session participants through steps to replicate it in a way that fits your community. The LPS Citizen's Academy is a unique, no-charge public outreach program that engages approximately 30 adult members of our community in four evening sessions during the first semester, all on-site at different buildings within the district. The relationships built and information shared with academy participants have paid important dividends in future efforts by the districts.

PRESENTERS: Mindy Burbach, Paul Gausman, Kathy Danek & Lanny Boswell - Lincoln Public Schools **E5 SOCIAL MEDIA AND THE BOARD MEMBER - DO'S AND DON'TS AND OTHER LEGAL ISSUES** Social media plays a big part in board governance these days, whether we like it or not. Many board members actively use social media for community engagement...and all board members employ staff who do the same. This presentation will cover the top things every board member must know about their own social media use, official school accounts, and the most recent court cases and real life examples where things can go wrong.**PRESENTERS: KSB School Law**



E6 ADDRESSING THE EDUCATOR WORKFORCE THROUGH INNOVATION AND PARTNERSHIPS

Recruiting and retaining the educator workforce is critical to successful schools and student achievement. Join us to learn about grow your own initiatives like teacher apprenticeships, rural school psychologist training programs, and principal preparation programs, the results of collaboration between school districts and educator preparation programs. Other recruitment strategies, including those specific to special education teachers, will also be shared. We'll discuss actions for retention of both teachers and administrators with a focus on the importance of collaboration and conversation between school districts and educator preparation programs. We look forward to having you join us!

PRESENTERS: Sara Skretta - UNL; Andrea Haynes -Westside Community Schools



E7 OPEN MEETINGS AND PUBLIC RECORDS - ARE YOU READY FOR THE NEW CHANGES?

In this session, lawyers from the Perry Law Firm will discuss some of the new changes to the Open Meetings Act and Public Records Laws that were recently made by the Legislature.



PRESENTER: Derek Aldridge - Perry Law Firm



E8 USING THE CONSTRUCTION MANAGER AT RISK METHOD TO DESIGN, CONTRACT, AND BUILD YOUR BOND PROJECTS.



Join us for an insightful session where a school superintendent and a legal expert will discuss the benefits of using a Construction Manager at Risk (CM@R) approach. Discover how a school district can effectively collaborate with architects, attorneys, and construction firms to successfully manage bond projects from inception to completion. Gain valuable perspectives on optimizing the process to ensure timely and efficient project delivery.

PRESENTERS: Jason Buckingham - Ralston Public Schools; Coady Pruett - KSB School Law



E9 HOW DOES MY SCHOOL TRAIN AND REPORT FOR THE BEHAVIOR INTERVENTION & TEACHER SUPPORT ACT (BITS)

Does my school have to train everyone this year? Does my school have to train everyone? Does my school have to watch videos? If my school recertified in MANDT or CPI in June, does that count? Does my school have to use Canvas? How do we record the staff who took the training? Join us this fine Friday morning as we help to answer these questions and more.

PRESENTERS: Larianne Polk & Andrew Easton - ESUCC



F

E - BREAKOUT SESSIONS
FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 22 - 10:30 TO 11:30 AM**F1 GETTING YOUR SYSTEMS FOR SUPPORTING STUDENT BEHAVIOR ON PAR**

Student behavior is a common concern among stakeholders. During the 2023-2024 school year, Lincoln Public Schools developed a comprehensive PK-12 behavior framework. The Prevention, Accountability, and Restorative (PAR) Behavior Framework is designed to equip teachers, staff, administrators, and stakeholders with the tools, strategies, and practices necessary to cultivate a positive, supportive environment for teaching and learning with greater consistency. The PAR framework encompasses evidence-based practices, preventative strategies, and an accountability matrix in conjunction with restorative practice to address a range of behavior needs across educational settings. Join us for an overview of the framework.

PRESENTERS: Lanny Boswell, Kathy Danek, Mike Gillotti & Karmin Pedroza - Lincoln Public Schools

**F2 2024 PHS CAREER ACADEMIES - FIND YOUR PATH IN HIGH SCHOOL**

Plattsmouth High School Wall-to-Wall Career Academies began in 2016 after years of visioning and planning by students, staff, and stakeholders. Our academies are led by student academy core leaders (ACL), the business/community advisory committee, and our district and PHS staff. Learn about our journey to becoming a National Model High School and how wall-to-wall career academies differ from pocket academies with every student in an academy. Join us at our session and also hear about our new website, marketing, updated course guides, and pathways for our three career academies.

PRESENTERS: Tina Harvey, Richard Hasty, Todd Halvorsen & Cherie Larson - Plattsmouth Community Schools

**F3 NEGOTIATING FROM THE BOARD'S SIDE: SUPERINTENDENTS, TEACHERS, AND CLASSIFIED STAFF**

Negotiations is one of the most important functions of a school board. In fact, "personnel" is the largest item of a school district's budget. And one of the Board's main responsibilities is to oversee the Superintendent. This session will walk through the statutory requirements for negotiations with teachers, as well as common pitfalls in Superintendent Contracts and classified staff agreements. We will also give boards an update on ideas for the 2024-2025 negotiations season.

PRESENTER: Justin Knight - Perry Law Firm

**F4 STRENGTHENING YOUR BEEF IN SCHOOLS PROGRAM WHILE SUPPORTING YOUR STUDENTS IN 4H**

Arnold Public Schools has spent the last two years partnering with local businesses to purchase market heifers or steers at the Custer County Fair Livestock Auction. The school pays the base set at current market, and the sponsoring business pays the premium. They are then processed at our USDA Inspected Processor. What started with one steer, quickly jumped to 4 at the 2023 auction. After the first year, businesses were requesting to participate in the program. Attend this session to learn more about seizing this opportunity to buy local and support our local farmers and ranchers.

PRESENTER: Joel Morgan - Arnold Public Schools

**F5 TITLE IX: NEW OR IMPROVED?**

Every year there's one topic we hope won't surface yet again, and every year Title IX and all things sex discrimination and gender identity see trends or changes we can't ignore. This year, we have new regulations, new cases, and a Supreme Court content with punting on 3rd down. From complaints of sex discrimination to athletic participation, it's been another busy year. We can't cover everything, but we'll hit the high points all board members and administrators need to know.

PRESENTERS: Jordan Johnson & Coady Pruett - KSB School Law



F6 CENTRAL NEBRASKA TEACHER RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

Nationally, there is a recognized teacher shortage and ongoing conversation and collaborations among policymakers, school leaders, and education preparation programs focused on recruiting and retaining teachers. Funded by the Nebraska Department of Education's Educator Shortage grant, UNK researchers delved into the experiences of Central Nebraska teachers. Their research captured teacher perceptions of their jobs, identified factors boosting professional satisfaction, and pinpointed interventions supporting their growth and development. During this session, the UNK Research team will share findings and ideas on how to support early career educators.

PRESENTERS: Chelsea Feusner, Janet Eckerson, Aprille Phillips & Chadra Diaz - University of Nebraska-Kearney



F7 SCOREBOARD UPDATE: ATHLETICS, NIL, AND COPYRIGHT

In this session, lawyers from Perry Law firm will discuss various issues that can arise with athletic equity and booster clubs, student-athlete name-image-likeness issues, and school and third-party copyrights and trademarks.

PRESENTER: Derek Aldridge- Perry Law Firm



F8 A LISTENING SESSION WITH MEMBERS OF THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Share your thoughts on statewide education policy with members of the State Board of Education. State Board members are particularly interested in what is currently affecting local school boards and districts, and the solutions you have to offer for these issues. Topics may include school accountability, accreditation and approval, educator certification, and statewide assessment, among others. Attending this session is a great opportunity for you to have your voice heard among members of the State Board of Education.

PRESENTERS: Ryan Foor & Elizabeth Tegtmeier - Nebraska Department of Education

Registering for the Conference

REGISTRATION FOR THE 2024 STATE EDUCATION CONFERENCE WILL OPEN WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 2024

To register, go to the NASB website at www.NASBonline.org and log in using your email and password, and click the State Education Conference link.

AS YOU REGISTER, BE SURE TO MAKE PLANS TO ATTEND THE EXHIBITOR RECEPTION
FROM 4:00 TO 5:30 PM ON WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 20.

IF YOU HAVE SPECIAL DIETARY NEEDS DUE TO A MEDICAL CONDITION, CONTACT AVARY PANSING-BROOKS AT
APANSINGBROOKS@NASBONLINE.ORG TO ARRANGE ALTERNATIVE MENUS.



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**2024 STATE EDUCATION CONFERENCE
NOVEMBER 20-22
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Co-Sponsored by the Nebraska Association of School Boards
and the Nebraska Association of School Administrators



DISTRICT OR-1
OPTION ENROLLMENT RESOLUTION
Updated October 14, 2024

WHEREAS, the School Board is required by law to adopt by resolution policies and specific standards for acceptance or rejection of option enrollment applications by October 15th for the following school year; and,

WHEREAS, the School Board has received and reviewed evidence and information submitted by the administration and other sources and made determinations thereon with respect to standards for acceptance or rejection and with respect to the capacity of this school district to accept option enrollment students based upon available staff, available facilities, projected enrollment, and availability of special education programs for the following school year; and,

WHEREAS, the School Board has determined that the educational interests of this school district would be best served by adoption of the resolutions, and the policies and specific standards herein contained.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Option Enrollment Policy presented to the School Board as Policy 5006, and Appendix "1" to such Policy 5006, should be and the same are hereby adopted, and any previous policy or interpretation or application of the option enrollment program which is or has been inconsistent with the Policy 5006, and Appendix "1" to such Policy 5006, are repealed effective on the date of the passage of this resolution,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that all paragraphs, subparagraphs, and portions of words of this Resolution, of Policy 5006, and Appendix "1" to such Policy 5006 are severable and that in the event any of the same are determined to be invalid for any reason, such determination shall not affect the validity of any of the remainder of the same.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that policies and specific standards for acceptance or rejection of option enrollment applications should be and are hereby adopted, for applications filed after adoption of this resolution, and are hereinafter set forth:

The above Resolution, having been read in its entirety, member _____ moved for its passage and adoption, member _____ seconded the same. After discussion and on roll call vote, the following members voted in favor of passage and adoption of the above Resolution:

_____.

The following members voted against the same: _____

The following members were absent or not voting. _____

The Resolution having been consented to and approved by a majority of the members of the School Board, was declared as passed and adopted by the President at a duly held and lawfully convened meeting in full compliance with the Nebraska open meetings law.

DATED this **14th day of October, 2024.**

District OR-1 PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Attest: _____
Secretary

By: _____
President

District OR-1 Appendix “1” to Option Enrollment Policy

Updated: October 14, 2024

The following is Appendix “1” to Policy #5006 for the **2025-2026** school year. The Board of Education hereby sets forth the maximum number of option students for the current school year in any program, class, grade level or school building or in any special education programs operated by this school district, based upon available staff, facilities, projected enrollment of resident students, projected number of students with which this school district will contract based on existing contractual arrangements, and availability of appropriate special education programs. Any program, class, grade level, or school building which has “0” as the No. of Option Students is hereby declared unavailable to option students due to lack of capacity.

District OR-1 Option Enrollment Appendix for 2025.2026.

Updated 10.14.2024

PROGRAM / GRADE LEVEL	PROGRAM CAPACITY	PROJECTED ENROLLMENT	NO. OF OPTION STUDENTS
Kindergarten	60	56	4
First	60	50	10
Second	66	50	16
Third	66	54	12
Fourth	66	60	6
Fifth	66	62	4
Building Capacity (K-5) Bennet Elementary	384	332	52
Level I Elementary Special Education (Resource)	35	35	0 - *Program at capacity
Level II and Level III Elementary Special Education (Life Skills, Autism, BD)	5	6	0 - *Program at capacity
Sixth	75	70	5
Seventh	75	61	14
Eighth	75	50	25
Level Middle School Special Education Program	28	28	0 - *Program at capacity
Level II and Level III Middle School Special Education (Life Skills, Autism, BD, etc.)	3	3	0 - *Program at capacity
Building Capacity, Middle School Attendance Center	225	181	44
Ninth	75	50	25
Tenth	75	50	25
Eleventh	75	50	25
Twelfth	75	45	30
Level I High School Special Education Program	23	23	0 - *Program at capacity
Level II and Level III Middle School Special Education (Life Skills, Autism, BD, Aspire Academy)	5	5	0 - *Program at capacity
Building Capacity, Sr. High School Attendance Center	300	195	105

*** Special education capacity will be determined on a “case-by-case” basis in accordance with state law and the available resources as determined by the District’s Director of Special Education or designee.**

StudentsOption EnrollmentA. Process and Time Lines to Option In

For a student to attend District OR-1 Public Schools as an option enrollment student, the student's parent or legal guardian must submit an application to the Board of Education of District OR-1 Public Schools between September 1 and March 15 for enrollment during the following and subsequent school years (the "application period").

Upon receipt of an application, the Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee shall provide the resident school district or, if the student attends a different district as an option student, the option district with the name of the applicant on or before April 1 or, in the case of an application submitted after March 15, within sixty days after submission.

Provisions for Waiver of Application Deadline

The application deadline will be waived by the School District for applications to option into District OR-1 Public Schools, provided that the application contains a release approval from the resident district or, if the student is an option student attending a different district, the option district attended by the student and satisfies any other requirements of law. Further, the application deadline shall not be waived if the application is for enrollment in any program, class, grade level, or school building or in any special education programs operated by this School District that have been determined by the School District to be at capacity following the capacity standards (Appendix "1"), and no waiver of the deadline shall be made for such an application regardless of whether such capacity determinations are declared invalid for any reason.

1. **Siblings**: The application deadline will be waived where the application is for a student who is the sibling of a student attending District OR-1 Public Schools as of the time the application is filed. A "sibling" for this purpose means a child who resides in the same household on a permanent basis with a student who is currently attending the School District and who has the same natural or adoptive parent or who is a stepbrother or stepsister.
2. **Kindergarten**: The application deadline will be waived where the application is for a student who is seeking to enroll and attend the Kindergarten grade level provided the application was filed on, or before June 1 before the first semester of the next school year.
3. **Release Approval**: For the foregoing exceptions, the application must contain a release approval from the resident district or, if the student attends a different district as an option student, the student's current option district.

4. Other Conditions: The waiver of the deadline in the above circumstances does not require acceptance of the application, as such applications may be rejected for reasons other than late filing.
5. Capacity: For the foregoing exceptions, the application deadline shall not be waived if the application is for enrollment in any program, class, grade level or school building operated by this School District which have been determined by the School District to be at capacity under the capacity standards (Appendix "1"), and no waiver of the deadline shall be made for such an application regardless of whether such capacity determinations are declared invalid for any reason. For any option application for a student who would receive or could be eligible to receive special education or related services, the Director of Special Education or designee shall conduct a case-by-case analysis to determine if the District has the capacity to provide the student with the appropriate services and accommodations.

B. Rejection of Applications; Reasons

1. Capacity: An option enrollment application shall be rejected in the event the capacity of a program, class, grade level, or school building operated by the School District would be exceeded by acceptance of the application, and an option enrollment application shall be rejected in the event the application is for enrollment in a program, class, grade level, or school building which has been declared unavailable to option students due to lack of capacity.

The Director of Special Programs shall review on a case-by-case basis all option applications for students who would receive or could be eligible to receive special education or related services. If the Director or designee determines that the District does not have the capacity to provide the student with the appropriate services and accommodations, then the Director or designee shall send a denial notice to the parent(s) or guardian(s) and include a description of services and accommodations that the District does not have the capacity to provide.

2. Timeliness: An option enrollment application shall be rejected in the event the application is not filed on or before April 1st immediately preceding the school year in which enrollment is sought, and the filing deadline has not been waived.
3. Previous Option Enrollment: An option enrollment application shall be rejected in the event the student has exhausted their option enrollments in other school districts, as determined by state law.
4. Other Reasons: An option enrollment application may be rejected in the event the Superintendent, the Superintendent's designee, or the School District determines: The application is not submitted on a form prescribed by the State Department of Education, is not completely and accurately filled in, is not received within the time required by law, or any additional information requested to be supplied is not supplied to the School District within the timelines indicated; or in the event

acceptance of the application is not required by law. Matters which are legally prohibited from being considered as standards for acceptance or rejection of applications (including “previous academic achievement, athletic or extracurricular ability, disabilities, proficiency in the English language, or previous disciplinary proceedings” and further including, without limitation, race, national origin, and gender) shall not be considered as reasons for acceptance or rejection.

C. Priority of Acceptance

Priority shall be accorded in the following order: (1) those applications required to be given priority by law, (2) those with a sibling in attendance at District OR-1 Public Schools, with priority within this group being given to those who had earliest filed applications, and (3) those without an option student sibling in attendance at District OR-1 Public Schools, with priority within this group to those who had earliest filed applications.

Filing date determinations are made by the Superintendent, or the Superintendent’s designee. In the event applications within a group are received at the same or substantially the same time, priority as between such same-date applications shall be determined on the basis of random drawing.

D. Determination of Capacity

The School District will determine and set, on an annual basis, the maximum number of option enrollment applications the School District will accept in any program, class, grade level or school building operated by this School District, based upon available staff, facilities, projected enrollment of resident students, projected number of students with which this School District will contract based on existing contractual arrangements, and may declare a program, class or school unavailable to option students due to lack of capacity. Such determinations may be made in the form of an Appendix “1” to this Policy. The determination and declaration made for any school year shall continue in effect for the next and subsequent school years unless otherwise determined and/or declared. The capacity for special education services shall be determined on a case-by-case basis as determined by the Director of Special Programs or designee.

E. Releases for Options Out

A request for release of a resident student or option student currently attending District OR-1 Public School District who submits an option application after March 15 will be granted unless the administration is considering or has recommended expulsion of the student at the time the application is filed, and the administration determines it is appropriate to complete the expulsion process.

A request for release of a resident student of or option student currently attending District OR-1 Public Schools who submits an enrollment option application after March 15 or any other statutory deadline will be granted on the following conditions:

1. Kindergarten: A release will be granted where the application is for a student who

is seeking to enroll and attend the Kindergarten grade level provided the application was filed on or before June 1 prior to the first semester of the next school year.

2. Siblings: A release will be granted where the application would allow the student to attend the same school as a sibling. A “sibling” for this purpose means a child who resides in the same household on a permanent basis with a student who is currently enrolled in the option district and who has the same natural or adoptive parent or who is a stepbrother or stepsister.
3. Educational Programming: A release will be granted where the needs of the student require the District to obtain additional staffing or equipment and it is in the best interests of the District and the student to enroll in the option district. The determination of whether this condition is met shall be made by the Superintendent or the Superintendent’s designee.
4. No Pending Expulsion: The deadline shall not be waived if the administration is considering or has recommended the expulsion of the student at the time the application is filed, and the administration determines it is appropriate to complete the expulsion process.

The Superintendent or the Superintendent’s designee is hereby authorized to execute such releases on behalf of the School District and the School District.

F. Notification of Acceptance or Rejection

In the case of an application to option enroll into the School District, the Superintendent or the Superintendent’s designee shall notify, in writing, the parent or legal guardian of the student, and the resident school district or, if the student is an option student attending a different district, that option district whether the application is accepted or rejected on or before April 1 or, in the case of an application submitted after March 15, within sixty days after submission.

If an option enrollment application or a request for release is rejected by the District OR-1 Superintendent or the Superintendent’s designee shall provide written notification to the parent or guardian stating the reasons for the rejection and the process for appealing such rejection to the State Board of Education. Such notification shall be sent by certified mail.

G. Status of Option Student

A student who is admitted under the enrollment option program shall be treated as a resident student, and in such regard shall be required to provide such enrollment information and documentation as is required for enrollment of other students (e.g., certified birth certificate and evidence of physical examination, visual evaluation and immunization), shall be required to be enrolled on a full-time basis, and shall be required to adhere to student conduct rules. The building assignment for an option student, as well as classroom and grade level assignments, shall be determined solely by the administration.

An option student shall not be entitled to transportation except as required by law.

Transportation or transportation reimbursement will be provided only in the following circumstances:

1. District OR-1 Public Schools may, upon mutual agreement with the parent or legal guardian of an option student, provide transportation to the option student on the same basis as provided for resident students. The school district may charge the parents of each option student transported a fee sufficient to recover the additional costs of such transportation.
2. Option students who qualify for free lunches are eligible for either free transportation or transportation reimbursement from the option school district. The District's policy is that the District selects which service (transportation or reimbursement) is to be provided to students.
3. For option students receiving special education services, the transportation services required in the student's Individualized Education Plan shall be provided by the resident school district.

H. Information Regarding Schools, Programs, Policies and Procedures.

As part of the option enrollment program, the administration shall make information about District OR-1 Public Schools and its school, programs, policies and procedures available to all interested persons and shall have a copy of the option enrollment policy and regulations available at each school building.

Legal Reference: Neb. Rev. Stat. Sections 79-232 to 79-246

Date of Adoption: March 13th, 2017

Date of Revision: October 14, 2024



Criteria August 2024-2025

NASB BOARD MEMBER

AWARDS OF ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM

PARTICIPATION IN ASSOCIATION LEARNING EXPERIENCE

Education is both complex and challenging. It requires the district/ESU leadership team, made up of the school board and administrators, to study problems from a variety of perspectives. Accountability to improved learning and instruction requires that the board and administrator adopt effective school policy and possess a vast range of resources and knowledge in areas such as school law, curriculum, finance, labor relations, community relations, policy, fiscal accountability, advocacy, and proper board meeting procedures. Through conferences, area workshops, and local district retreats the Association serves our members by providing learning experiences to support growth and professional development. NASB supports new and veteran board members that build their knowledge and effectiveness in boardsmanship and leadership skills.

BENEFITS OF PARTICIPATION IN NASB LEARNING EXPERIENCES

- Board Development – provides extensive learning experiences to support the development of governance skills needed to oversee the education of students in the school district
- Board/Superintendent Relations - supports the board member's working relationship with the administrator to ensure a quality education for all students
- Goal Planning - equips board members and administration to collaborate in setting goals to support the vision/mission of the district
- Advocacy - assists board members in their advocacy role representing students in public education (to the Nebraska Legislature)
- Conflict Resolution - provides board members with the necessary resources to assist when facing critical issues that may take the focus away from student learning and achievement
- Policy - supports board member's responsibility to set, review, and revise district policy
- Fiscal Accountability - support the board's role in collective bargaining and fiscal accountability by educating board members on programs and services that provide cost savings-benefits to the school district such as ALICAP, Community Engagement, Education Search Service, NJUMP/CJUMP, Negotiations Software, SPARQ Meetings, Unemployment Insurance Program, and Whole Child Project.

AWARDS OF ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM

“THROUGH LEADERSHIP, INNOVATION, VISION AND ENGAGEMENT, THE NEBRASKA ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL BOARDS PROVIDES PROGRAMS, SERVICES, AND ADVOCACY TO STRENGTHEN PUBLIC EDUCATION FOR ALL NEBRASKANS.”



Board Award Schedule

AWARD LEVEL	Award Points	Award
LEVEL I	50 – 149	NASB Board Standards/ Document Envelope/ Magnet Notepad/NASB Magnet
LEVEL II	150 – 249	NASB T-Shirt
LEVEL III	250 – 349	NASB Notes/Notebook
LEVEL IV	350 – 499	NASB Tumbler
LEVEL V	500 – 749	NASB Portfolio
LEVEL VI	750 – 999	NASB Messenger Bag
LEVEL VII	1,000 – 1,249	NASB Glass Paperweight
LEVEL VIII	1,250 – 1,499	NASB Rose Wood Plaque
LEVEL IX	1,500 – 1,999	NASB Glass Clock
LEVEL X	2,000 +	NASB Cut-Glass Award

2024 - 2025

Awards of Achievement Qualifying Activities

NASB Sponsored Learning Experience

Area Membership Meetings	15 points
Labor Relations Conference	15 points
Facilities & Construction Workshop	15 points
State Education Pre-Conference	10 points
State Education Conference	15 points
Presenter at NASB Conference	10 points
Moderator at State Conference	5 points
Participation in Mentor Program at State Conference	5 points
New Board Member Workshops	15 points
Legislative Issues Pre-Conference	10 points
Legislative Issues Conference	15 points
Legal Workshop(s)	15 points
Budget / Finance Workshops	15 points
Presidents' Retreat	15 points
School Leaders & Law Conference	15 points

Board Leadership

Board Leadership Programs and Services

NASB Board Retreat/Goal Planning	15 points
NASB Community Engagement	15 points
NASB Community Alignment	15 points
NASB Strategic Planning	15 points
NASB Strategic Planning – Phase II	15 points
NASB Online Board Self-Assessment Survey	10 points
NASB 360 Superintendent Evaluation	10 points
NASB Online Superintendent Evaluation	10 points
NASB Online Well-Being Survey	10 points
NASB Online Custom Survey (e.g. Facilities, Parent, Mascot, etc.)	10 points
NASB Staff Professional Development	10 points
M.A.B.E. Steering Committee	5 pts/mtg

NASB Programs and Services

ALICAP	10 points
CJUMP	10 points
Data Analytics/Feasibility Study	15 points
District Comparative Data Study	5 points
Education Search Service	10 points
Gallup StrengthsFinder	15 points
NJUMP	10 points
NLAF	10 points
Policy Customization	10 points
Policy Update Service	10 points
Sparq Meetings	10 points
Sparq Negotiations	10 points
Unemployment Insurance	10 points

**Points awarded for all Programs Services contracted prior to May 15th of the current points year except NLAF which has an ending contract date of Feb. 28*

NASB Advocacy

Legislative Committee Member	5 pts/mtg
Legislative Advocacy Event	5 pts
Legislative Proposal	10 points
<i>Award points granted to board member (s) who propose a legislative change to the legislation committee and/or new legislation</i>	
Legislative Engagement	5 points
Legislative Testimony on behalf of NASB	5 pts/testimony
Delegate Assembly	15 points
Federal Advocacy Event	20 points

National Sponsored Learning Experience

National Conference Attendance	20 points
National Conference Presenter	10 points
National Committee/Task Force	5 pts/mtg

Miscellaneous

Board Retreat	15 points
TeamMates Mentor	10 points
NASB Board of Director	5 pts/mtg

NASB President's Board Award Criteria

- All board members must attain a minimum of Level I Award
- Board must have a voting delegate participate in the Annual NASB Delegate Assembly
- Each member of the board must attend a minimum of (3) three of the following Learning Opportunities during the current points year (Aug. 1 through July 31):
 - NASB /NASA State Education Conference
 - NASB/NASA Labor Relations Conference
 - NASB Area Membership Meeting
 - NASB Budget & Finance Workshop
 - NASB Legislative Issues Conference
 - NASB School Leaders & Law Conference
 - National Conference (one per individual board member will count toward the board award)
- Board Retreat and Board Goals: Qualifications require that the full board participate in a board goal planning retreat/work session during the Award Year (Aug. 1 through July 31). The goals must be specific to improved board governance. Credit toward the Board Award is dependent upon the board submitting copies of the following documentation: board retreat minutes reflecting attendance of participating board members, and the board goals created.
- The total points accumulated by the board must equal a minimum of 1,000.
- The total points earned during the current Board Development year (by the individuals serving on the board as of July 31), must equal a minimum of 350.
- The deadline for earning the President's Board Award will be July 31, 2025. To be considered for the award, all changes to individual points must be submitted through CRM to the NASB office before July 15, 2025.

All boards who are recipients of a Board Award will be presented the award at their local Area Membership Meeting.

2024 - 2025 Awards of Achievement Program Year

August 1, 2024, through July 31, 2025, at 5:00 p.m. (Central Time)

Questions please contact: Shari Becker

1.800.422.4572 or sbecker@nasbonline.org

NASB Board of Excellence Criteria

- Board members must attain a minimum of Level I Award
- Board must have a voting delegate participate in the Annual NASB Delegate Assembly
- Members of the board must each attend a **minimum of (2) two** of the following Learning Opportunities during the current points year (Aug. 1 through July 31):
 - NASB /NASA State Education Conference
 - NASB/NASA Labor Relations Conference
 - NASB Area Membership Meeting
 - NASB Budget & Finance Workshop
 - NASB Legislative Issues Conference
 - NASB School Leaders & Law Conference
 - National Conference (one per individual board member will count toward the board award)
- Board Retreat and Board Goals: Qualifications require that the board participates in a board goal planning retreat/work session during the Award Year (Aug. 1 through July 31). The goals must be specific to improved board governance. Credit toward the Board Award is dependent upon the board submitting copies of the following documentation: board retreat minutes reflecting attendance of participating board members, and the board goals created.
- The total points accumulated by the board must equal a minimum of 1,000.
- The total points earned during the current Board Development year (by the individuals serving on the board as of July 31), must equal a minimum of 350.
- The Board of Excellence award may be awarded to boards who meet the above criteria with the exclusion of one board member, i.e., 5 of 6 board members for a six-member board; 8 of 9 board members for a nine-member board, etc.
- The deadline for earning the NASB Board of Excellence Award will be July 31, 2025. To be considered for the award, all changes to individual points must be submitted through CRM to the NASB office before July 15, 2025.

All boards who are recipients of a Board Award will be presented the award at their local Area Membership Meeting.

2024 - 2025 Awards of Achievement Program Year

August 1, 2024, through July 31, 2025, at 5:00 p.m. (Central Time)

Questions please contact: Shari Becker

1.800.422.4572 or sbecker@nasbonline.org

NASB BOARD QUICKS

A MONTHLY E-UPDATE OF KEY DATES FROM THE NEBRASKA ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL BOARDS



1,900,000 Nebraskans 329,000 Students 1,700 Locally Elected School Board Members 260 Member Districts/ESUs ONE NEBRASKA

To register for an NASB event, click on the 'My Membership' link, then navigate to the 'Events' dropdown and select 'Register'. If you do not have an email and password to log in or have forgotten it, please contact NASB at 402-423-4951 for assistance. All Dates & Locations Tentative & Subject to Change

JOIN US!

Events & Networking - <https://members.nasbonline.org/events>

See AMM photos now at <https://members.nasbonline.org/events/area-membership-meetings>



State Conference - Student Voices & Call for Moderators Due October 4 - email Sharon!

NASB Board Candidate Virtual Workshop - October 9 - 7:00 to 8:30 PM CT

Order your 2024 Nebraska Ed Laws Books by October 28 at <https://nasb.envisiams.com/membership/ne-ed-law-book>



Statewide General Election Day - November 5

Check out our Legislative Candidate Questionnaires at <https://members.nasbonline.org/government-relations/candidate-questionnaires-videos>

State Education Conference - November 20-22 - Omaha

NASB Delegate Assembly - November 22 - 8:00 AM - Omaha

Download your 'Delegate Handout' for the Delegate Assembly now at <https://members.nasbonline.org/government-relations>



Continued on Page 2



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NASB BOARD QUICKS

A MONTHLY E-UPDATE OF KEY DATES FROM THE NEBRASKA ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL BOARDS



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PAGE 2



2024 NEW BOARD MEMBER WORKSHOPS

CALL TO ORDER:
WELCOME TO THE BOARD TABLE

NORFOLK - KEARNEY - GERING - NORTH PLATTE - YORK - LA VISTA

New Board Member Workshops

- December 2 - Norfolk
- December 3 - Kearney
- December 4 - Gering
- December 5 - North Platte
- December 10 - York
- December 11 - La Vista

LEGISLATIVE ISSUES CONFERENCE
January 26-27, 2025 - Lincoln

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER WEEK
January 26 to February 1, 2025

PRESIDENT'S RETREAT
February 16-17, 2025 - Kearney

NAEP STATE CONVENTION
March 19-20, 2025 - Kearney

NASB MEMBER GOLF OUTING
June 11, 2025 - Kearney Country Club

SCHOOL LEADERS & LAW CONFERENCE
June 11-12, 2025 - Kearney

YOUR 2024 PLATINUM AFFILIATES

If your business would like to become an Affiliate Member of NASB, please visit: <https://members.nasbonline.org/about-us/affiliate-members>

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NASB BOARD NOTES

SEPTEMBER
2024

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION FROM THE NEBRASKA ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL BOARDS



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Snapshots



IN THIS EDITION OF BOARD NOTES

THIS MONTH IN ...

AT THE BOARD TABLE

THE 2024 STATE EDUCATION CONFERENCE

AREA MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS WRAP UP

SEARCHING FOR THE RIGHT LEADERSHIP FIT?

TEACHER/ADMINISTRATOR NEGOTIATIONS MADE EASY

GET TO KNOW YOUR LEGISLATIVE CANDIDATES

WHY IS INCIVILITY CONTINUING TO WORSEN IN AMERICA?

EHA WELCOMES NEW ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE

... AND MUCH MORE!

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THIS MONTH IN ...

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<https://members.nasbonline.org/>

THIS MONTH IN ...

A quick snapshot of the various programs, services, support and events NASB has planned for its members in the coming month!

ADVOCACY & GOVERNMENT RELATIONS ... During Area Meetings, we have emphasized the importance of pushing back on the narrative that high property taxes in Nebraska are primarily due to spending at the local level. We need you to share your unique, individual stories through letters to your Senators. Look for communication from your Board President and Superintendent on how to best engage, and how NASB can help. As always, stay engaged and informed! Call Colby & Matt with questions any time!

ALICAP & INSURANCE ... ALICAP Members! Reminder that all 2024-25 Premium Contributions are due September 30th. If your district/ESU has not yet paid, please do so ASAP. Welcome ALICAP's newest Members: Palmyra District OR-1, Allen Consolidated Schools, and Aurora Public Schools. ALICAP's Membership is now up to 210 Nebraska Public Schools and ESUs. Welcome to the Pool!

BOARD LEADERSHIP ... "At the Board Table" is on page 4. This space reflects recommended regular board meeting agenda items to include in your upcoming agenda. - Marcia, Katie, Caden, Stacie, Ben, Stephanie & McKenna!

DATA ANALYTICS ... Legislative changes are causing significant changes to local levies and state aid to local districts. As a Board Member, you should stay current with a knowledge of your own district's finances and demographics, along with the situation of your neighboring districts. NASB can collect data and illustrate the financial situation in your district to help you better inform your Legislators of your district's financial challenges for next winter's Unicameral session.

EDUCATION LEADERSHIP SEARCH SERVICE ... Will your district or ESU need a Superintendent or Administrator starting July 2025? Are you an applicant considering a specific position or two? We can prepare a proposal to outline the steps of a search process, answer questions about the process or talk to you about the vacancies we are facilitating. Give Shari a call.

ENERGY PURCHASING ... We are already fielding inquiries from districts wishing to sign up for our natural gas purchasing consortiums next Spring during the annual signup period. This can be one less item your Superintendent and Business Manager need to focus on each year since our market consultants watch the gas markets every day throughout the year to lock up supplies whenever buying opportunities occur. NJUMP and CJUMP are protected by having significant amounts of natural gas already purchased for the 2024-25 heating season to help districts stretch their financial resources.

FOUNDATION ... The Nebraska Public Leadership Foundation (NPLF) has created an annual scholarship program for high school seniors who are pursuing higher education to become a teacher in a Nebraska public school system. Please consider helping today's student leaders become tomorrow's education leaders by donating to the NPLF Student Scholarship Program at www.nepublicleadership.org

GALLUP STRENGTHS ... Do you have IDEATION and STRATEGIC in your Top Ten? When you need to do something or get somewhere, you consider all possibilities. And if none of the possibilities seem right, you create a new one. Contact Shari for information on scheduling a Gallup team retreat.

MEMBER ENGAGEMENT ... I'm looking forward to seeing you all at the State Education Conference in just 60 days!

NOW HIRING ... NASB is hiring a Board Leadership Associate! If you or someone you know might be interested in this position, visit our About Us page to learn more!

POLICY ... School safety is a huge issue these days. LB1329 allows boards to adopt an optional policy to create an emergency response map of school facilities for public agency use, such as local law enforcement, fire departments, and emergency medical services. Districts adopting such a policy will have state funding sources available to assist with the cost of creating and implementing these maps. If you'd like a copy of our optional Emergency Response Mapping Policy, contact Jim Luebbe.

TECHNOLOGY ... Welcome new Negotiations Subscribers: Elba Public Schools, Superior Public Schools, and Fillmore Central Public Schools. Read "Teacher/Administrator Negotiations Made Easy" on Page 8. Contact Darion or Nicole today!

TRAINING, NETWORKING, ENGAGEMENT & EVENTS



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Now Hiring! NASB is hiring a Board Leadership Associate ... visit the About Us page to learn more.



Area Membership Meetings began August 20

North Platte, Gering, Valentine, Kearney, York, Norfolk, Nebraska City ✓
September 24 - Omaha September 25 - Fremont



Labor Relations Conference - October 2-3 - Lincoln

NASB Board Candidate Virtual Workshop - October 9 - 7:00 to 8:30 PM CT



Statewide General Election Day - November 5

State Education Conference - November 20-22 - CHI Health Center Omaha

Delegate Assembly - November 22



New Board Member Workshops - December 2024

Norfolk - Kearney - Gering - North Platte - York - Omaha

2025 Legislative Issues Conference - January 26-27 - Lincoln

2025 School Board Member Week in Nebraska - January 26 to February 1

AT THE BOARD TABLE

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BOARD AGENDA ITEMS FOR YOUR MONTHLY MEETINGS

<https://members.nasbonline.org/board-leadership>



Each month, this space reflects recommended regular board meeting agenda items to include in the upcoming board meeting agenda. Please contact Marcia at mherring@NASBonline.org if you have questions or recommendations for improving the Board Meeting Annual Calendar.

OCTOBER BOARD AGENDA ITEMS

Please see the September 16th email from mherring@NASBonline.org and shiggins@NASBonline.org for the draft of the October Board Meeting Agenda. If you have questions or need us to resend the email, please feel free to contact Marcia at 402-450-5152 or Stacie at 402-209-1608.

NASB LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR BOARD CANDIDATES OR NEWLY APPOINTED/ELECTED BOARD MEMBERS

NASB Board Candidate Virtual Workshop - October 9th from 7:00 to 8:30 PM CT. You may access the Microsoft Teams Meeting by emailing Marcia Herring at mherring@NASBonline.org

State Conference Mentor-Mentee Session - Watch your Inbox for more information in the weeks to come.

NASB New Board Member Workshops

Monday, December 2 - Norfolk Country Club
Tuesday, December 3 - Kearney Holiday Inn
Wednesday, December 4 - Gering Civic Center
Thursday, December 5 - North Platte - Venue 304
Register by Monday, November 25, 2024

Tuesday, December 10 - York - Holthus Center
Wednesday, December 11 - La Vista Conference Center
Register by Thursday, December 5, 2024

Target Audience

Newly elected board members, appointed board members, experienced board members, ESU board members, Superintendents, ESU Administrators

Topics to be covered

NASB Board Governance Standards, Open Meetings Act, board meetings, board-superintendent communication, public comment, closed/executive session, conflict of interest, mission, vision, and goals, policy governance, community and stakeholder engagement, community alignment, student learning, NASB Annual Board Calendar, board committees, board self-assessment, superintendent evaluation, scenarios, board professional development

Awards of Achievement Points Earned: 15



THE 2024 STATE EDUCATION CONFERENCE

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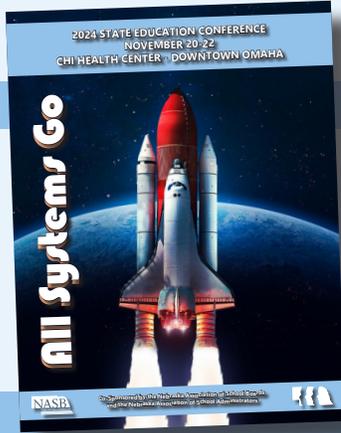
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<https://members.nasbonline.org/events/state-education-conference>

NOVEMBER 20-22 - CHI HEALTH CENTER - OMAHA

Registration is open now for the 2024 State Education Conference. You won't want to miss this annual event where over 1,000 school leaders and board members gather to learn and network. There will be two pre-conferences, three general sessions, 58 breakout sessions, over 100 vendors, and unlimited opportunities to grow in your role supporting public education.

Hotel room requests open at 10:00 AM CT on Wednesday, September 25. You must already be registered for Conference in order to participate in the hotel room booking process.

GET INVOLVED ... CLASSROOM SHOWCASE

This is an opportunity for students and teachers to demonstrate projects and programs that reflect the integration of technology in curriculum. The Classroom Showcase is scheduled for 8:00 to 11:30 AM, Friday, November 22, 2024. Contact Julie Moore at executivedirector@netasite.org with questions or to sign up.

GET INVOLVED ... STUDENT VOICES

Nominate a student from your district to participate in the panel discussion where they can offer their perspective on a variety of issues. Our goal for the session this year is to include students from all levels of High School achievement and participation. We would love to see some students that will pursue a 2-year degree, some that may enter the Military or workforce after graduation, in addition to those who plan to pursue a 4-year degree. Special consideration will be given to nominees who have overcome obstacles to be successful. This breakout session will take place Thursday, November 21 from 2:15 to 3:15 PM.

Visit <https://members.nasbonline.org/events/state-education-conference> to download the nomination form. Nominations should be emailed to Sharon Endorf at sendorf@NASBonline.org by October 4.

GET INVOLVED ... CALL FOR MODERATORS

Board members, superintendents, and administrators are invited to serve as breakout session moderators at the following times:

- Thursday, November 21 - 9:45 AM (A Sessions), 11:15 AM (B), 2:15 PM (C), 3:30 PM (D)
- Friday, November 22 - 9:15 AM (E), 10:30 AM (F)

Please email Sharon by October 4, if you would be interested in helping. All volunteers will receive 5 award points toward their Awards of Achievement. Thanks in advance for your help!

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS



AREA MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS WRAP UP

Leadership

Innovation

Vision

Engagement

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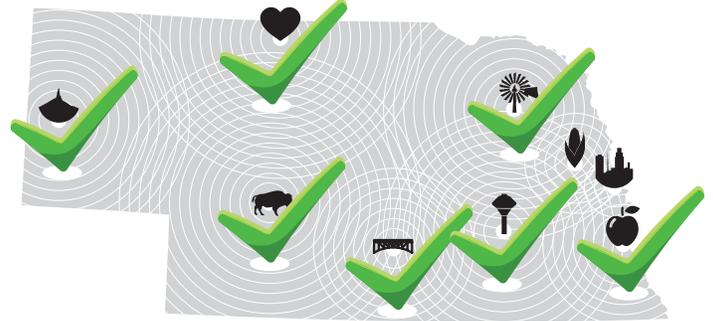
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<https://members.nasbonline.org/events/area-membership-meetings>

As we wrap up another year of Area Membership Meetings (join us in Omaha or Fremont this week), we have been able to recognize so many of you with both individual, and full board awards. Below are those individuals who have earned Levels VII through X this year, as well as the Boards who received the Board of Excelled Award, through our Awards of Achievement program.



CONGRATULATIONS TO THE LEVEL X RECIPIENTS FOR 2024

Wayne Erickson - ESU 2; Valerie Fisher - Papillion La Vista

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE LEVEL IX RECIPIENTS FOR 2024

Shaun Jensen - Holdrege; Richard Brabec - Schuyler
David Raabe - Wisner-Pilger

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE LEVEL VIII RECIPIENTS FOR 2024

Suzanne Sapp - Ashland-Greenwood; Garlyn Grosse - Cedar Bluffs
Lynette Mitchell - Elm Creek; Rodney Rayburn - ESU 16
Lisa Albers - Grand Island; Rick Hollendieck - Gretna
Craig Gana - Norris; Ken Winters - Plattsmouth
Allison Sandman - Wauneta-Palisade; Andy Grosshans - Waverly

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE LEVEL VII RECIPIENTS FOR 2024

Scott Erthum - Ainsworth; Matt O'Daniel - Arlington
Doris Martin - Beatrice; Janet Byars - Beatrice
Pam Holcomb - Broken Bow; Jason Richters - Centennial
Will Kemptar - Centura; Theresa Seipel - Columbus
Mary Scarborough - ESU 3; June Bowers - Falls City
Brian Copsey - Gering; Keith Runge - Lakeview
Jay Hall - Laurel-Concord-Coleridge; Deb Neidig - Madison
Tom J. Bredvick - McCook; Skip Altig - North Platte
Brandon Desh - Palmyra; Jean Karlen - Pender
Jayson Bishop - Perkins County; Elizabeth Kumru - Ralston
Chuck Misek - Schuyler; David Baxa - Twin River
Chris Cerveny - Wilber-Clatonia

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 1 PRESIDENT'S BOARD AWARD RECIPIENT FOR 2024

Gretna Public Schools
Greg Beach, Mark Hauptman, Rick Hollendieck, Kyle Janssen, Dawn Stock, & Blake Turpen

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 11 BOARD OF EXCELLENCE AWARD RECIPIENTS FOR 2024

Ainsworth Community Schools
David City Public Schools
ESU 3
Hershey Public Schools
Kenesaw Public Schools
Madison Public Schools
Norris School District 160
Osmond Community Schools
Palmer Public Schools
Ralston Public Schools
School District 145 - Waverly



View Photos at

<https://members.nasbonline.org/events/area-membership-meetings>

2024 AREA MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

Leadership - Training - Recognition - Networking - Vision

North Platte - Gering - Valentine - Kearney - York - Norfolk - Nebraska City - Omaha - Fremont

SEARCHING FOR THE RIGHT LEADERSHIP FIT?

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<https://members.nasbonline.org/programs-services/education-leadership-search-service>

One of the most important jobs you have as a board member is to hire and evaluate your ESU administrator or superintendent. We are entering the time of year when retirements are being announced and searches are beginning. This fall will be especially busy due to the number of interim superintendents placed late in the spring. As the vacancies are filled, we will see a domino effect throughout the state. Ideally, your leadership team will stay in place for many years, but with retirements, career advancements, etc. it is good to know who to call should the need arise.

The search process is a team effort at NASB with staff members specializing in leadership searches, board development, communications, marketing, and school law. The NASB search team is well equipped to manage the details of the search and will work together with the district to ensure a smooth and successful process from the viewpoint of a board member.

NASB SEARCH MISSION STATEMENT

Through a collaborative working relationship with the Board of Education and district, NASB Education Leadership Search Service ensures a highly professional search process designed to attract the very best applicants, and bring credit to the board for the manner in which the search is conducted.

The NASB search process begins with the development of a Leadership Profile. The Profile is initially developed based off feedback from board members. It serves to guide the selection of interview questions and the assessment of candidates.

NASB utilizes multiple avenues to recruit qualified individuals for each vacancy. One networking and recruiting opportunity is through our membership in the National Affiliation of Superintendent Searchers (NASS). Shari Becker, Director of the Education Leadership Search Service, is the Past Chair for this organization and has a direct connection to 39 other state School Board Associations for recruiting and reference support.

Applications are submitted through an online process that is also shared with multiple other states, giving us another opportunity to promote the position nationally. As applicants complete their materials, they are screened by NASB staff members who follow a detailed protocol. We believe it is essential for the board to understand the experience and leadership qualities each applicant possesses to ensure the right fit. Staff members will utilize both open session and closed session to share these qualities with the board.

The service does not stop once the administrator/superintendent has been hired. NASB provides a two-year guarantee for boards who complete a leadership team goal planning session with NASB, which is included in the search fee.

It is never too early to contact us for information on the search process if you are aware of an upcoming vacancy. We offer a unique process to each board, and we provide support through all stages of a search process.

Let NASB help you find the right match for your leadership vacancy.

For information regarding the application process or a proposal for your district or ESU, please contact Shari Becker, Director of Education Leadership Search Service, at 402-423-4951 or sbecker@NASBonline.org

TEACHER/ADMINISTRATOR NEGOTIATIONS MADE EASY

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<https://www.sparqdata.com/>

GAIN ACCESS TO THE LARGEST COLLECTION OF BARGAINING DATA, NEGOTIATED AGREEMENTS, REPORTS, AND REAL-TIME CALCULATIONS AND WORKFLOWS DESIGNED TO ANALYZE THE IMPACT OF CHANGES TO BENEFITS AND COMPENSATION WHEN BARGAINING.

The negotiating season is here, and it's time to start preparing you and your district for what's to come at the bargaining table. With Sparq Negotiations, you have real-time access to the largest, most comprehensive negotiating tool in the state of Nebraska. Salaries are a top expenditure every year, so make the negotiations process successful and easy!

Sparq Negotiations provides you the tools necessary to stay competitive in your array, remain ahead of the game, and achieve successful negotiations. It provides the resources and knowledge to gain a strategic advantage in all stages of the negotiation process by providing real-time, quick-change calculations while comparing peer districts in your array, which saves tremendous amounts of time in the process! Say goodbye to the days of manual calculation with this user-friendly platform. Schools can run studies of any school in the state and see the comparison reports from other districts. This allows you and your board to work from more accurate data to settle negotiations fair and fast!



To learn more, schedule a demo, and see how Sparq Negotiations can make your life easier, contact Darion Miller at 800-422-4572, or email dmiller@sparqdata.com today!

GET TO KNOW YOUR LEGISLATIVE CANDIDATES

<https://members.nasbonline.org/government-relations/candidate-questionnaires-videos>

Prior to the November 2024 election, Nebraska's 1,700 locally elected school board members are eager to learn more about the views and opinions of their fellow elected leaders and candidates running for the Legislature, as well as the State Board of Education. In addition to Legislative Meet & Greets across the state, we have asked all Legislative Candidates to answer five open-ended questions regarding their thoughts on local governance and education related issues. Topics include: Local Control, School Funding, The Role of Education in the State, Educational Workforce, & Mandates.

Legislative Candidate Questionnaires

SURVEYS ARE POSTED AS RECEIVED AT:

<https://members.nasbonline.org/government-relations/candidate-questionnaires-videos>

NASB does not endorse candidates and does not make recommendations to members, or anyone, on whom to support for election. NASB may, from time to time, provide opportunities for candidates for elected office to meet with or communicate with its membership. Any NASB event allowing candidates for office to meet or communicate with its membership should not be considered a direct or passive endorsement of any candidate.

2024 LABOR RELATIONS - OCTOBER 2-3

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<https://members.nasbonline.org/events>

Wednesday, October 2

Preconference Workshop: The ABCs of Negotiations with The Perry Law Firm

The single biggest part of a school district's budget is personnel costs. Salaries and benefits alone usually represent around 90% of a district's total expenses. Therefore, it is absolutely essential that a district understand the negotiation process and legal requirements in order to ensure that these expenses are a reasonable and good use of taxpayer dollars. In this session, we will walk through the negotiation process and offer practical suggestions, including specific items to consider heading into the 2025-26 negotiations timeline.

Social: After the Preconference, head down a few blocks into the Haymarket to Tomahawks Axe Throwing for some thrilling, safe, and social entertainment.

Thursday, October 3

Keynote: From Chaos to Clarity: How to be your best when things are at their worst with Marianne Renner
Today's new world is bringing more chaos and uncertainty than ever before. New challenges and constant change can take a toll on performance. How do you show up and bring your very best even during the most trying times? Get inspired and learn tools to get the best out of yourself and those around you.

Concurrent Session Topics Include: Wages and Payment Collection; Negotiations and Arrays; Retirement; EHA Health Care Member Support; HR Hot Topics; Legal Updates; Workers Comp; FLSA; Federal Labor Case Law; Superintendent Role in Board Relations; And More!

For more information and to register go to

<https://members.nasbonline.org/events/labor-relations-conference>



WHAT'S NEW AT NASBONLINE.ORG

Candidate Questionnaires

<https://members.nasbonline.org/government-relations/candidate-questionnaires-videos>

Area Membership Photos

<https://members.nasbonline.org/events/area-membership-meetings>

Education Leadership Search Service Updates

<https://members.nasbonline.org/ells>

Government Relations Updates for 2025

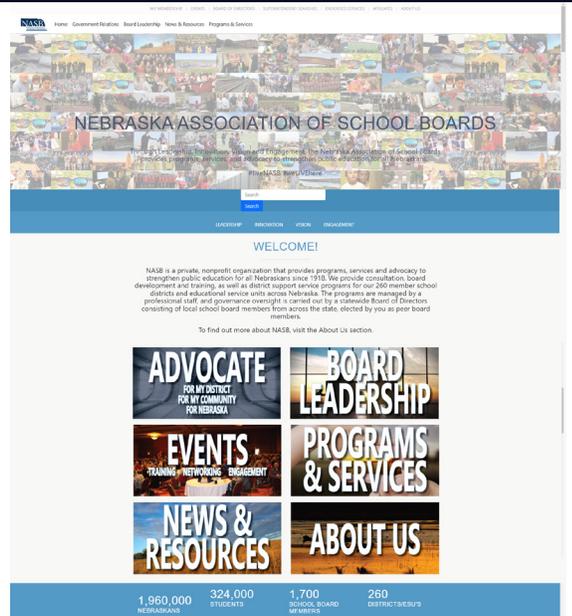
<https://members.nasbonline.org/government-relations>

2025 Event Dates and Locations Added

<https://members.nasbonline.org/events>

NASB's Endorsed Services

<https://members.nasbonline.org/endorsed-services>



WHY IS INCIVILITY CONTINUING TO WORSEN IN AMERICA?

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Prior to her election to the State Board of Education in November 2020, Patti Gubbels served on the Norfolk Board of Education, and was a member of the NASB Board of Directors, and the NASB Legislation Committee since 2016.



Merriam-Webster defines incivility as rude behavior or remarks that are not in keeping with civility. Although incivility and uncivilized are similar words, they do not mean the same thing. To be uncivil means being savagely cruel and primitive. Incivility relates to rude speech, but it also includes rude or unsocial behaviors like looting, bumping into a person without apologizing, and sabotaging someone else's work.

Weber Shandwick, one of the world's most prominent public relations firms surveyed attitudes of American citizens about civility yearly from 2010 through 2019. Results of the Civility in America Report (2019) reveal that over 90% of those surveyed are profoundly concerned about the level of incivility in our culture, believe the incidence of incivility is worsening, and eight in ten of Americans surveyed believe the risks of incivility to society are high.

“ .. over 90% of those surveyed are profoundly concerned about the level of incivility in our culture ...”

My sense is that if Weber Shandwick conducted a survey today, the results would continue the trend of increasing incivility in our country. This begs the question “why is incivility continuing to worsen in America?” Research shows that there are numerous possibilities. Consider how much we rely on technology rather than people, how nothing is simple anymore, how we are overloaded with information, and how our culture has come to implicitly condone incivility.

We live in a world that relies increasingly on the use of AI and other forms of technology which reduce connectivity with other humans. Think about how you feel when you call customer service to help solve a problem. An automated customer service agent answers, puts you on hold for an extended time listening to the same music over and over, which is usually not a soothing tune. After waiting and waiting, you are disconnected. Something that seems like it should be simple to do through human conversation becomes complex and frustrating. Or consider that with constant access to information sources such as email, social media, and 24-hour television news it becomes difficult to unplug. Our culture change, in general, has led to a lack of respect, politeness, and dignity.

Our world is so complex that many problems lack a clear definition, have conflicting values or perspectives, involve multiple stakeholders, lack right or wrong answers, and can only be solved with collaboration and compromise. With so many kinds of stressors, individuals are more likely to react with anger, frustration, and hostility.

The 2019 Civility in America Survey results show the societal consequences of incivility. Respondents indicated that they believe incivility leads to increased online and in-person bullying, harassment, intimidation, and intolerance. In addition, surveyed individuals feel less safe in public places, experience more isolation, and are less engaged in their communities.

I am especially concerned, as an education policy maker, about the risks of incivility to our society and government because it leads to a lack of trust, cynicism, and polarization. Incivility contributes to voter alienation, antagonism, or hostility. When hostility, anger, lack of trust and cynicism are directed toward government officials, incivility has the potential to negatively affect the ability to function as a government and distracts and prevents effective decision making.

It is important that we make civility a priority for the sake of our society and that we use strategies that counter incivility such as analyzing emotions evoked by rude remarks and responding in a rational rather than emotional way, attacking the problem, not the person even when subjected to incivility. Finding common ground because often incivility comes from a shared concern, and modeling professionalism even in emotionally demanding situations that eat at the soul.

Editor's Note: The opinions expressed in the column are those of Patti Gubbels and do not necessarily represent the Nebraska State Board of Education.

EHA WELCOMES NEW ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE

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New School Year Brings Transitions: EHA welcomes new account executive



The Educators Health Alliance (EHA) is pleased to announce that Cortney Ray will be returning to serve as its Account Representative for Blue Cross Blue Shield of Nebraska.

"The EHA Board is delighted to welcome Cortney to the team serving Nebraska educators and their families in support of their health care plan needs," said Board Chair Trish Guinan. "Cortney brings two decades of health insurance experience to her new position with BCBSNE. Her knowledge of the EHA plan is substantial and will benefit our members and their families."

Cortney previously served as a BCBSNE leader supporting the EHA from 2015-2022. She joins a team of experts working to support the EHA. That team includes BCBSNE's Emily Tobias, the Senior Regional Service Representative for the EHA. Tobias is a former teacher who served as a member of the NSEA Board of Directors. Also working to support EHA members and their families with their health care plan is EHA Field Representative Greg Long.

Contact Cortney at cortney.ray@nebraskablue.com - Emily at emily.tobias@nebraskablue.com - and Greg at greg@ehaplan.org



Paul Grieger
Managing Director,
Public Finance
402-392-7986
pgrieger@dadco.com



Cody Wickham
Senior Vice President,
Public Finance
402-392-7989
cwickham@dadco.com



Andy Forney
Senior Vice President,
Public Finance
402-392-7988
aforney@dadco.com

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D.A. Davidson & Co. has long been a leader in innovative debt financing for school districts. What we're most proud of are the relationships we've nourished and the strong community improvements that are made as a result.

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We specialize in crafting educational spaces that honor the distinctive essence of every school, adapt seamlessly to evolving teaching methods, and elevate academic achievements. Through thoughtful design developed in a collaborative process, each school building can be a springboard for success. **Rather than following fleeting fads, we prioritize research and evidence-based approaches in our design process.**

GOOD DESIGN MATTERS



48% more participation in classroom discussion in classrooms with collaborative group seating.

Study by University of Minnesota



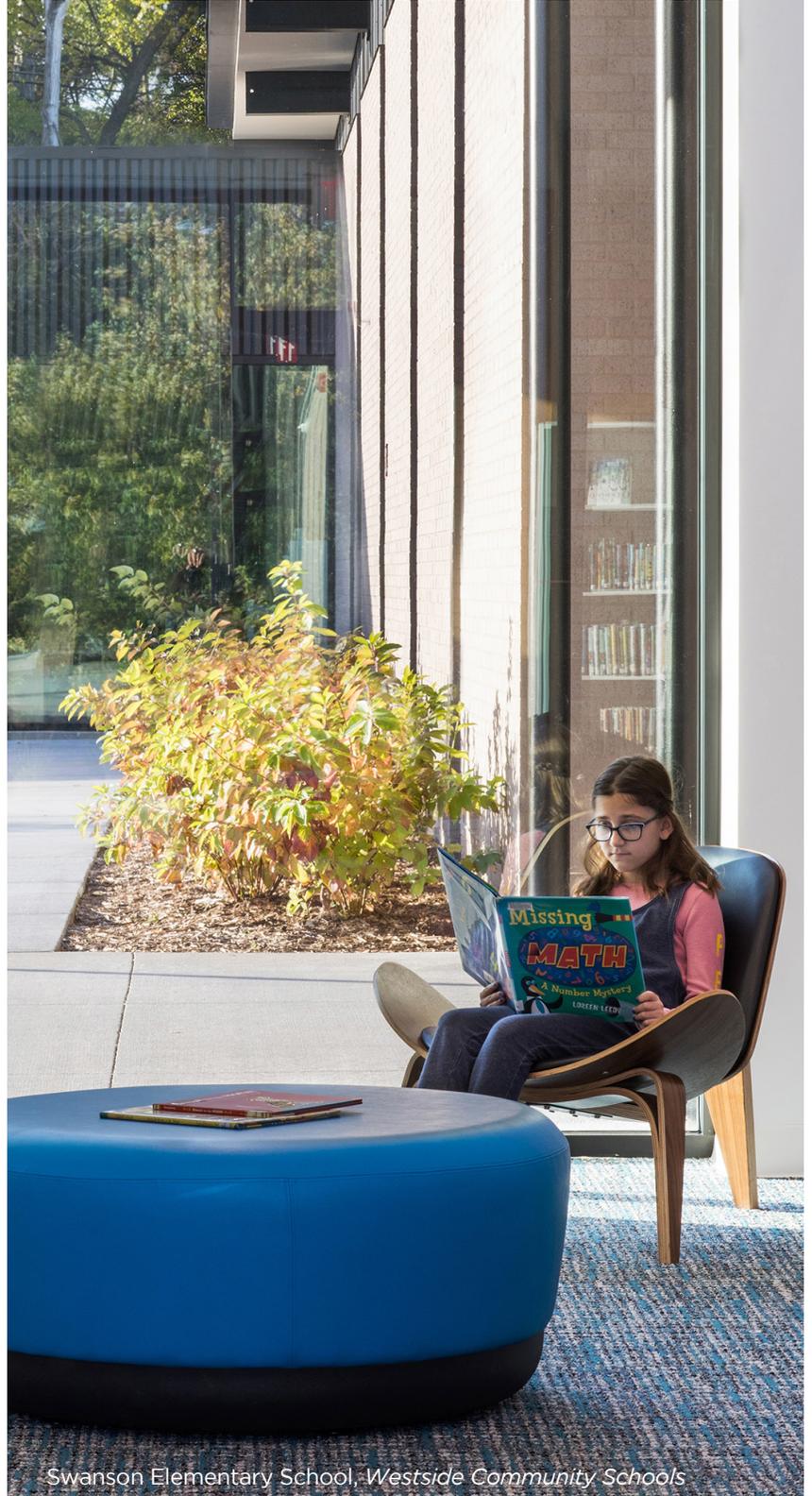
55% less risk of developing various mental disorders later in life when students have more access to green space.

Study by Aarhus University in Denmark



26% improved learning rate in reading with daylighting in classrooms.

U.S. Dept of Ed



Swanson Elementary School, Westside Community Schools

alleypoyner.com

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<https://members.nasbonline.org/board-of-directors>



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Region 4 - Elizabeth Kumru
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<https://members.nasbonline.org/about-us/nasb-staff>



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Executive Director



Nate Alspaugh
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and Support Specialist



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Megan Boldt
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YOUR 2024 PLATINUM AFFILIATES

YOUR 2024 GOLD AFFILIATES

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BCDM Architects
PLATINUM LEVEL AFFILIATE

BVH Architecture
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Carlson West Povondra Architects
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Nebraska Liquid Asset Fund
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Opa! Food Management

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Blue Cross Blue Shield of Nebraska
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National Insurance Services

Public Risk Management/ALICAP
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Creative Sites, LLC
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Cunningham Recreation/GameTime

Fisher Tracks, Inc.

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Master's Transportation
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NASB BOARD NOTES

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION FROM THE NEBRASKA ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL BOARDS

SEPTEMBER 2024



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The NASB provides programs, services and advocacy to strengthen public education for all Nebraskans. Learn more at www.NASBonline.org