Welcome!

- We will begin promptly at 2:00 pm ET.
- For the best Adobe Connect experience, close other windows while participating in this webinar.
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Connections & Conversations:
Ensuring Access to Excellent Educators in Rural Schools

April 15, 2016 | 2:00 – 3:15 pm ET
EASN Session Facilitators

Dr. Rose Honey
Rural Access Issues and Support CoP Lead

Bill Horwath
Content Lead
Session Agenda

• Introduction & EASN Overview | 5 min.
• Session Agenda & Objectives | 5 min.
• State Policy Responses to Ensuring Excellent Educators in Rural Schools | 15 min.
• Shortage Predictor Model: Missouri SEA | 12 min.
• Growing Your Own - Highlighting the Lake and Peninsula Borough Schools: Alaska SEA | 12 min.
• Teacher Training & Incentives for Teacher Retention: Maine SEA | 12 min.
• Question & Answer | 5-10 min.
• Closing | 5 min.
Session Objectives

Webinar participants will:

• Discuss and examine strategies to address common problems related to access to and retention of excellent educators in rural communities.

• Identify State-specific strategies for addressing equity gaps in a rural setting, with a focus on growth predictor models, grow your own programs, and methods for addressing teacher retention.

• Communicate needs and questions related to rural access issues and supports to the EASN Rural Community of Practice (CoP).
A Quick Poll

What do you see as the biggest hurdles for ensuring access to excellent educators in rural schools?

(please mark up to 3 options)
State Policy Responses to Ensuring Excellent Educators in Rural Schools

Dr. Doug Gagnon
Research Associate
Carsey School of Public Policy
University of New Hampshire
Rural School Staffing

Research has documented that rural teachers are:

1. Less likely to hold a master’s degree (Provasnik et al., 2007) or to have attended a selective college (Gibbs, 2000)

2. More likely to teach out-of-field (Lazarus, 2003) and to be a novice teacher (Gagnon & Mattingly, 2014)
Rural school staffing challenges:

- More remote
- Often small
- More likely to be poor

A review of the literature suggests that there are a number of strategies tailored to address rural school staffing challenges.
Rural School Staffing

I organized rural-specific staffing strategies into four domains:

1. “Grow your own”
2. Financial incentives
3. Communities of practice
4. Capacity building
Rural School Staffing: Grow Your Own

• Aims to develop the existing talent pool in rural areas

• Assumption: Individuals who grow up and have positive experiences in a rural community are more likely to stay to teach in a rural school

• GYOs include:
  • Introducing education careers to promising rural high school students
  • Partnering with universities to establish rural-specific coursework, multiple-subject certification programs, and rural student-teaching placements
  • Retraining of service-oriented professionals (e.g. ex-military) and current school paraprofessionals to become classroom teachers
Rural School Staffing: Financial Incentives

• Monetary or in-kind rewards
• Rural teachers make nearly $10,000 less per year than urban and suburban teachers, controlling for experience and degree level (Player, 2015)
• Net migration of teachers from rural to suburban districts (Miller, 2012)
• Financial Incentives may take many forms:
  • Increasing base pay/changing funding structures
  • Signing/retention bonuses
  • Housing stipends
  • Loan Forgiveness
Rural School Staffing: Communities of Practice

• Develops in-service teachers
• The isolation and small size of many rural communities create unique challenges for helping rural teachers develop
• Rural-specific CoPs include:
  • Mentoring and induction programs
  • Distance learning
  • Rural school partnerships
Rural School Staffing: Capacity Building

- Any initiative aimed at providing supports, resources, technical expertise, or other services to rural schools
- I use this category as a catch-all
- Examples often include supports to human resource efforts in small and understaffed rural districts, which lack the time, resources, and analytic capacity to adopt more sophisticated practices of teacher recruitment and hiring
Rural School Staffing: Quick Poll

Please rank the four categories from most viable/promising to least viable/promising in your State or the States that you work with (with 1 being the most viable/promising):

- “Grow your own”
- Financial incentives
- Communities of practice
- Capacity building
Research Questions

How many States analyze teacher equity gaps across rurality and/or propose rural staffing solutions?

Are more rural States more likely to do so?

Are there innovative proposed strategies worth studying?
Findings

Number of States Examining Rural Equity Gaps and Proposing Rural-Specific Solutions in State Equity Plans

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>States</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Both Gaps Examined, Rural-Specific Policy Solutions</td>
<td>14</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gaps Examined, Only</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural-Specific Policy Solutions, Only</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither Gaps Examined, Rural-Specific Policy Solutions</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Findings

Equity gaps examined across urbanicity

Equity gaps not examined across urbanicity

Rural-specific strategies proposed

Did not submit a plan
Findings

Percentage of States Proposing Grow Your Own, Financial Incentives, Communities of Practice, and Capacity Building

- Grow Your Own: 21%
- Financial Incentives: 28%
- Communities of Practice: 17%
- Capacity Building: 30%
1. The practice of using data to drive rural staffing policy is beginning to emerge.

2. There is variability in how states are approaching rural staffing issues.

3. It is important to study the effectiveness of current strategies.

Please type your responses into the chat box.
Please type your questions into the chat box.
State Guest Speakers: Missouri

A Shortage Predictor Model

Ms. Andrea Dixon-Seahorn
Special Consultant for Equitable Education-Office of Educator Quality, Missouri Dept. of Elementary & Secondary Education

Dr. Paul Katnik
Assistant Commissioner, Missouri Dept. of Elementary & Secondary Education
Why was the Shortage Predictor Model (SPM) Created?

• Created in response to the imbalance of teacher supply/demand in hard-to-staff content areas and geographic locations

• Designed to pin-point where shortages will likely occur by region and certification area, across the state

• Developed in collaboration with Regional Educational Laboratory Central (REL Central) at Marzano Research Laboratory and Center on Great Teachers & Leaders
How does the Shortage Predictor Model work?

- Data was collected in Spring 2014 from school districts to simulate a 5-year projection (2014-2019) of shortages and surpluses, in three critical regions of the State.

- A Shortage Index (SI) was created to reflect the percentage of teachers who are less-than-fully qualified, and perceptual ratings of teacher supply on a 5-pt. scale: Considerable surplus (1) to Considerable shortage (5).

- Statistical methods were used to project shortages in subject areas of: Science, Mathematics, English Language Learners, and World Languages.
Missouri Teacher Shortage Area Map

- Counties with 10 or more certification areas lacking qualified teachers
- Counties with 5-9 certification areas lacking qualified teachers
- Counties with 4 or fewer certification areas lacking qualified teachers
Teacher Shortage Area Map

- Counties with 10 or more certification areas lacking qualified teachers
- Counties with 5-9 certification areas lacking qualified teachers
- Counties with 4 or fewer certification areas lacking qualified teachers

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What are the next steps for the Shortage Predictor Model?

• Still in its infancy stage, the SPM may require the latest data available from school districts to ensure accuracy of predictions, in order to shore up educator pipeline – particularly in rural remote regions of the State

• Institutions of Higher Ed, LEAs, & SEA utilize current data trends & Annual Teacher Shortage Report to guide recruitment and retention efforts

• The credibility of the Shortage Predictor Model continues to be tested over time
Shortage Predictor Model

How do our Equity Plan Goals address rural teacher shortages?

- **Goal C.4. Identifies** - Gaps, Root Causes, Strategies, Metrics

- **Missouri Equity Lab** - Cohort I, 8 participating LEAs, 3 of which were rural, learned how to develop *District Equity Plans*

- **Rural Equity Conference** - Convening of rural school districts and COE faculty on the campus of *Southeast Missouri State University*, to discuss solutions to teacher workforce issues in rural school communities, such as “Grow Your Own”

- **Equity Committees** - Address content areas and geographic locations in highest need, and study possible teacher incentives to attract teacher candidates to rural settings
Please type your questions into the chat box.
State Guest Speaker: Alaska

Growing Your Own: Highlighting the Lake and Peninsula Borough Schools

Ms. Cecilia Miller
Alaska Dept. of Education & Early Development

Mr. Ty Mase
Superintendent
Lake and Peninsula Borough Schools
Grow Your Own in Alaska

- **Engaging High School Students**
  - Future Educators of Alaska
  - Alaska Native Science & Engineering Program

- **Accessing Teacher Preparation**
  - Student Education Scholarship Programs
  - Preparing Indigenous Teachers & Administrators for Alaskan Schools
  - Alternative Certification Programs

- **Providing Pathways for Paraprofessionals to be Teachers**
  - Training Educators for Achieving Certificated Hire Fluent Native Language Speakers (LKSD)

- **Sharing Districts’ Career Ladder Initiatives**
  - Educational Leadership, Special Education, Secondary Math, Early Childhood Education and English Language Learners

- **Expanding Student Internships in Remote Rural Schools**
  - Targeting Student Success with Tutoring (LPSD)
Lake and Peninsula - Our District

- 12 isolated villages located along the Alaska Peninsula
- Encompasses an area about **300 miles south and west of Anchorage**
- Access to our villages is extremely limited.
- Three of Alaska’s major **Native ethnic groups** are found here: Yupik Eskimo, Athabascan Indian, and Aleut.
- 1,631 people are scattered across our Borough
- Approximately **315 students in attendance**
- Our student population in LPSD is 90% Alaska Native
- Many of our schools are small two teacher sites with 10 to 20 K-12 students.
- Our schools offer a **performance-based education to multiple grade levels**
- Our solution for teacher retention came through an **RTI tutoring initiative** that was started eight years ago.

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**Onsite Tutoring/Intervention**

### HOW IT WORKS:
- The majority of our tutors are recruited in the Fall and come for the Spring semester.
- Most are December graduates – all are certified educators.
- We provide travel, an induction, shopping help, no-cost housing, approximately $20 an hour, and an experience of a lifetime.
- Six years and dozens of tutors later, over 1/3 of our teaching staff is composed of former tutors!

### WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED:
- Academic achievement has increased.
- It’s a wonderful cultural immersion for new staff.
- They are better prepared for the challenges of rural Alaska.
- Staff retention has increased dramatically.
- The majority of tutors want to stay. We have reduced the need for spring recruiting.
- It brings wonderful energy into our small schools.

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# Online Tutoring/Intervention

## HOW IT WORKS

- Students are identified for intervention using AIMSweb.
- Students are tutored online in 30-minute sessions one to three times per week.
- University students are enrolled in a teacher education program.
- University professors train the tutors to analyze and interpret the AIMSweb data and create effective lessons.
- Blackboard Collaborate is utilized for delivery.

## WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED

- Academic achievement has increased.
- It has Big Brothers and Big Sisters qualities.
- Works great for advanced students as well.
- Provides a “live learning lab” for university partners.
- Online tutors are starting to student teach and do onsite tutoring with LPSD.
- It brings wonderful energy into our small schools.

[Link to easn.grads360.org](#)
Program Results

1. Teacher retention has greatly improved.
2. Graduation rates have increased.
3. Significant growth in Student Achievement.

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<tr>
<th>LPSD Student Benchmark (proficient or advanced) Comparison</th>
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<tr>
<td>----------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Benchmark in Math</td>
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<td>Benchmark in Reading</td>
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<td>Benchmark in Writing</td>
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Questions

Please type your questions into the chat box.
State Guest Speakers: Maine

Teacher Training & Incentives for Teacher Retention

Ms. Rachelle Tome
Chief Academic Officer, Maine Dept. of Education

Ms. Anita Bernhardt
Director of Standards and Instruction, Maine Dept. of Education
Teacher Training: X-Campus

• **Goal**: Decrease high turnover rate in high poverty rural schools and isolated, small schools

• **University of Maine/University of Maine at Machias**: A cross-campus collaborative model:
  - Capitalizes on underutilized campus space
  - Provides rural, high poverty teaching experiences for student teachers
  - Results in cost-savings to IHEs
Incentivizing Longevity

• **Existing legislation** – Fund for the Efficient Delivery of Educational Services (FEDES): Provides access to funds to districts who meet the requirements of the law. Could be accessed to support equitable access across districts.

• **Future legislation** – Work to set aside funds targeting the reduction of gaps related to the equitable access to effective educators through longevity bonuses after five years and/or to loan forgiveness.

• **Blue Ribbon Committee** (2016-17) – Will study and address current school funding issues. Opportunity to recommend funding changes for targeted needs and impact areas.
Increasing Flexibility and Easing Burdens

• Certification
  • Provide differentiated fees for educators in high poverty, rural and isolated small schools
  • Generate new endorsements to address staffing without nominalizing educator credentials

• Title II
  • Explore new flexibilities under ESSA and use of State activities funds to support LEAs with recruitment and retention challenges
  • Provide technical assistance to LEAs to inform use of allocated funds for recruitment and retention challenges
Please type your questions into the chat box.
Resources

Equity Plan Implementation Readiness Assessment:
https://easn.grads360.org/#communities/pdc/documents/10012

Equitable Access Support Network (EASN) Rural Access Issues & Support Community of Practice:
https://easn.grads360.org/#communities/rural-access-issues-support

https://easn.grads360.org/#communities/pdc/documents/9946
Contact Information

• **EASN**: Please visit the EASN website or email the EASN to join an EASN Community of Practice, find relevant resources, or request targeted support: https://easn.grads360.org/, easn@aemcorp.com

  ▪ **Session Facilitation**: Rose Honey: rose.honey@aemcorp.com
    Bill Horwath: bhorwath@education-first.com

  ▪ **Session Presenters**: Doug Gagnon: Douglas.Gagnon@unh.edu
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      Andrea Dixon-Seahorn, TBD

    • Alaska: Cecilia Miller, cecilia.miller@alaska.gov
      Ty Mase, tmase@lpsd.com

    • Maine: Rachelle Tome, Rachelle.Tome@maine.gov
      Anita Bernhardt, Anita.Bernhardt@maine.gov
Thank you!