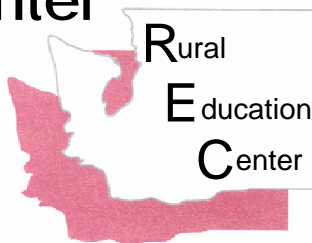


The Rural Education Center

Newsletter



Fall 2004
Issue #1
03-04

Jim Kowalkowski, Director

Websites to check out:

National Rural Education Association:
<http://www.nrea.net>

The Rural School and Community Trust:
<http://www.ruraledu.org>

The 96th Annual National Rural Ed. Association Conference will be Oct. 19-22 in Indianapolis, Indiana. Visit www.nrea.net for more information.

Updates

Please share copies of this newsletter with those folks in your district and/or organization who might be interested in this information. Don't forget to give each of your school board members a copy also. Hopefully, you will find this information relevant, timely, and useful.

Mark Your Calendars

The annual WASA Small Schools Conference will be held **March 6-8, 2005** in Yakima. The location of this conference is being moved to the Yakima Convention Center. WASA will be sending out flyers later in the school year with more information. Mark your calendars now and plan to attend another excellent conference.

Please do not hesitate to contact the Rural Education Center if you need assistance. Best wishes for a successful school year!

Special Thanks to Martin Boyle

Martin is the superintendent for the Index School District. He has served as the chairman of the Rural Education Center for the past several years and was elected at the REC summer meeting to serve again in this role. Martin is a strong advocate for our rural schools, having also served on the WASA Small Schools Committee as well as being a contributor to the publication: *Achieving Small School Success in Washington State*. Thank you Martin for all of your work on behalf of small and rural schools.

Larry Keller: Chair Elect!

Larry Keller, superintendent of the Mansfield School District, is the REC chair-elect. He will serve as the chairman for the 2004-05 school year. Thank you Larry, we look forward to working with you.

Be Sure to Attend the WSSDA Annual Conference

Special Sessions for Small Schools—Bring your board members!

If you have not done so yet, be sure to register for the WSSDA annual conference to be held in Spokane this November. The Rural Education Center has assisted WSSDA in offering several sessions aimed specifically for small school districts. On Thursday, November 11, there will be a 3-hour networking session for small and rural school districts. Other sessions specifically targeted for folks from small districts include: "Higher Education in Small Schools: Lessons from the Field"; "When Bargaining Gets Tough: Preventing Shattered Relationships in Small Districts"; "Positive Media Relations for Small Schools"; "Highly Qualified Teachers: What this Means to Small Schools"; "Grant Writing for Small Schools"; and "Do Small & Medium Sized Districts Have Diversity Issues?". For more information and to register on-line, go to: <http://www.wssda.org>.

This newsletter is published by the Rural Education Center with assistance from Washington State University's College of Education at in Pullman, WA. The Rural Education Center address is:

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The Rural Ed Center Newsletter

Practitioners' Workshops a Success!

The Rural Ed Center, WSU, and OSPI joined forces again this summer and fall to offer two Small Schools Practitioners' Workshops. Staff from school districts were given time and support to work on their respective School Improvement Plans and other projects. Districts participating in the June workshop were Touchet, Klickitat, Kalama, Keller, Pomeroy, and Wishkah Valley. District participants in the September workshop were Klickitat, Castle Rock, Wishkah Valley, and Mary M. Knight. A special thank you to Barbara Diment, Title V Program Supervisor at OSPI for her work on getting the funding to sponsor the costs for these workshops.

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For information on how to join the Rural Ed Center, contact:
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We're on the Web!

See us at:

<http://ruraledcenter.wsu.edu/>

Note: We are still working on upgrading this website. Stay tuned for updates and developments.

Program support provided by:
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Plans Underway for June & September 2005 Practitioners' Workshops

The REC is working with OSPI to hopefully continue offering practitioners workshops for small and rural districts. **Tentative** dates for the June 2005 workshop are June 19, 20, & 21. We also hope to offer a follow-up workshop sometime in September 2005. Please stay tuned for more updates. If you would like more information on these future workshops, please contact Jim Kowalkowski at (509) 843-3393 or by e-mail: jkowalkowski@psd.wednet.edu.

Re-establishing "RenGrants": The Journey Continues

The Rural Education Center will once again be working hard to support legislation to re-establish the emergency school repair program. Representative Don Cox plans to help re-introduce a bill that will create a grant program to help school districts pay for nonrecurring cost associated with urgent facilities repair and renovation. During the last legislative session, HB 3110 passed out of House Education but died in House Capital Budget. WAMOA (Washington Association of Maintenance & Operations Administrators) has "signed on" to support "RenGrant" legislation. It's not too early to contact your legislators and ask them to help re-establish this important program. A special thanks needs to go to Mitch Deming representing WAMOA. Mitch is a retired superintendent that some of you may know. His commitment to help get RenGrants re-established is very much appreciated. Stay tuned for more information!

I-884 Flyer

Included with this newsletter is a flyer that the Citizens for the Education Trust Fund sent to the Rural Education Center. The flyer gives some specific information about this important initiative. On the back of the flyer is a list of the school districts that are members of the Rural Education Center. The I-884 folks complied information on the one-time distribution that districts will receive, along with the funding that I-884 will provide for the 2005-06 school year. If you have specific questions about the enclosed I-884 flyer, please contact the Citizens for the Education Trust Fund at:
PO Box 1727, Seattle, WA 98111
Phone: (206) 728-6448
Website: <http://www.i884.com>

The Rural School & Community Trust

If you are looking for an informative website on the numerous issues that small schools are dealing with, check out the Rural School & Community Trust website: <http://www.ruraledu.org>.

Here is a listing of some of the recent reports available on this site:

"Fact Sheet: Most Rural Students Left Behind Under Department of Education's New *Flexibility* Rules Regarding Highly Qualified Teachers"

"New Report Finds Significant Benefits of Distance Learning in Rural Education"

"Dollars and Sense: Small Schools Work and They're Cost Effective"