

Rural Schools on the Move through Innovation and Collaboration



NOVEMBER 11-12, 2015
Holiday Inn & Convention Center
Stevens Point, WI

A conference for administrators, board members, teachers, CESA employees, higher education professionals, public library administrators, elected officials and citizens interested in rural school and community issues.

Wednesday, November 11, 2015

8:15	Conference Registration Continental Breakfast --Sponsored by 
9:20 Expo 1-2	Welcome Kim Kaukl, WiRSA Executive Director
9:30-10:15 Expo 1-2	Use of Social Networking as a Strong Communication Tool Joe Sanfelippo, District Administrator, Fall Creek <p>When is the last time something amazing happened in your school? How many people knew about it? The work done in schools all across the globe is spectacular. Kids gather...learn...leave...and make the world we live in a better place. So...amazing things happen all the time. The issue is the stories about schools are being told by people who have no affiliation with schools. The idea of branding schools isn't about selling kids or making false promises...it's about promoting the amazing things happening for those not experiencing them on a daily basis. Telling the story of schools helps create a narrative that builds culture and gives everyone in your community an identity. Utilizing social media and being the chief storyteller in your district is a great way to celebrate the success of students with parents and the community. FIND YOUR AUDIENCE...BUILD YOUR BRAND...CELEBRATE KIDS!!</p>
10:20-11:10 Expo 1-2	Key Stakeholders Developing Grass Roots Initiatives-Grass Roots Panel Heather DuBois Bourenane, Wisconsin Public Education Network and Citizen Advocates for Public Education (WPEN) Sandy Whisler, Citizen Advocates for Public Education (CAPE) Bruce Quinton, Superintendent, Pepin Ann Muenster, Fox Cities Advocates for Public Education <p>A positive, aspirational message focused on how public schools are the hearts of our communities is the key to</p>

building and amplifying support for public schools. Our session will cover why grassroots, coalition-minded advocacy is essential to supporting Wisconsin public schools, and how rural districts might address some of the challenges they face in local organizing. With years of experience in public education advocacy, this panel brings perspectives of parents, educators, administrators, and community organizers to the table to share best practices and ideas for local action.

11:15-12:45
Expo 3-4

Veteran's Day Recognition

Standing Up for Rural Schools, Libraries and Communities Awards

Dr. Tony Evers, State Superintendent, DPI

The annual rural awards program sponsored by the Department of Public Instruction.

Lunch

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12:55-1:40
Expo 1-2

FFA

Sally Albers, FFA State President

In this program, Sally Albers will be giving an overview of the Wisconsin Association of FFA, address how FFA fits into agricultural education, the impact this has on students, and more!

Kevin Keith, National FFA Local Program Success Team Leader

Kevin Keith grew up in Bruce, Wisconsin and then received his BS degree at the UW – River Falls. He taught High School Agricultural Education at Denmark High School prior to working for the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction as Education Consultant for Agricultural Education and served as the Wisconsin State FFA Advisor prior to becoming a National FFA Organization Staff member in 1996. He received his MS degree from the UW-Madison in

continuing and vocational education. He currently serves as the Team Leader for Local Program Success for the National FFA Organization, following 13 years as a Local Program Success Specialist for the Northeastern U.S. (Ohio to Delaware to Maine).

1:45-2:30
Expo 1-2

Whole Grade Sharing

Duane Willhite, Superintendent North Fayette, West Union, IA and Valley Community, Elgin, IA with Todd Wolverton, Principal, North Fayette High School

North Fayette and Valley Community Schools are two Northeast Iowa school districts that formed a Whole Grade Sharing partnership on July 1, 2013. Together they serve approximately 1200 students, with a middle school in Valley and a high school in North Fayette. Mr. Willhite is a shared superintendent, working in both districts, and will share the major challenges and rewards involved in creating a successful WGS partnership.

2:30-2:45

Break

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2:45-3:30
Expo 1-2

Recapping the 2015-17 State Budget: K-12 Education and Rural Schools

Todd Berry, President of the Wisconsin Taxpayers Alliance and Tom McCarthy, DPI Communications Officer

The 2015-17 state budget (Act 55) is now law. What were the major fiscal and political forces that drove development of the new budget?

What were the changes, if any, impacting K-12 education, and specifically rural schools e.g., revenue limits, general aid, categorical, school choice? What might the current budget suggest for school finance long-term? Cut through the partisan rhetoric with Wisconsin Taxpayers Alliance President Todd Berry and DPI Communications Director, Tom McCarthy as they recap the 2015-17 state budget

<p>3:35-4:20 Evergreen</p>	<p>Breakout Session 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <p>FAB LAB-Education for the Future Dr. George Karling, District Administrator, Three Lakes Dr. Steven Yahr, FAB LAB Director, Three Lakes with Dr. Robert Meyer, Chancellor, UW-Stout</p> <p>We will discuss how to implement a PK-12 FAB LAB, and why it is important for meeting the needs of underserved populations, and workforce development, as well as your districts and communities sustainability.</p>
<p>Frontier</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <p>Discovery Outreach: Summer Science Camps and Other Opportunities Wes Marner, Lab and Outreach Coordinator, Morgridge Institute for Research</p> <p>The Morgridge Institute for Research and the Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation co-sponsor Discovery Outreach, a team of educators at UW-Madison dedicated to connecting the public with science happening around the state. This presentation will describe our constellation of programming, with an emphasis on the (1) Summer Science Camp for students from rural Wisconsin schools and (2) the statewide Wisconsin Science Festival. We will discuss how you can get your students involved in these programs, the programs' reach, and ways we are determining the impact of this work.</p>
<p>Sands</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <p>School Fair-School/Community Collaboration Shari Graffunder, Agriculture Education/FFA Advisor, with Christine Moore and Kara Hutter, FFA Officers, River Valley</p> <p>A community collaboration which incorporates the students, staff, administration, local businesses and community members has become a tradition over the years. There are only a couple left in the state which is why this joint effort is celebrated with our annual homecoming. The session will discuss how to work with community, build lasting relationships, and discovering ways to integrate new facets to</p>

Spruce

invigorate a long standing tradition!

- **Teacher Retention**

UW-Oshkosh Center for Additional Teacher Licensing
Barb Herzog , Co-Director Program Coordinator:
Secondary and EC-A
Penny Buckley, Co-Director Program Coordinator:
EC-MC/MC-EA

The Center for Additional Teaching Licenses (Add-On Program) was developed to assist Wisconsin teachers in acquiring new licenses, help administrators fill vacancies with highly qualified teachers and promote teacher retention within districts. In this session, you will hear about the convenience, individualization and rewarding nature of the Add-On Program and how it can serve your teachers, schools and districts in promoting student learning and personnel stability.

Dr. John Ulferts, Superintendent-Principal,
Shirland Community Consolidated School
District #134, Shirland, Illinois

An Evaluation of Staff Recruitment and Retention in
the Smallest Rural Schools: What are the
Implications?

Although teachers are the single most important determinant to student achievement, rural school districts struggle to recruit and retain teachers. Nationally, rural schools average 30% to 50% teacher turnover annually with schools of less than 300 students reporting the highest turnover rates. This study of teachers in the 24 smallest Illinois rural districts sought to identify the recruitment and retention factors that most influence teachers to accept and remain teaching in the smallest school districts. Rural teachers were asked what strategies they perceived as being most effective for recruitment and retention. Overall job satisfaction was also measured as it impacts teacher retention. Findings of the study were contrasted to an earlier Montana study of rural teacher recruitment and retention.

<p>4:30-5:30</p>	<p>Reception --Sponsored by </p>
<p>5:30</p>	<p>Dinner --Sponsored by  </p>
<p>6:15 Expo 3</p>	<p>Keynote Speaker Jim DeBroux Retired High School Principal, Mosinee</p> <p>A veteran of forty-two years in education and a former principal of the year for Wisconsin suffered an accident that left him paralyzed from the neck down. This occurred just three days prior to the final year he was planning to work. He will share his journey with you including what he learned about the world around him, including the fears, joys, and surprises along the way. He will include his observations on how to face some of our challenges as educators.</p>

Thursday, November 12, 2015

7:30
Expo 1

Breakfast

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8:00-8:45
Expo 1-2

Teyanna Loether

Alice in Dairyland

Teyanna Loether is serving as the 68th Alice in Dairyland. As Wisconsin's agriculture ambassador, she is striving to educate audiences across Wisconsin about the \$88 billion economic impact and importance of our state's diverse agriculture industry in our daily lives. Alice in Dairyland is a one-year, full-time public relations professional employed by the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection (WI DATCP). Each year, Alice in Dairyland travels more than 40,000 miles throughout the state, promoting Wisconsin agriculture to various audiences.

8:50-9:35
Evergreen

Breakout Session 2:

- **Building Partnerships in Career and Technical Education**

Bob Morehead, Chetek-Weyerhaeuser

A look at Chetek-Weyerhaeuser's Technology Education Program. Bob is in his fourteenth year as technology education teacher and has spent the last seven at Chetek-Weyerhaeuser. Four years ago, the Chetek-Weyerhaeuser Technology Education Department sought out a path that would give students more opportunities for post-secondary success. This search led to a comprehensive welding and machine tool program, with a curriculum that is rigorous and tied to industry and technical college standards. Bob will be sharing his experiences working through this transition.

Frontier

- **Learning from this Year's WiRSA Exit Interview Program**

Dave Hammelman, Hammelman Resources LLC and Rick Waski, District Administrator, Adams- Friendship

Over 100 exit interviews have been conducted so far this year. What are the top four reasons these former staffers gave for their decisions to leave their district? Where did they go, are they leaving education? What is the one consistent statement made by almost all of these individuals? What initiatives are Boards and Administrations considering?

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- **Rural School Collaborating Through Summer School**

Brandon Robinson, Kara Holden, Zack Fugate, Unity and Renee Gavinski, Luck

It is no secret that school districts across Wisconsin work hard to provide meaningful and effective summer school programming opportunities for their students. The number of differences between programs is vast, and every year districts strive to find ways to increase student involvement in a manner that leads to great things happening for students, while also boosting the ever-important FTE. Audience members attending this session will learn about a powerful, student-centered and collaborative approach to summer school shared between two rural school districts: the Unity School District and the School District of Luck. During the summer of 2015, Unity and Luck combined programs to offer incredible summer school opportunities to students K-12 at one site. Both districts worked hard to overcome various hurdles and more than 600 students attended summer school courses from districts with a combined enrollment of 1478 students. Join us for a fun summer school discussion and learn some innovative collaboration strategies that impacted the lives of our students, districts, and communities alike.

<p>Sands</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <p>Engaging Your Students, Staff and Community in Healthy Lifestyles Nick Cochart, Superintendent, Algoma Tony Klaubauf, Superintendent, Denmark Patti Vickman, Superintendent, Southern Door with Cindy Van Asten, Senior Account Executive, M3 Insurance</p> <p>Health and wellness initiatives are changing the culture of schools and helping to create happy, healthy students and employees resulting in increased student achievement – all on a very manageable budget. Come to this panel discussion on how nine districts in Door & Kewaunee Counties formed an insurance cooperative to achieve significant health insurance premium savings. Three of the cooperative’s districts will share strategies used to motivate and engage students, staff, and community in health and wellness.</p>
<p>9:35-9:50</p>	<p>Break --Sponsored by</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>The Meemic Foundation</p> </div>
<p>9:50-10:35 Evergreen</p>	<p>Breakout Session 3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <p>2020 Vision: Community and Agency Reciprocal Partnerships that Advance One School District’s Opportunities for Student Success Dr. Christine M. Weymouth, Superintendent, Mauston Jim Dillin, Principal, Mauston High School, Gil Saylor, Lead Teacher, iLEAD Charter School, Lynda Oleinik, Director of Teaching and Learning</p> <p>This presentation will demonstrate how a rural school district can develop and sustain three highly valued programs in its schools with the support and innovative partnering of external partners. A team of presenters will discuss how the secondary iLEAD Charter School, The Welding Institute and the Mauston Montessori School became realities and our plan for sustaining their growth. Innovative</p>

applications such as shared decision making and post-secondary agency communication and planning, along with internal school organizational collaboration all work together to promote the Mauston Schools as a school district of choice for students and families.

Frontier

- **Fine Arts in Rural Schools**

Matt Snow, Band Director with
Rebecca Schinker, Choral Director, River Valley

Fine Arts at River Valley High School have enjoyed a measure of student success with direct results from great collaboration between its staff and community. This session will speak more towards music, but these same concepts have applied to our Art classes and students as well.

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- **Building Utilization, NWTC and Florence Partnership**

Ben Niehaus, District Administrator,
Florence County
Sally Miller, NWTC North Regional Manager

Come see what the School District of Florence County and Northeast Wisconsin Technical College created through a mutual vision to utilize a former elementary facility. The partnership has grown into expanded opportunities of partnership and community support that were unforeseen in the original mission.

Sands

- **WEA Members Benefits**

Sharon Schmidt, Financial Wellness in Workplace Retirement Plans

Does your district provide employees with financial education? How is it provided? Are you paying for it? Do you know what your employees need in terms of financial education? How effective or well-received is it?

In this session we will discuss:

- What is causing employees to delay retirement and what this can mean to the employer.
- The lack of confidence today's employees have about retirement, and why.

	<p>-- The negative implications financial stress has on your employees and what employers can do to help.</p> <p>Learn how to keep your employees engaged, increase plan participation, and add value to your district's employee benefit package.</p>
<p>10:40-11:25 Evergreen</p> <p>Frontier</p> <p>Spruce</p>	<p>Breakout Session 4:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <p>Sharing Spanish via Technology for Elementary Students John Eyerly, District Administrator, Westfield Louie Ferguson, District Administrator, Arcadia</p> <p>This presentation will show the partnership between Arcadia and Westfield Schools on providing Spanish instruction to our elementary students through the use of technology. We began this partnership four years ago and we continue to explore ways that we can provide services to students and staff in a timely and cost efficient manner. The distance between the schools is over 100 miles and we have been able to forge a partnership.</p> <p>Leadership Forgiveness Dr. Theodore D. Kryder, Crandon</p> <p>Dr. Theodore D. Kryder will present on "Forgiveness as a Leadership Trait" and will also identify it as a leadership power. You will explore what forgiveness is, what it is not and the historic link to better leading and living. In an educational world of doing more with less forgiveness can allow more to be done through a ripple effect of human worth and value. The negative paths of forgiveness will be identified and you will see forgiveness can be the missing tool in your belt of leadership abilities to connect you to success.</p> <p>PLCs, A Dynamic Change to Our Small School Setting Owen-Withee High School PLC Leadership Team</p> <p>The Leadership Team from Owen-Withee High School will outline the steps we took to develop and</p>

<p>Sands</p>	<p>sustain a successful PLC in a small school. We'll start with the Board proposal, work through the staff groupings and report on our now 5th year of PLCs. Let us show you how we work collaboratively to implement strategies and use research-based initiatives to help increase student achievement. We know that PLCs work and we can help you start a PLC or improve on the one you have started in your district. We are excited about our results and want to share our secrets!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <p>Future Ready Districts with Trusting Partnerships</p> <p>Josh Robinson, District Administrator, Frederic</p> <p>In Frederic, we have created some trusting partnerships over the past three years that have helped us make significant progress in our financial situation, technology infrastructure and infusion, social media outreach, student transportation, and energy efficiency projects. We have also been creative with our neighboring rural schools by sharing resources to benefit both districts.</p>
<p>11:30-12:45 Expo 3</p>	<p>WiRSA Annual Awards--NREA Update John Hill, NREA Executive Director</p> <p>Lunch --Sponsored by</p> 
<p>12:50-1:35 Expo 1-2</p>	<p>Teach 2.0 and other Technology Initiatives Kurt Kiefer, DPI Assistant Superintendent for Division of Libraries and Technology, with Matt Yeakey and Terry Birk, DOA TEACH Administrators for the Division of Enterprise and Technology</p> <p>DPI will share the current and planned status of the various WISE tools and systems as well as other digital technology updates. The latest WISEdash dashboards and enhancements will be reviewed. We will also highlight the valuable resources available for doing data inquiry and school improvement planning through WISExplore. WISEdata is the new multi-vendor open</p>

	<p>data collection tool designed to replace many current data collections including WSLs, ISES, and CWCS. WISELearn is the educator resource portal for sharing digital content, accessing online professional learning, and connecting with social networks. We will also overview the online learning options available through the Wisconsin Digital Learning Collaborative. DET TEACH program staff will share the latest updates on changes to the program and new opportunities targeted at small, rural school districts.</p>
1:35	Conference Adjourns
1:40-2:10 Expo 1-2	WiRSA Annual Meeting
2:30-3:30 Harvest/ Trillium	WiRSA Board of Directors Meeting

Be sure to take a moment to browse our Vendor Booths:

UW-Oshkosh – Fred Yeo

CESA 10 – Luke Schultz and Joseph Hamann

Don Stevens and Dave Hammelman

Ehlers – Keith Brightman

Forecast 5 – Jeff Carew and Josh Rader

ACT – Peggy Roush

Meemic – Roy Hinz

National Insurance Services – Stephanie Laudon

WEA Members Benefits – Judy Cooper

Think Through Math – John Geers

Jostens – Dale Komro and Marcus Carpenter

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A graphic for Member Benefits consisting of a stylized blue and white star above a swooshing blue and white wave.

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Thank you for making the WiRSA Conference a success!