

RURAL EDUCATION CENTER

WHO WE ARE

The Rural Education Center (REC) is a statewide cooperative of small and rural school districts committed to achieving the highest quality of learning on behalf of children in our schools. The REC provides support and information to superintendents, building administrators and school board members who serve small and/or rural school districts.

The guiding philosophy of the REC recognizes that the unique culture of small and rural schools presents challenges to school leaders, teachers and students. At the same time, the opportunities provided by small and rural schools are significant and important to society at large.

**SUPPORTING
SMALL AND RURAL
DISTRICTS**



HISTORY OF THE REC

The Rural Education Center (REC) was established in 1987. The idea of the REC came out of a Washington Association of School Administrators (WASA) Small Schools Committee. The need for a research-based service organization had been discussed for many years.

As a public research university committed to its land-grant heritage and tradition of service to society, the College of Education at Washington State University decided to partner with a group of small school districts to help advance the needs of small and rural districts in our state. The original concept was then further developed by Dr. Brian Talbott, who at the time was Superintendent of ESD 101, and Dr. Ray Smith, the inaugural director, with advice and encouragement from WASA's Small Schools Committee.

Originally the major task for the REC was the development of a database addressing a variety of subjects. It consisted of financial reports, staffing and program information. The first years were spent compiling and sharing studies on subjects of interest to small schools including, Cooperation vs. Consolidation, In-Service needs, Small School funding formula, Student Course selection, Drop-out rates of Small Schools, and others.

As the Directorship has changed so has the focus of the Center. To date REC has become an increasingly important voice at the State level for small and rural schools. State associations and legislative bodies hold REC in high regard when asked for information on issues affecting small and rural schools across Washington.



College of

Education

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY



WHAT WE DO

Policy Advocacy, Information Exchange, and Leadership Networking:

Appointed by Governor to serve as a member of the Basic Education Funding Task Force

Appointed by the state Legislature to serve as a member of the Compensation Technical Working Group

Served as a member of the State Committee to Review the Levy Equalization Formulas

HB 1139 – Named the Rural Ed. Center at WSU to be one of the key partners with The WSAC (Student Achievement Council) to submit a report on the field placement of student teachers with strategies on increasing the recruitment and retention of candidates in rural and remote school districts

Invited by legislative committees to present information on small and rural schools in our state

Provided testimony on numerous educational bills at the request of legislators

Partnered with ESD 113 to publish a “Research Brief” on Rural School Graduation Rates in WA State

Partnered with several organizations to successfully keep the small high enhanced funding in place

REC Director served on the recent WASA “Hold Harmless” workgroup which helped result in additional funding from the 2019 Legislature

Presentation to the Senate Ways & Means Committee – March 2019 – “Perspectives from Small & Rural Districts” – focus on financial impacts of recent legislation

Successful in getting Rural Satellite Skill Center Bill (ESSB 5874) sponsored & passed with 100% yes votes in House & Senate – 2019 Legislature

Op-Ed “Beyond McCleary: We now have more loser than winners” published in The Spokesman-Review - July, 2018

Op-Ed “Rural school districts do a good job of serving students, community” published in The Seattle Times – March, 2010

Strong collaboration with the WASA Small Schools Committee and the WSSDA Small Schools Task Force

The REC consistently has a strong presence during each legislative session

REC Director serves on the WASA Legislative & Finance Committee

GOALS

Strengthening partnership and engagement between the REC and WSU will allow for new avenues of support and innovation:

- Expanding the Role of REC and its Director
- Exploring New Research Projects
- Increasing involvement at both the State and National Levels
- ... and more



MEMBERSHIP

75 member school districts,
seven ESDs, and several
organizations

ELEVEN MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

- Association of Washington School Principals
- ESD 101 - NorthEast
- ESD 105
- ESD 112
- ESD 113 - Capital Region
- ESD 114 - Olympic
- ESD 123
- ESD 171 - North Central
- Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction
- Washington Association of School Administrators
- Washington State School Directors' Association

SEVENTY-FIVE MEMBER DISTRICTS

- Almira | Benge | Boistfort
- Brewster | Bridgeport
- Cle Elum-Roslyn | Colfax Colton
- | Columbia SD #206 Crescent |
- Creston | Curlew Damman |
- Davenport | Dayton Dixie |
- Easton | Eatonville Entiat |
- Freeman | Glenwood
- Grapeview | Great Northern
- Harrington | Hood Canal
- Inchelium | Kahlotus
- Keller | Kittitas | Klickitat
- Lacrosse | Liberty | Lyle
- Mansfield | Manson
- Mary Walker | Methow Valley
- Morton | Oakesdale | Odessa
- Omak | Onion creek | Orient
- Orondo | Oroville | Palisades
- Palouse | Paterson | Pomeroy
- Prescott | Pullman | Quilcene
- Quincy | Rainier
- Reardan-Edwall | Republic
- Lind-Ritzville | Skykomish
- Soap Lake | South Bend
- St. John/Endicott | Starbuck
- Stehekin | Steptoe
- Stevenson-Carson | Tekoa
- Tonasket | Trout Lake | Valley
- Waitsburg | Waterville | Wilbur
- Wilson Creek | Wishram