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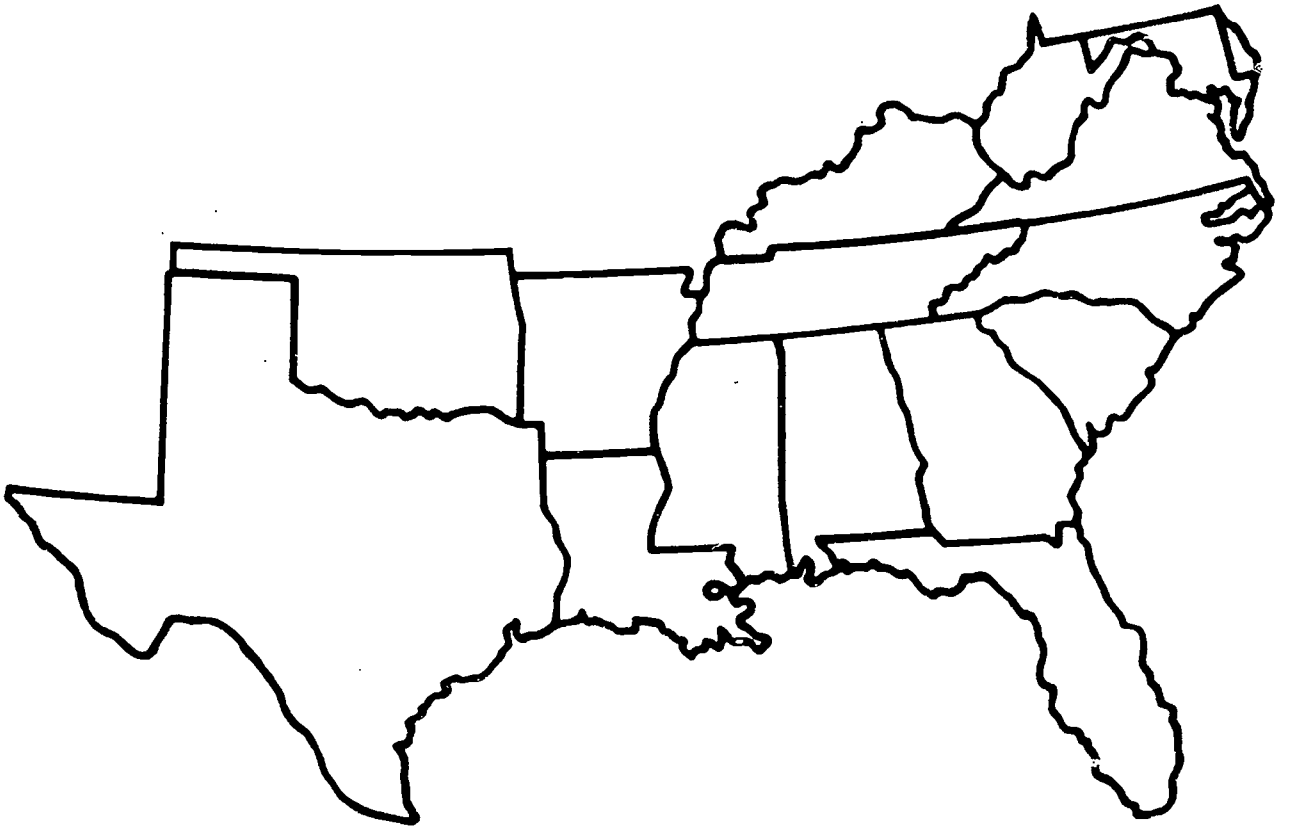
ABSTRACT

This journal contains the following articles pertaining to education in rural areas: (1) "The State of the Association" (William Peter) reviews the mission and progress of the Southern Rural Education Association; (2) "Arts Enrichment Programs in Middle Tennessee Rural Schools" (Howard Brahmstedt and Patricia Brahmstedt) describes how these programs began through university-school cooperation and grants; (3) "Mandated Teacher Evaluation Does Improve Teaching and Learning" (William Kurtz) discusses benefits of and problems with the new Texas evaluation process; (4) "National Award Winning Community-At-School Program" (Casher Choate) describes a model community education program in rural Tennessee; (5) "PAEC: A Pacesetter in Rural Education" (Paula Waller) explains how resources are shared among nine Florida counties in an education cooperative; (6) "The Development of Teacher Recruitment Materials for Rural Schools: Three Examples" (Dwight Hare) compares the differences among recruitment efforts in three parishes in Louisiana; (7) "Unexpected Benefits for Rural Education from a Beginning Teacher Internship Program" (Chuck Hulick and Bobby Malone) highlights the impact of the program; (8) "Urban Chauvinism and Rural Values" (Keigh Hubel) provides a personal account of rural life; and (9) "Technology in Rural Schools: The Future Is Now" (Kenneth Brookens) provides examples of telelearning, distance learning, and satellite communication in rural schools. (KS)

# SOUTHERN RURAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION







# Journal

SREA Journal
Volume 1 — Number 1
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# SOUTHERN RURAL EDUCATIONAL ASSOCIATION




*The Southern Rural Education Association Journal is published annually and is the official publication of the Southern Rural Education Association.*

*The purpose of the SREA Journal is to provide a forum for the presentation of issues and the sharing of knowledge which would be of interest to practitioners, policy makers, and researchers involved in education in rural areas.*

*The views expressed in the SREA Journal are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views or policies of the Southern Rural Education Association. The publisher cannot accept responsibility for the accuracy of information provided by the authors.*

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# The State of the Association

*William G. "Bill" Peter*

Teaching is perhaps the most sophisticated of human endeavors; and in many of the rural schools in the South it finds its most difficult challenge. The Southern Rural Education Association (SREA) was founded upon, and operates from, a resolve to meet this challenge. It is appropriate in this, the first journal of the organization, to review these conditions, the resulting guiding goals of SREA, and the state of our association, particularly in regard to progress toward these objectives.

Not only is the art/science of teaching as complex as anything imaginable, the difficulty of teaching compounds as knowledge compounds in volume and sophistication. Add to this that the American public schools are increasingly expected to shoulder new responsibilities in solution of progressively burgeoning social problems, that parents are less supportive, that kids come to school less prepared intellectually and attitudinally, and on. Then, to add fuel to these difficulties, resources and financial support steadily diminish, bureaucratic commandments exponentiate, and legal jeopardies burgeon.

In rural America, all of these problems are frequently amplified by problems inherent in ruralness itself — problems with distance, resources, staffing, services, transportation, smallness, funding, and on. In the rural South these perplexing problems find their most perfect (and most unfortunate) manifestation.

One of the most prominent problems in the South, one for which the heavily burdened and suffering schools are seen as a solution, is a widespread degeneration of rural communities. Many factors contribute to the making of an enormous "catch twenty-two." As communities decrease in size, resources, services, and wealth; the schools consequently decrease in quality, which in turn causes a decline of the community, and on. High school graduates immigrate to the cities to "seek their fortunes," causing a drain of talent and youth from rural communities, causing the communities to be less attractive places for talented young people to live and work, an on. The gloomy prognosis in this further adds to the despair of southern rural educators. It is hoped that the schools may not just abate the erosion but contribute significantly to rejuvenation as well. The miraculous fact is that some are meeting these challenges. It can be done.

## MISSION STATEMENTS REVIEWED

SREA is built upon positive and optimistic premises, ones which imply the strength of rural people and communities, and especially educators, to face the challenges head on. The solution of the often debilitating problems of rural educators in the South constitutes the guiding principles and objectives of SREA. In the words of its bylaws, the general purpose of the Southern Rural Education Association is "to establish a regional focus on the need and concerns unique to rural education in the South and to provide a forum for the discussion and resolution of those needs and concerns."

The goals and objectives of SREA are represented by ten statements of resolve: The membership of Southern Rural Education Association, each and together, shall:

- Identify general and specific educational concerns of Southern rural areas.
- Develop criteria to assess the needs and effectiveness of rural education programs and innovations.
- Identify, encourage and reward the replication of exemplary rural education programs and innovations.
- Serve as a source of ideas and encouragement to assist rural educators to develop and maintain programs unique to rural settings.
- Promote research and action programs designed to support and improve rural education institutions.
- Encourage teacher education institutions to consider rural education needs in teacher training programs and certification.
- Serve as the catalyst for developing effective state rural education organizations.
- Work with the National Rural Education Association to increase the utilization of national programs in southern rural schools.
- Develop an information and dissemination network among and between rural education associations, legislative bodies, state departments of education, centers and institutes, and others interested in promoting quality rural education opportunities in the South.
- Organize this network into a viable coalition to develop policy statements on rural education in the South, and to elicit support from policy and decision-making groups for the inclusion of rural education initiatives into reform movements and legislative programs.

During its brief existence SREA has indeed addressed these important objectives. It is time, however, for SREA to take another giant step forward. We have survived our infancy and adolescence. It is now time for SREA to pro-actively develop a much stronger and more effective voice. It is time because conditions demand it. It is also time because SREA has come of age.

## PROGRESS REVIEWED

We have convened annually to discuss issues, share ideas, and develop strategies (explicit mostly in our first three objectives). These conventions have indeed been progressively informative, inspirational, and enjoyable. We must continue this tradition. Even more importantly, we must maintain the resolve with which we leave these conferences.

Regarding objective number three, recognition has been given by the association from time to time, but this

has been random, without pain. The Alvin C. York Award will be presented for the first time this year to a practitioner in rural education. A task force, under the chairmanship of Bobby Malone, has developed an initial awards and recognition program this year. The Presidential Award will be awarded for the first time next year in Florida to a nationally renowned individual, from outside the rural education sector, who has made a signal contribution to rural education in the south. Please congratulate that committee for their work and the many hours spent; and sympathize with the several problems that accompany such new ventures. It is appropriate that additional annual awards also be made by the association. The SREA awards and recognition program is bound to improve, grow, and pay dividends in increased excellence in education for the children of the rural South.

As per objective four, research has indeed been stimulated by the annual conferences, and practice improved throughout the member states. This year we have seen the institution of a SREA Research Symposiumm, which will undoubtedly further our goals in this area greatly. Recognition must certainly go to Sue Raftery, and all who have worked toward the success of this venture.

This journal, is itself, largely a response to many of the objectives of SREA. We can take pride in this, and congratulate editor Chuck Hulick. It is imperative that we effectively publicize our activities and achievements. There is no simple road to credibility, but a journal is one of the best.

The representation of teacher preparation institutions in SREA is high percentage-wise. However, to date, no ad hoc action has been initiated by the Association to encourage the teacher education programs uniquely designed to prepare teachers for rural schools (objective number six). This needs to become a part of our agenda.

Service by SREA to establish and support state rural organizations (as per objective number seven) has also received little systematic attention. This is an important objective which calls for special attention.

Little has been done to collaborate with NREA to increase the utilization of national programs in southern rural schools. I propose that SREA be a noticeable participant, perhaps a full partner with NREA in their scheduled convention in Mississippi in 1991. (An informal invitation to do so has been forwarded from the NREA office.) More specific initiatives are needed in the furtherance of objective number eight.

The essential outlines of a network as described in the last two objectives (nine and ten) are becoming clearer, but advancement toward these goals has been painfully slow. These two objectives perhaps offer the greatest promises of powerful and lasting achievement by SREA.

The establishment of the Presidential Award is an effort by the Executive Board toward affecting legislation and policy (implicit in objective number ten). Until SREA can impact favorable legislation and policy toward the enabling of its objectives, many of its efforts will be insufficient, infertile, disappointing. A dynamic legislative committee representing a pro-active attitude is requisite if we are to successfully proceed toward this objective.

## BUILDING ON THE SUCCESS TRADITION

The effects of SREA have been positive, but a modicum of its potential. If we are to more fully realize our mission, the Association must continue to grow in strength and effectiveness. In order to do this, more time, effort, and resources will have to be contributed to it. We must commit new energies, and find ways to focus (thus make the best use of) those we have.

Most organizations of our kith focus their activities through annual resolutions -- immediate objectives which reflect the stated goals of the organizations. A resolutions committee has been formed, the simple charge of which is to recommend resolutions to the Executive Committee, and subsequently to the SREA assembly for adoption.

Organizations such as SREA thrive through three energizing forces. The first is that it have one or more individuals who are willing and able to contribute a good deal of time and attention to it. Second, it is imperative to have an organized system of communications — including a newsletter — which effectively informs members, stimulates activity, increases credibility, publicizes programs and achievements, recruits advocates, etc.; and third, it must have a committed and active executive board. All three are important to the future of SREA. The third is perhaps the most crucial to SREA at this juncture.

The Board is an essential key to the success of SREA. We must do whatever possible to elect/-select those individuals in each state to the Executive Board who have not only the requisite talent, but a fervent commitment to rural education, and the resources to fulfill the obligations of membership on the Board. These individuals must also serve as year-round agents in their state, as State Executives, as it were of SREA — doing whatever necessary and possible to further the goals and welfare of the Association. The key to the success or failure of SREA in better fulfilling its objectives lies in the hands of us all. But the Executive Committee plays a very special role in establishing priorities and activities; and in keeping the business of the organization moving and on track, not just in an occasional meeting of the Board, but regularly in their separate states.

We have seated six new members on the board this year, filling all of the vacancies in the seventeen contiguous States, but not the Virgin Islands or Puerto Rico. The President has appointed an at-large board member to represent the latter and Washington D.C. (vacated by a move). These too must be filled.

This year the Executive Committee had an additional meeting in the fall.

*(Continued on Page 11)*

# ARTS ENRICHMENT PROGRAMS IN MIDDLE TENNESSEE RURAL SCHOOLS

*Howard Brahmstedt and Patricia Brahmstedt*

***When funding is limited, education in the arts seems to be the first to suffer budget cuts. A creative way to ensure teaching of the arts is described in this article which has had a real impact on several middle Tennessee schools.***

In Tennessee some rural English classes are discussing Shakespeare's love sonnets while students from a rural machine shop class listen to a black operatic baritone sing Italian opera and German lieder. These activities are not typical of arts programs in most rural schools. They are, though, activities found in arts classes in the schools of Middle Tennessee who are members of the Tennessee Technological University Rural Education Consortium. Funding arts programs, like those mentioned above in rural schools where money is scarce and where children have limited back grounds, can be a challenge. The TTU Rural Education Consortium is findways to meet this challenge.

***"Since the arts were not considered essential subjects for the curriculum, these programs were eliminated when money was scarce."***

The Tech Rural Education Consortium is an organization within Tennessee Tech University which promotes research and service between the university and member schools from a fourteen county area in Middle Tennessee known as the Upper Cumberland area. Until the consortium was formed, most schools in this area had minimal instruction in the arts. Like most rural schools, they had very small budgets. Since the arts were not considered essential subjects for the cirriculum, these programs were eliminated when money was scarce. At the initial meeting of the TTU Rural Education Consortium, one of the biggest requests submitted to the university by the rural schools was for help in starting programs in the arts. Money to fund such programs was obtained by using the funds set aside by the university-supplemented with donations from other sources such as matching funds for state and federal grants. Most of the grant money for the arts programs came from the Tennessee Arts Commission. One program received money as a Drop-out Prevention Program. Much of the planning for these arts enrichment programs was done by faculty members from the university who felt that involvement in the arts was a necessary part of a school curriculum. These faculty members saw that many rural schools had very inadequate arts, programs, so they helped organize special arts projects to make the students and the general public more aware of the importance of arts education.

The arts projects which have been implemented have covered a wide variety of ideas. Movement ballet classes are being taught in one small school as a result of an Arts-in Education Grant from the Tennessee Arts Commission. Visual art classes and some music classes are being taught in some elementary schools as field experiences for college students in art and music education classes. The teachers in charge of the university music and art education classes teach the elementary school classes themselves; then, each college student in the class teaches a lesson on a different day.

The most successful program in the arts started by the TTU Consortium had been the band and general music program in Gainesboro, Tennessee. In the first year of funding from the university, a part-time music teacher was hired to teach in K-8 grades and to supervise student teachers in the upper elementary grades. The second year the program was expanded with grant money by adding general music and band instruction in the high school. Two grants added money to this program: a Drop-out Prevention Program Grant from the Appalachian Regional Commission and an Artists in Residency Grant from the Tennessee Arts Commission. By the third year the program was so well received by the community that the local school board voted to fund a music teacher.

***"There is a changing attitude towards the value of arts in a school curriculum in the Upper Cumberland area of Middle Tennessee."***

Another music program, which used professional musicians who presented a series of concerts in several designated schools, was funded by a Grants-in-Aid Tennessee Arts Commission Grant. The series, entitled "Learning by Listening," presented soloists from the woodwind, brass, string, and vocal areas, and a woodwind quintet and a brass quintet. Each concert followed a format constructed to display, through music and comments, the concepts of melody, rhythm, harmony, form, and tone color in the music. Prior to each concert, students received instruction about the concepts to be covered in the concerts. Where possible, video tapes of live performers were left for follow-up activities.

During the second year of this grant program, one of the performers in the series had to cancel a concert. This led to an expansion of the program into the area of theatre. The TTU Theatre Ensemble was substituted on the series with a presentation entitled, "Love, my name is Will." The presentation consisted of Shakespeare's sonnets grouped into dramatic scenes integrated with

*(Continued on Page 7)*

# MANDATED TEACHER EVALUATION DOES IMPROVE TEACHING AND LEARNING

*William H. Kurtz*

***Reform in education which may initially seem likely to cause problems can often turn out to be beneficial with the cooperation of all those involved. This report from the State of Texas describes examples of mandated reforms and the important processes which resulted in eventual benefits to schools and students.***

Educational reform is sweeping the country. The State of Texas is no exception to this "new reform" process. In many ways, the reform in Texas and those changes attributed to it are more wide ranging and severe than in most other states. The pressures and frustrations that have accompanied the changes have been equally wide ranging and in some cases severe. As schools and school personnel have begun to make the changes, some positive effects have started to emerge. Most interesting is the emerging perception that teachers are paying much more attention to the art and science of teaching and that students, who have bought into the process, are showing evidence that they are learning more.

Serious reform began in Texas in 1982 with the passage of a bill that required that "essential elements" be identified for each course that was be to taught in the schools. In addition, teachers were required to keep daily lesson plans that would show when each essential element was taught and in what context. State accreditation teams now check to see that this process is being carried out. Before this mandated reform could be fully implemented, Ross Perot forced the passage of the widely publicized House Bill 72. This legislation had the infamous "no pass-no play" requirements for athletes in addition to several more significant sets of requirements that affected teaching and learning. These requirements were:

To set passing at a score of 70 on a scale of 100

To create a system that, in essence, withheld credit in a course due to excessive absences while at the same time provided wide ranging opportunities to make up work under most other adverse conditions. (suspension, home bound, alternative schools, etc.)

To raise graduation requirements

To create a mandated teacher evaluation system

To create a career ladder for teachers.

In addition, several funding changes and other budgeting requirements caused about 20 per cent of the state tax effort to be transferred to local districts. This has proven to be disastrous for a number of districts, a few of which have become financially insolvent.

The mandated teacher evaluation system that was created was called the Texas Teacher Appraisal System, (TTAS). The system had several basic requirements:

1. An evaluation form was created to meet the requirements of the legislation.
2. Administrators and others who were to evaluate teachers had to successfully complete training sessions in instructional leadership and in the proper use of the TTAS scoring sheet.
3. All teachers were to be evaluated each year through a series of announced and unannounced visits.
4. All teachers who were found to be below expectations were to have a personal improvement plan developed and monitored.
5. All districts would provide teachers an opportunity to learn about the system through inservice activities.
6. The formal evaluation of the teacher was to be presented to the teacher through a post evaluation conference.
7. Each teacher was to be evaluated by a primary evaluator and one other evaluator.

During the implementation of the TTAS, several problems arose and much confusion and discussion ensued. Teachers were basically suspicious of the entire undertaking, and many became actively involved in trying to influence the final product. They were moderately successful, especially when revisions were made after the first year of operation. A serious problem arose when the state agency, through its service centers, attempted to train those who would train evaluators. The major issue was how to create a series of teams of "Trainers of Trainers" that could be highly consistent in teaching others to make common judgments when viewing instruction. This may not seem as difficult as it was, but in retrospect, it may have been the most difficult part of installing this system. A second dilemma was finding enough personnel to do the evaluations. In the first years of the system, many districts added administrative personnel in order to be able to meet the requirement for each of the evaluators to visit each teacher several times. The result was that a large number of minimally prepared evaluators were pressed into service. Coupled with the fact that only a few administrators were experienced at formal evaluation, the resulting evaluation force was essentially beginning anew.

To monitor the process, a longitudinal study of 200 teachers and appraisers in ten selected school districts was

conducted by Kurtz and Weitman at Southwest Texas State University (1988). The study measured attitudes and perceptions of these groups. Data from the study provided some insight into the problems these groups had over the first few years of the evaluation process and highlighted positive and negative aspects of the system.

Data from the study showed much more agreement between teachers and appraisers than the researchers predicted. In only two areas was there a clear debate between these two groups. The most crucial argument was whether or not the items on the evaluation instrument actually reflected the significant aspects of teaching. Teachers did not feel that the domains evaluated reflected the teaching process as they knew it. Appraisers tended to believe that it did. Part of this disagreement seems due to the speed of implementation of the system. Appraisers had more time to study the areas covered on the evaluation sheet and consequently were more comfortable with it. Teachers had no more than a short inservice on the process, and it took several years for them to understand the meaning of the domains. One major problem for teachers was the fact that the appraiser was to be able to see evidence of all the domains on the scoring sheet in a class session. In the normal process of teaching in one hour blocks, it is not unusual for a single lesson to last more than one day. In a laboratory course, it may take several days to be involved in all the domains. In the areas such as music, physical education, and art there was a different problem. The instrument was generally designed to match lecture/discussion types of teaching strategies, so in the activity classes, it was difficult to evaluate instruction unless the teacher developed a lecture discussion session for the class. The debate as to what the significant aspects of teaching are is continuing and has spread to other facets of the states requirements. The effect of the debate is to cause teachers, administrators, appraisers and agency officials to closely examine the teaching process.

The second disagreement was the inconsistent scoring found on the scoring sheets. As teachers began to compare the scores of the two appraisers that visited them, many noticed that the two evaluators did not always agree as to the level of competency of the teacher. Several documented cases of wide disagreement in interpreting what was required to score at high level confirmed the teachers concerns. In many districts, the average scores given to teachers varied greatly from campus to campus within the district. Discussions that followed caused both teachers and appraisers to carefully examine what constituted good teaching and what acts demonstrated that a teacher was performing well.

Other discussions are being held as a result of other problems. When it was learned that some teachers were preparing special sessions just for the announced evaluation visit, "walk-through" evaluation visits have become more prevalent. The ensuing debate has led most teachers and appraisers to support the walk-through visits or unannounced full period visits as an integral part of the evaluation process. In some cases, teachers were found to be less willing to share new and/or different teaching strategies. They seemed to be saving something for the evaluation process that would help insure that they would get a high enough score so as to be placed on the career ladder. (The career ladder is a device to promote and pay teachers without taking them out of the classroom). These tactics had a negative effect on improvement of instruction for some, yet because of the effects of the personal improvement plans written for many teachers, the instructional improvement process seems to be taking place at a higher level than before the advent of TTAS. Finally, there is ever increasing discussion of whether or not the six domains are equally important and of the negative effect of the sixth domain that allows local stipulations to be added to the document. Teachers believe that it is easier to score in some domains if you teach certain subjects. While evaluators agree, they believe that they are making adjustments in the way they score evaluations that will solve this problem. Both teachers and appraisers are concerned at the significance placed on the locally created domain. Superintendents, and especially boards of trustees, put great weight on this domain when considering whether or not to retain personnel. There is little evidence to indicate that the instrument is being used strictly to terminate teachers so this concern may not be well founded. Data from the study indicates that both teachers and appraisers agree that terminations are not being carried out as a result of TTAS.

Several positive teacher and administrator behaviors were also identified by the study. Both teachers and appraisers indicated that the number of teacher-administrator conferences had increased dramatically. Teachers and administrators were having continued discussions about teaching and learning. These discussions usually began during the post conference that the primary evaluators conducted after the evaluation visit and continued through the school year.

Teachers are seeking new strategies to help them with teaching. Inservice and university training has become more popular, especially when it related to new or different concepts of teaching in their subject area. In addition, school departments are working together to determine what should be taught and when it should be taught. In many cases, this interest in articulation of the curriculum has been shown for the first time in many years.

Administrators are watching the instructional process much closer than before. They are looking at the daily lesson plans of teachers, a process that has caused all concerned to seriously consider what is being taught. Administrators seem to be assuming the role of instructional leader. There is evidence that they are using the instructional data to help teachers rather than using the data against teachers. Positive instructional gains are now appearing. Administrators are also devising ways to increase collaboration

between teachers, supervisors and department chairperson. These groups are being encouraged to collectively set goals and parameters for growth and to work together to improve the instructional process.

The most exciting evidence comes from the student population. After a few short years of treatment, scores on standardized tests are increasing. The gains are not huge, but they are clearly there. The per cent of the population that is passing the standardized exams in also increasing. Teachers are indicating that students are taking their studies more seriously. More homework is being completed, and more students are handing in assigned work. The only negative is the dropout rate. In spite of what the schools have done, the dropout rate is not declining and, in some cases, has risen slightly.

***"It must be emphasized that the gains are not a direct function of the mandates but the result of the reaction of the professionals in the field to the mandates."***

In summary, the effects of reform and especially mandated teacher evaluation are for the most part positive. Dialogue has begun and is producing serious study of the instructional process. This new atmosphere of collaborative discussion of the merits of everything from instructional strategies to curriculum articulation has caused an awakening among professional educators that is refreshing and significant. Educators are becoming more of a force in determining the direction the educational process will take and are giving a sense of reason to a sometimes questionable political solution to an educational problem.

Teachers who are using new strategies are making the process of teaching and learning much more effective. They are seeking new methods and studying the art and science of teaching more intensely than before. The opportunity to be involved in collaborative discussions and to participate in the decision making process is beginning to relieve some of the stress caused when they were totally left out of the legislative process to create the reforms. The fact that most of them are scoring well on their evaluations also shows that they are good teachers capable of turning out a better product. Satisfaction is beginning to return to many teachers. If the process continues to be refined and improved, some positive gains will result. It must be emphasized that the gains are not a direct function of the mandates but the result of the reaction of the professionals in the field to the mandates.

Students are working harder and gaining more. If the improvement continues, it is quite possible that the number of students that graduate with satisfactory basic skills will reach a much higher level. They are the benefactors of a professional, dedicated response to the legislative mandates.

The process of reform and mandated teacher evaluation is showing signs of working. It is the result of many hours of work by dedicated administrators, teachers and other educational professionals. As the process matures and the players get better at their doing their jobs, more positive results will undoubtedly be obtained. Students are the immediate benefactors and society in general will be the benefactors over time. It is truly a situation where everyone can win.

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# Arts Enrichment

*(Continued from Page 5)*

late Renaissance vocal and instrumental music. Each presentation was preceded and followed with discussion sessions about the presentaion. A study guide was circulated to make the students even more aware of the essence of the poetry and music. Additional funding for this projest was obtained from the Tennessee Humanities Council.

This year the TTU Consortium has received its largest Tennessee Arts Commission Grant yet. An Artists in Residency Grant gives four schools a five week, one day per week residency from each of four artists. The residency will consist of direct instruction to selected students in grades kinderarten through twelve, one or more workshops for teachers, and a public performance or display to conclude the residency. The arts include music, visual arts, theatre, and movement/-ballet or folk dance. The schools are contributing money themselves towards this program.

The success of the TTU Consortium with starting arts programs is an example of people with a common tie working to make an idea grow. What are the benefits? There is a changing attitude towards the value of arts in a school curriculum in the Upper Cumberland area of Middle Tennessee. There are also many school children with improved self-esteem who have learned how to express themselves creatively, both verbally and nonverbally. Furthermore, they have learned how to look at or hear a work of art and say, "That's beautiful. It makes me feel great."

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# NATIONAL AWARD WINNING COMMUNITY-AT-SCHOOL PROGRAM

*Casher A. Choate*

***How can rural schools work with their communities to upgrade the education level and the values for education in those communities? This article describes one model which has been successful.***

In the not too distant past, rural schools were the hub of their community. Recreational events, community meetings, agricultural training, and even church services were just a few of the activities that happened at the school in addition to the educational programs for boys and girls. With the consolidation movement, many of these programs were forgotten, and the school ceased to be the hub of the community. Over a period of time, citizens' attitudes toward education changed. One reason for this change has been a decrease of citizen involvement in the schools.

In an attempt to improve the quality of education for the county's citizens and alter their attitudes toward education. Alvin C. York Institute, a small town rural high school, convinced a local bank to contribute $20,000 to initiate a community education program at the school.

The community education program at York Institute began the 1985-86 school year in an effort to provide increased educational opportunities and services for citizens of all age levels. The Union Bank has continued financial support of the program recognizing the need for helping people to upgrade skills, for raising the literacy level, and for having an established program of learning which will enable all persons to fulfill their unmet learning needs on a lifetime basis.

Two thirds of the citizens in the county lack a high school education. One third never went past the eighth grade, and many lack any formal education.

With York Institute serving the area as the center of learning and recreation, programs are provided to enhance the lives of the citizens in social, cultural, and recreational areas. In addition, adults pursue programs to develop new skills through both vocational and academic courses. As a result of the community education program, people of the community are helped to realize their own potential for solving their problems. Academic courses offered range from volunteers teaching literacy in the adult education programs to people meeting requirements for advanced degrees.

As people experience a change in the value they place on education, they establish a self-confidence that prepares them to cope with the impact of rapid changes in our highly technical society. Many people are upgrading their skills to qualify for new jobs or for improving the skills for the jobs they now hold. As positive attitudes toward learning are created and people gain upward social mobility, the economy of the community is improved.

The goals of the community education program at York Institute are as follows:

1. To attack the literacy problem.
2. To improve the skills of the disadvantaged adult population.
3. To attempt to meet the cultural and recreational needs of the isolated rural area.
4. To help the people to replace resignation with hope.
5. To help those in poverty circumstances to gain upward social and economic mobility.
6. To create, implement, and direct a program of learning which will enable all persons to fulfill their unmet learning needs on a lifetime basis.

In order to meet the goals of the program, many different classes, activities, programs, and seminars have been provided. Classes have included basic computers, advanced computers, typing, creative writing, karate, bridge, guitar, accounting, aerobics, art, small engine repair, flower arranging, diet and exercise, home landscaping, oil painting, machine shop math, photography, first aid and CPR, interior decorating, hunter safety, square dancing, clogging, real estate appraisal, Dale Carnegie courses, 55-Alive, calligraphy, and woodworking. There have been picnics for senior citizens, rook tournaments, health fairs, basic trauma life support clinics, volleyball tournaments, horseshoe pitching, and banquets for organizations. Seminars have included "Food for Your Heart," "Child Abuse," "Insurance," "Drug Awareness," "Teen Pregnancy," "Income Tax Preparation," and "Wills." College and university level courses are offered from freshman through the master's level. Through the program, this school was established as a General Educational Development (GED) testing center; and tutoring adults in reading, adult basic education classes, and GED testing preparation are ongoing.

***"As people experience a change in the value they place on education, they establish a self-confidence that prepares them to cope with the impact of rapid changes in our highly technical society."***

In addition to the bank's annual financial contribution, other businesses provide personnel and materials for some classes. Public agencies, parents, volunteers, and other interested persons contribute time and talents to the classes and activities. Professionals in their fields provide seminars without cost. The Chamber of Commerce and other civic organizations provide programs and services. Regular faculty members come back at night to provide instruction. The local news media provide free publicity and advertising The community education director recruits professionals and agency represent-

atives to conduct volunteer seminars and programs that are beneficial to people of all ages.

York Institute's community education program involves many parents who were school dropouts. The educational programs allow them to become familiar with the schools which their children attend. The involvement should help them to change the value they place on education.

Community education is people helping people for community improvement, group improvement, and self-improvement. Since this community is an isolated rural area with a high illiteracy rate and a lower socio-economic population, the community education program at York Institute provides hope to the local citizens for a brighter future. The program is working. The community is reaping the benefits. The future of the community is much brighter because of it.

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# PAEC: A PACESETTER IN RURAL EDUCATION

*Paula Waller*

***Rural school districts often lack adequate funding to provide all of the services which are needed. By joining together in a cooperative venture, resources can be shared by rural schools. One such a program is described from the rural part of northern Florida.***

Located over five hundred miles from posh Miami Beach and over three hundred miles from Orlando's Walt Disney World, the Panhandle Area Educational Cooperative districts have much more in common with their rural neighbors to the north, Alabama and Georgia, than they do with the Gold Coast of South Florida. The few palm trees that occasionally dot the landscape are blighted and stumpy because they don't belong here. West Forida lands are game filled piney woods with clay roads spidering into colorful rural communities named Two Egg. Sweet Gum Head and Prosperity. More like country cousins than sisters to the rich, urban, highly populated districts of Dade, Duval and Broward, the counties of the PAEC have to creatively combat problems associated with rural poverty. A tribute to this spirit of cooperation is the Panhandle Area Education Cooperative - a PAECSETTER in rural education for over twenty years.

Historically, this consortium grew from an early recognition by the superintendents in the area of the advantages of pooling their resources and sharing programs. These superintendents for years had practiced rooming close together at state meetings so that they could discuss common problems, offer advice to each other and seek ways to cooperate in areas of mutual interest. The first formal sharing was in 1959 when a NDEA, Title V grant established the Chipola Area Educational Project (CAEP) to improve testing, evaluation and guidance services for seven regional counties.

The cooperative efforts of the CAEP were so beneficial that in 1967 plans were put into motion to extend the programs of the CAEP as well as to invite two new districts, to participate. It was at this meeting that the plan was formulated for what would become the Panhandle Area Educational Cooperative. The nine counties joined together and wrote a proposal for funding under ESEA, Title III. In July 1967 the proposal was approved, a grant was awarded, and the formal components of the consortium were put into place.

From its inception the consortium defined its role as educational enhancement and began to implement innovative programs designed to meet member districts' needs. One of the first innovations involved all nine districts adopting the same school calendar to make possible a consortium wide program of inservice training for teachers. This especially benefitted teachers in areas such as humanities, physical education, special education, business subjects, foreign language, and media where small numbers prevented the district from providing inservice in those subject areas. Common inservice activities permitted teachers to meet their counterparts from neighboring districts and share best practices as well as problems.

To meet the everpresent problem of providing rural classrooms with fully qualified, well-trained teachers, the new consortium implemented projects INSTEP, COP, and LIFT. **INSTEP** provided a program for persons who wanted to teach but did not graduate from a teacher education program. Upon completion of a nine week course designed by UWF plus one year of supervised teaching, the participant was declared fully certified in education by the Department of Education. **Career Opportunites Program (COP)** provided assistance for teachers to work on advanced degrees and **Lattice for Improved Future Teachers (LIFT)** provided training for teacher aides as well as financial assistance to use on a teacher certifi cation.

Over the past twenty-two years, PAEC has established its position as an organization on the cutting

edge of educational enhancement in the state.Proving year after year through cooperation and pooling resources small rural districts can enjoy an array of programs and services as varied and rich as those found in Dade and Broward, our rich sisters to the south. Our smallest district consisiting of three schools with sixty-four teachers can still boast of educational programs that include instructional technology, preschool, instructional television, middle school staff development, risk management, Florida Diagnostic and Learning Resources System, migrant education, comprehensive health/dropout prevention, educational leadership training, Teacher Education Center activities, and many more educational services that would be available only through consortium membership.

In 1967 five consortia were funded throughout Florida and in 1989 the Panhandle Area Educational Cooperative is the only one that survived. The key to success has been that it is an integral part of the districts' schools. It provides enhancement that could only be maintained through cooperation. PAEC working with universities, community colleges, the State Department of Education, state and local agencies, school and community organizations have become PAEC-Setters in rural education working toward the goal of enriching the educational expressions for rural teachers and students throughout the panhandle area of Florida.

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# The Development of Teacher Recruitment Materials for Rural Schools: Three Examples

*Dwight Hare*

***Small, rural school systems continually struggle to ensure an adequate supply of certified teachers. Teacher recruitment materials are effective only if they reflect local teacher labor market conditions.***

Small rural school systems have traditionally struggled to ensure an adequate supply of teachers. Never having achieved financial equity, they are now expected to demonstrate educational excellence (Hare, 1986). To policy makers, concerns over teacher supply and demand are labor market concerns, and useful research enables the control and adjustment of the market.

Barnett Berry (1984) notes while policy research cannot "remedy all convoluting factors affecting the teacher labor market ... it must account for them if policies are to be regionally sensitive and consequently, effective and efficient ... resonable and possible (p. 74). Berry identified factors important in policy analysis,and developed recommendations for consideration by policy makers. Of particular interest is that school systems should become sensitive to labor market forces indigenous to their locale. He notes that rural school systems can promote the benefits of rural living much as industry does in attracting college graduates to their rural sites. Based on these factors, a collaborative effort was undertaken between the Louisiana Center for Rural or Small Schools (LaCROSS) and three rural school systems in north Louisiana to develop materials for recruiting teachers. These materials reflected local context and local market forces. Following is a description of the three parish school systems and an explanation of the development of recruitment materials.

**Parish A**

Parish A has 17,300 residents with the largest town about 5000 residents. Parish A's economic base is the local pulpwood and paper making operation which employs nearly one-fifth of the parish population. This explains the parish's 5-6% unemployment rate in a region averaging 13% and a state averaging 9%.

Parish A's ten schools, all air conditioned and recently renovated, educate 3400 students and employ 230 teachers and administrators. Sixty percent of the teachers have degrees beyond a Master's. Teachers receive a local annual supplement of some $3000, making their salaries nearly 25% higher than the state base pay.

While many teachers in Parish A teach and live there, others commute. It is important to note that these commuters are not those typically associated with rural schools. They are not from urban areas waiting for a job 'back home,' and they see teaching in Parish A as permanent employment.

A secondary supervisor, responsible for recruitment, attends teacher job fairs sponsored by area universities. Recruitment materials for Parish A emphasizes proximity to urban areas. Teachers can pursue advanced degrees at area universities, enjoy the quality of schools and life in Parish A, and earn competitive salaries.

The recruitment packet includes a map detailing accessibility to the parish, a letter from the superintendent emphasizing specific points about the schools, and a description of life in Parish A. Slides and a 15 minute video highlight the community and schools at recruiting fairs. Because of accessibility and economic-financial stability, Parish A utilizes a "soft-sell" attitude.

**Parish B**

Parish B has an agricultural economy based primarily in cotton and totals 24,000 residents. Attempts to diversify the economy have resulted in the establishment of several catfish

farming, operations and contingent businesses in production and processing. Unemployment is around 14%. The parish seat has 6000 residents and is approximately 40 miles from Northeast Louisiana University, the closest university.

Parish B has 5400 students in 12 schools. The majority of its 310 educators graduated from N.L.U., and many are spouses of those engaged in agricultural operations. The local teacher supplement is approximately $1250 yearly, but, because of the declining agricultural economy and competition with the mall in Monroe, sales tax revenue has been adversely affected. Parish B's local tax contribution for education is approximately two-thirds of the state average. Most teachers live within the parish, and those living outside of the parish do not tend to remain with Parish B's schools.

Parish B recruits teachers from area universities, but has typically employed mostly those from this or surrounding parishes. The recruiting packet contained three descriptive pages and a letter from the superintendent emphasizing advantages of living and teaching in Parish B. A video and slides, projecting the parish seat as an urban, progressive, diverse economic center rather than a small farm-economy town, were created to attract teachers at job fairs.

**Parish C**

Parish C, in the Mississippi Delta, has a cotton and soybean farm economy. Its 8000 residents live mostly in the three parish towns. Employment is seasonal, and one-third of the families live below the poverty level.

Parish C has 1650 students and 109 teachers and administrators in three elementary and three high schools. The teacher pay supplement, based on sales tax, has declined over the past few years and totals about $900 yearly.

Usually Parish C teachers are parish natives. Some drive from Mississippi because they began teaching at the time teacher pay was higher in Louisiana. Teachers who neither live within the parish nor drive from Mississippi are typically of three types: 1) certified and simply comfortable in their Parish C school, 2) certified, but awaiting a position to teach 'back home.' or 3) not certified (usually due to NTE scores) awaiting a position 'back home' once they are certified.

The superintendent does not attend job fairs because Parish C cannot compete with area systems; thus, no recruitment packet was developed. However, a brochure listing the demographics of the parish and emphasizing the advantages of the rural system (17-1 student-teacher ratio), was developed for initially contacting prospective teachers. Instead of utilizing job fairs, the superintendent "keeps in touch" with students from "Parish C" enrolled in teacher education. He even reads the newspapers of area parishes and contacts college graduates. He reports he has occasionally found an employable individual in a secondary subject area who may be employed as a classroom teacher while becoming certified. However, the superintendent's efforts do not mitigate the inherent conditions in Parish C.

**Summary**

"School systems should become more knowledgeable of labor market forces indigenous to their locale," according to Berry (1984, p76). This article describes the use of research by local school systems to address their teacher labor market. The importance of this article is to illustrate the practice of local schools solving local problems and the involvement of area universities in helping solve these problems. What is of concern for policy makers is the acceptance of the necessity for educational policy to effectively reflect regional teacher labor market forces indigenous to local school systems.

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## The State of the Association

*(Continued from Page 3)*

An enormous amount of business was transacted in a very short period of time. This meeting was costly in time and money for those board members who attended. However, if the organization is to flourish, such meetings of the Executive Committee should occur on a regular basis: once during the NREA convention in the fall, again in the winter (for pre-planning the convention, etc.), again in the spring at the SREA convention, and perhaps even another meeting in the summer. The goals and objectives of SREA simply will not respond in any significant degree to an occasional meeting of its executive body. Nor, will the goals and objectives of SREA submit to superficial commitment by members of this body. Thankfully, the Board has historically been composed of highly dedicated and energetic people. Were this not so, the organization would have collapsed long ago.

We have moved with increasing effectiveness and pace toward realizing our objectives. To continue this progress calls for increasing commitment and time by us all. In many respects, SREA is the most potent agent of excellence on the rural education scene in the South. Support it as you can. Stimulate membership. Keep your Executive Committee members on his or her toes in respect to our objectives. Let him or her know your concerns, needs, and ideas. Let us all work for the further effectiveness and excellence of SREA, and its mission of equitable and excellent education for all of the children of the rural South.

# Unexpected Benefits For Rural Education From A Beginning Teacher Internship Program

*Chuck Hulick and Bobby Malone*

***Beginning teacher induction programs have increased in recent years. There is evidence that these programs help the new teachers, but this article suggests that in addition there may be benefits to rural education.***

## Introduction

The legislature in the state of Kentucky underwent some revision in 1989 (Kentucky Department of Education, 1989). The internship program was established as part of the movement to reform education in this country and was specifically intended to provide support and assistance for beginning teachers which would make the first year of teaching a better experience. It was hoped that a good beginning might also help keep more of these new professionals in the teaching profession. In a number of instances where the first year is especially difficult, teachers decide to leave the field and to seek employment in some other line of work.

## The Teacher Internship Program

A committee is formed to provide support and supervision for the teacher intern. The members of the committee include the school principal, a resource teacher from the school, and an external person who is frequently a teacher educator from a nearby college. The resource teacher makes him/herself available to the intern prior to the beginning of school and during the school year to assist in any way. The resource teacher serves in many ways as a mentor to the intern.

The teacher educators are considered to be knowledgeable in the most recent literature on education and familar with the training the intern received in college. The teacher educators are also able to use their experiences in the schools with the intern to enrich the courses they teach in the teacher training program.

The internship committee follows a timetable in order to observe the intern teaching classes a minimum of three during the academic year. After each observation the committee meets with and gives feedback to the intern regarding the teaching they have observed.

## Feedback on the Internship Proram

Research conducted on the internship program has found that a vast majority of the interns report that the internship program has been very helpful to them. They note that it takes some time during their very busy schedule to meet their internship responsibilities, but that it is helpful. Interns have made statements such as the following about the internship:

> "Because of my specific committee, I found the internship program very helpful. It was a great success and I am very proud of my accomplishments as a teacher."

> "The internship mentor provided a lot of information, support, and suggestions. Even the observations helped to increase my effectiveness and self-esteem."

> "The help given was greatly appreciated, and I think helping (me) not judging (me) was why my internship was successful."

> "It provided the encouragement a new teacher needs."

The feedback has also helped to identify skills in which the interns felt that they were not adequately prepared. One of these skill areas was that of dealing effectively with classroom discipline. This is consistently one of the realms in which new teachers report feeling less self-confident. Another realm which was identified by interns as a weakness was that of having skills to deal effectively with parents. From this knowledge the teacher educators have begun to examine the teacher training program to determine how these skills are being taught. The conclusion has been that very little in the teacher education curriculum addresses the skills necessary to deal with parents. Changes have already been implimented to more adequately address these skills in the future.

## Additional Impacts

The evidence cited above seems to indicate that the internship is providing the support and feedback for the new teaching professionals as it was intended to do. However, additional benefits seem to have occurred as a result of the internship program.

As a part of the internship program all of the committee members must participate in training. The initial training received by the committee members lasts 4 days. Each year after the first year the committee receives update training which lasts two days. The training program includes training in the research knowledge base upon which effective teaching is based as well as training in an observation system for the committee to use in observing the teacher intern.

Principals and resource teachers report that the training they received for the internship program was one of its most valuable benefits. It brings them in contact with research literature with which they are often not familiar. Teachers and principals are very busy in their jobs and are often unable to keep up with all of the new research findings which are being published. They report that the knowledge not only has helped them to do a good job of helping the intern, but it has also been very beneficial to them personally.

The observation system in which

they are trained identifies specific behaviors which teachers can perform in order to enhance the learning and achievement of their students. Resource teachers indicate that they begin using these behaviors in their own teaching. Principals report that the observation system and the knowledge base enables them to better perform the instructional supervision required of them.

While these benefits seem to accrue to all the principals and resource teachers who are trained as a part of the internship program, those from rural school districts may benefit even more. Rural districts often have fewer specialized personnel whose responsibility it is to be knowledgeable in the current research. The district may be located farther from colleges and other resources who might normally provide this information. The training has reduced the feelings of professional isolation which some of the rural schools report.

The internship program has had another somewhat unexpected benefit for rural education. The teacher educators who travel to the schools to work with the intern and the internship committee are traveling to many rural schools where they have never been previously. College professors do not have a particular reason to be in many of the small rural schools or many other schools for that matter. Going to these rural schools and working with the school personnel several times during the academic year brings them into contact with the settings and the contexts of rural education. Many professors have expressed the opinion that they have become more familiar with teaching in rural schools and perhaps feel better prepared to incorporate these ideas and examples into their teaching.

Schoeder (1989) found in a study of university faculty who had participated in the internship program that most of the faculty members said that participation in the program had made a difference in their own teaching. They also reported that the experiences had made a difference in their thinking about the training of teachers, and that they had used the learning which resulted from their experiences to attempt to make changes in the teacher education program.

## Conclusion

The Kentucky Teacher Internship Program has been successful in providing support for and in assisting new teachers. These were the primary goals of the program when it was initiated. It appears there have been additional benefits for rural education which may not have been envisioned when the internship program was begun.

Teachers and principals in rural schools have had access to training in the most current research literature on effective teaching strategies. They have also been trained in a teaching observation system which can benefit them directly in observing and helping the teacher intern and also help them in their own work. This training is fairly extensive and is provided free to the school district. There is also evidence that when these two individuals go back to the schools and begin talking about the new information, other teachers have asked to be provided with more information on both the knowledge base and the observation system.

Finally, college and university faculty who particiapte in the internship program as a part of the intern's committee have had reason to be in many rural schools on a regular basis. The faculty report that their thinking about these schools has changed as a result of these experiences. They have also incorporated some of this new awareness into their teaching. By using examples from small and rural schools in their teaching and routinely talking about their experiences in these schools, their students will become more aware of rural schools and their special characteristics. Hopefully, some of the stereotypical ideas regarding rural schools will be challenged and more prospective teachers will regard teaching in a rural setting as a postitive experience.

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# URBAN CHAUVINISM AND RURAL VALUES

*Keigh Hubel*

***Many people have very stereotyped ideas regarding the nature of life in a "rural" area. These assumptions which often exist at almost an unconscious level are identified through the personal experience of the author.***

I was born and raised in a small Minnesota community of less than 500--graduated in 1950 in a class of 16. In my home town I knew all of the dogs by first name and they wagged their tails when I greeted them. In third grade I also knew all of the local heroes

and they knew me. For fun we pulled some pranks like anyone with energy and ideas might .

Maynard (my hometown) is undergoing economic distress just like most rural areas. For the past few years it seems like the major cash crop has been scrap iron and the major industry jury duty. But we're coming back, we have resolve. We seem to be able to put things in proper perspective. The weather is one of those things.

I realized that life in Maynard was different than life in the city, but when I went to boot camp at Fort Riley it came home to me loud and clear. I was making one of those love driven trips home to see Arlene and I had let my mother know, but I also wanted Orval and Leona to know so I could see them if possible. I had worked on their farm for four years, and they were kin also. I stopped in Kansas and placed a long distance call as follows:

*Me:* "I would like to place a collect call to anyone who answers at the Orval Peterson residence."

*Operator:* "What is their number?"

*Me:* "Two longs and a short."

*Operator:* "You smart alecs tie up a lot of our time..."

*Me:* "Please just try to get Maynard Central."

After some effort on her part she did her job and...

*Gusty:* "Maynard Central."

*Operator:* "I have a collect call for anyone at the Orval Peterson residence from Keigh Hubel."

*Gusty:* (Maynard Central) "That's two longs and a short, but they're not home. They're at the basketball game and Leona is serving bars later. Where are you Keigh?"

*Me:* "I'm in Kansas City on my way...

*Operator:* "You can't..Who's going to pay for this?"

*Gusty:* "Orvil will."

*Me:* "Will, you let Orval and Leona know I'll be home this weekend."

*Gusty:* "Sure."

At that point I knew the difference between caring and anonymity.

Life in Maynard was easy for me although I realize now that we were poor. When I was growing up there were no labels of rich or poor. People knew that labels might drive people apart so they didn't use them. Some people has swell things or were referred to as "well to do." Others had "modest means." All along I got to know what it is to be kind. We all learned how to develop enduring relationships, sometimes with people who made that task difficult.

Maynard is still less than 500 and peopled with stable, steadfast, honest citizens, who still believe in the American dream. When I am with them, as with other rural folks they show me the meaning of decency.

All of the preceding is but an introduction to my reaction to the notion of urban chauvinism. I wonder about devotion only to things urban. The concept of chauvinism originated from the actions of Nicholas Chauvin, a soldier in Napoleon's army who maintained an unreasoned attachment to the lost empirical cause. Since that time militant, boastful, condescending, fanatical devotion to one's own race, country, sex are also referred to as chauvinistic. Urban biases which would relegate everything rural to second class status also deserve a careful examination under the chauvinist label. Male-chauvinism is an attempt by males to treat females as second class citizens. This has resulted from ignorance and cultural traditions. To some extent urban chauvinism is much like male-chauvinism--based on ignorance and the obvious urban cultural biases, but it is real. Consider the following examples.

Bill Stagg in the FFA magazine wrote the following: "When you first meet Rick Maler, you come away impressed. He dresses well, understands the world around him and seems to be following a carefully crafted life plan. He has all the articulation and urbanity of someone born and bred in the city. Only he wasn't."

Whether from ignorance or urban myopias this message is mainlined into all of those rural youth who faithfully read their FFA journal. They have to feel somewhat deprived or second class in nature, guilty about where they have been geographically planted.

Rural teachers in a FOXFIRE program in Georgia were told by big city teachers "You are simple, but interesting." The open, honest, direct approach —the desire to communicate in sincere and friendly ways — is often interesting to city people. Rural folks tend not to play games or manipulate others and have fewer hidden agendas. Somewhere in the deep reaches of this urban mind rural areas can be seen as a vast zoo where the genuineness and decency of the people become oddities and qualities worthy of recreational viewing.

***"This has resulted from ignorance and cultural traditions. To some extent urban chauvinism is much like male chauvinism — based on ignorance and the obvious urban cultural biases, but it is real."***

Larry Gavin is a teacher of English to teens. He has chosen to live in a small town where his neighbors have also asked him to serve as mayor. This community of 300 was awarded a sewer project grant and hired a bondsman from Boston to help raise the additional funds needed. At their first meeting Larry noticed the man talked slowly and loudly as if all of those in attendance were retarded. Larry was and is erudite, urbane, and gracious enough to let his apparent condescending attitude pass without comment. The Bostonian sees anyone living outside of an "arena of action" (city) as a bucolic boob. Larry's patience was tested as the pre-town council chatter moved to the October stock market crash and the Boston chauvinist ex-

claimed, "You heard about that out here?"

At a legislative committee meeting in Marshall, MN a state representative for St. Paul exhorted "Sure Wendell Berry is a farmer, but he is an intelligent one." The list of what a farmer has to be stretches from agronomist to zoologist. Many a mathematician and mechanic have been awed by the way farmers figure and fix.

A review of the movie "Country" exclaimed, "The movie was well acted, well written, gripping with it's message, but unrealistic because Jessica Lange was too beautiful to be a farm wife." One thing I know for sure is that beauty is more than an external quality and that's one fact rural, people live out. It also shows that the reviewer is making judgements based on some isolated stereotyping she has done.

Many of these images come from the likes of Larry, Darrel and Darrel and Pee Wee Herman. The latest is a geek who supposedly has his roots in a rural setting. Inferences also tie Larry, Darrel and Darrel trio to the farm , especially the A&W Rootbeer ads that show Larry with his friends (farm animals).

Bob Leenerts from Illinios was paired with a roomate who had never been out of Chicago in the freshman dorm at the University of Chicago. For at least a week the Chicago biased boy eyed Bob with obvious wonder and amazement. Somehow he was looking for Bob to act as he thought he should — his view of a farm boy. One morning he said to Bob, "Do you really have roosters to wake you up in the morning?" Other examples:

"Do you have computers?"--a question to a rural teacher in Iowa.

"Do you have a place to sit?"--a question posed by football fans who were preparing to travel to a rural area to watch a game.

"I couldn't tell he was from the country until someone told me. He seemed almost normal."--a comment at a recent education conference.

"Some of them are real ambitious and get good jobs in the city."—a resident of a small town in SW Minnesota.

"I knew a good one once. You can't lump them together."

"They say a fella moved from the city to the country and raised the I. Q. of both areas."--a "joke" told at an urban development conference.

"Clod," "hick," "sorghum Lapper," "hayseed," and "bumpkin" are all names rural people, especially farmers, are called.

Of course, there are exceptions, but the vast majority of American education today is permeated by an orientation towards things urban, and conscious or subconscious prejudice against things rural. Textbooks as well as curriculum designs reflect urban biases. Career education prepares our brightest youths to leave their hometowns for jobs in the cities of the world. They are directing them away from their own communities. Studies show that such biases alienate young people from their heritage. What is often ignored is local history, arts, leisure pursuits, memories, stories, politics, wisdom and collective community experiences. We imagine the future out of the notions we develop about our past.

Significant research has shown that one of the best ways to promote growth, build community pride and retain young people is to study the local community. To study something is to make it legitimate for young life reflected in the curriculum, our youth are being told that it is not significant or maybe not even an option for them to follow. Today, teachers across the nation have accepted a standardized, urbanized curriculum that largely ignores the rural influence.

When I was in high school people in general prepared me to leave Maynard. A local state senator took an interst in me because our family was of "modest means" and all of his messages led me to believe that all roads of opportunity led away from Maynard. None of the careers we studied in ninth grade civics existed in Maynard. The popular notion was that "anyone with any get up and go, got up and went."

***"Of course, there are exceptions, but the vast majority of American education today is permeated by an orientation towards things urban, and a conscious or subconscious prejudice against things rural."***

I listened to the radio and built a mythology about life in the city. I looked at magazines with pictures of life in the cities - exciting. I heard stories about life in the cities from those who lived there and now visited on special occasions-dazzling. I studied textbooks that exalted urban heroes like Henry Ford and John D. Rockefeller-archetypal.

The subtle messages from all of the sources allowed me to look at my neighbors with anticipatory pity as I waited for my liberation. I didn't know why then but some graduates who live right in Maynard didn't attend the class reunion. They felt guilty about not ever being liberated from this dismal existence.

If the way rural people love, laugh and live is outmoded I wanted to be considered passe. I also hope that rural people will see fit to call for the inclusion of local people, places and things in their school curriculum. The development of pride in who we are is a matter of believing that the way we live is O.K. A first step in the process of developing local and personal pride is to recognize that we don't have to accept the condescending and patronizing attitude of the urban majority.
I like who I am and where I live!

# Technology in Rural Schools: The Future is Now

*Kenneth Brookens*

Being educated in a rural school has led to the notion by some that one's education is second rate. If this were a fact, then nearly 60% of all school districts in this nation with three-fourths of their students living in towns with less than 2,500 population would be receiving a second rate education. In many instances this is just not true. Rural schools have particularly been challenged with tight budgets which limit the money available for teachers, textbooks, advanced courses, and technology coupled with isolation and economic decline. However, a rural education is a mixture of the good and bad. Student-teacher ratios are low and students receive more individual attention. Schools are a central part of the rural community. Change is occurring in rural schools. Rural educators across the country are using the unique characteristics and strengths of their community coupled with today's technology to provide quality and up-to-date education for rural America that rivals large city and urban schools.

For rural education the future is now. Education is at the beginning of a very fundamental shift from a text-based education system to a media-based system. Powerful media have been around for some time: pictures, slides, motion pictures, video tapes, transparencies, and television have been used to enhance learning. Often lag time between the development of technology and its adoption and integration into education varies with the technology, but estimates vary between five and twenty years. For example we have known about the computer for 30 years and that computer assisted instruction (CAI) is a powerful tool. To date few places can boast of CAI being integrated into the curriculum. The microcomputer has been on the market for 15 years, yet it has not found its way into general adoption in the classroom. These media forms have all been used to enhance learning. But what is new is the enhanced computer capabilities that facilitate the use of mixed media. What is now available is the integration, the management, and the interactivity of all these things with a single system that created a multi-media learning system.

With the availability of new technologies for the rural schools, change is occurring in the educational environment. The following examples describe some rural education programs that are helping schools and communities to meet the challenges of enhancing the learning environment in spite of isolation and economic decline by instituting aggressive and progressive change in their educational programs.

## Telelearning: Teaching Out to the Gifted in Rural School

Providing academically challenging programs for the gifted in rural schools has always been difficult. One solution is the Telelearning Project housed at the Louisiana School for Math, Science, and the Arts. The program provides low cost, highly interactive courses through the linkage of computers to a phone line network of rural students in Louisiana. Since 1988 the program has served 14 schools throughout the state providing the following courses: calculus, precalculus/ trigonometry, survey of the arts, French 1, and western civilization. The most obvious and most important benefit is that advanced coursework is brought to rural isolated students who would not otherwise have access to it. Plans for 1990 include expansion to 20 locations so that some one-third of the state's parishes can be served. For more information contact Gail Lewis, EdD, or Martha S. Talbert, Co-Directors, Telelearning Project, Louisiana School for Math, Science, and the Arts, Natchitoches, LA 71457.

## Rural Schools Cluster to Offer Distance Learning

The North Dakota State Department of Public Instruction with the assistance of the Mid-continent Regional Educational Laboratory (McREL) implemented a technology plan for rural school dsitricts. Five schools in the western part of the state, linked by fiber optic cable and interactive video systems, are clustered to use a mutually agreed-upon curriculum broadcast throughout the school day to all the others from one school. This project proved that shared decision making can take place by bringing together schools with similar interests to solve common problems and also to stretch the technology dollars with no perceived loss of local control. Another project, the Prairie School Television consortium uses technology to establish a video library service so schools can develop individual libraries of course materials. Contact Toni Haas, Director, Regional Programs or Paul Nachtigal, Director, McREL Rural Institute for further information at 12500 E. Iliff Ave., Suite 201, Aurora, CO 80014.

**Education Satellite Network**

The Education Satellite Network (ESN) is a network hub that provides a combination of classroom-oriented services that allow the teacher to teach rather than to search for resources. Specifically, it shares ideas and adaptations of ideas. In addition to these brokerage services, ESN produces and transmits original programming initiated internally and externally including a monthly newsmagazine program on education related issues and events. Within the very near future combinations of technologies will allow increasingly complicated tasks to be performed such as touch-key pads or other devices that will enable learners to respond to questions or ask questions, and have near-instantaneous feedback via terrestrially-based and/or satellite-based systems. Additional information can be obtained by contacting Hal Gardner, Director of Satellite Communications, Missouri School Boards Association, 2100 I-70 Drive S.W., Columbia, MO 65203.

**The Future is Now**

The examples above suggest that media rich learning environments can provide a level of understanding that would not be possible by text alone. Whether we like it or not, technology is a major source of our culture. The challenge of the 1990's is to ensure that technology becomes a constructive force in students' lives in public education. The mission of education is to harness the technology and to redirect its energy into the most dynamic and interactive system ever developed. Rural schools can now compete with city and urban schools. The technology is now available for rural schools to become the leaders for the transmission of culture and learning in our society.

# Southern Rural Education Association
# MINUTES

The Board of Directors for the Southern Rural Education Association met at the Terrace Garden Inn in Atlanta, Georgia on October 14, 1989.

Those attending were:
Bill Peter — Missouri
Don Dale — Oklahoma
Paul Stapleton — Virginia
Bobby Malone — Kentucky
Chuck Hulick — Kentucky
Jack Sanders — West Virginia
William Kurtz — Texas
Paula Waller — Florida
Gail Curry — Florida
Robert Hoffman — Missouri
Ken Brookens — Missouri
Paul DeLargy — Georgia
Ernest Nicholson — South Carolina

SREA President, Dr. Bill Peter called the meeting to order and presided during the session. Introductions were made and the agenda was reviewed.

Minutes of the last meeting in Nashville, Tennessee were read and approved by concensus.

The Executive Secretary's report and summary of the Nashville Conference were deferred due to the absence of William Clauss and Kathy Lewis. Pertinent information regarding these areas will be discussed at the next meeting.

Paul DeLargy, Program Chair for the 1990 SREA Fifth Annual Conference, discussed several aspects of the convention. The Conference is scheduled for April 18-20, 1990 at the Terrace Garden Inn in Atlanta. Board members were given a tour of the facility in order to conduct planning activities for the meeting. A tentative conference agenda as well as a projected budget summary were shared. Estimated expenses for the conference totaled $21,450 with an estimated income of $21,450.

These data were calculated based on an attendance of 200 persons. The registration fee for an SREA member was set at $70.00 with an additional $25.00 late registration fee. A non-SREA member would pay $85.00 registration with an additional $25.00 for late registration. DeLargy also presented plans for presentation proposals, mailouts, recruitment of participants and telephone/communication network of State Directors. Timelines included October 15-November 15 for mailouts, reservations no later than March 27, 1990, solicitation of presenters by the end of January, 1990, acceptance of presenters by end of February, and scheduling of printing. Paula Waller volunteered staff members of the Panhandle Area Educational Cooperative to assist with registration and also to coordinate door prizes. A long discussion regarding vendor displays ensued. **Motion/second (Bill Kurtz/Paula Waller) to charge basic fee of $250.00 which would entitle vendor to one display table, one concurrent session presentation, and registration for one person. Additional table would cost double the SREA expense and additional persons coming with vendors would be charged a registration fee.**

**Motion carried. Motion/second (Bob Malone/Paul Stapleton) to include a Research Forum as part of the SREA Conference agenda with Sue Raftery coordinating the event. Motion carried.** Approval by concensus was granted for Dr. Jonathan Sher as opening keynote speaker; Dr. Barbara Hatton, Ford Foundation as luncheon speaker; and Senator Wyche Fowler as guest speaker for the closing luncheon. **Motion/second (Nick Nicholson/Bill Kurtz) to have President's Reception at Conference. Motion carried. Motion/second (Nick Nicholson/Paul Stapleton) to purchase Bahamas Vacation plan for $89.00 as a door prize for 1990 conference. Motion carried.**

A committee was appointed for the purpose of establishing criteria for the selection of the Alvin C. York Award winner as well as other SREA-related awards and recognition. Of immediate concern was getting the criteria out for nominations so that screening and selecting a recipient can be done prior to the Spring Conference. Appointed to the committee were: Bob Malone, Chairman; Jack Sanders, Chuck Hulick, and Bill Peter. **Motion /second (Paul DeLargy/Bill Kurtz) to investigate possibility of a sponsor for a national type SREA annual award, specifically approach Blue Bird Bus Company. Motion carried.**

Resolutions were the next agenda item. A sample proposal was circulated by Bill Peter. Bob Malone suggested each state submit hot topics to be compiled and identified as areas for which resolutions need to be written. These should be forwarded to Frank Howell.

No report on marketing activities was made due to Kathy's absence. However, it was noted that all State Directors should do marketing and personalize their efforts.

SREA publications were discussed: **Motion/second (Bill Kurtz/Nick Nicholson) to give Chuck Hulick authority to initiate publication of the first SREA Journal. Motion carried.** One suggestion was to include the SREA membership application and a subscription form in the first edition. **Motion/second (Bill Kurtz/ Nick Nicholson) to authorize Chuck Hulick to spend up to $1500.00 to publish first SREA Journal. Motion carried.**

Report of SREA Policy Statement was deferred due to absence of Bob Stephens.

In Sue Raftery's absence, no report on Research was made. See minutes above for action taken regarding Research Forum at Spring Conference.

Plans relative to the 1991 SREA Convention were described by Paula Waller. A packet of information on possible city and hotel sites was distributed. Suggestions including conducting Disney workshop, taking tour of Disney Underground, offering CEU's for participation, and considering "Equity" as the Conference theme. **Motion/second (Paul Stapleton/ Jack Sanders) to allow the Florida delegation authority to arrange 1991 Conference at Holiday Inn in Orlando. Amendment offered by Nick Nicholson to allow Florida delegates to investigate and book like accommodations if necessary. Motion as amended carried.** 1991 President will be Paula Waller and Program Chair will be Gail Curry, both from Florida.

Bill Peter announced Board positions needing to be filled included Delaware, Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands, and West Virginia.

Several issues affecting policy and legislation were mentioned. Jack Sanders expressed an opinion that SREA serve as a forum for issues while taking no political action, but carry information and knowledge back to the individual states for specific action. An item of concern regarding the IRS status of SREA was noted. Bill Peter agreed to research this question.

Each State Director in turn described marketing activities occurring in his/her state. All were encouraged by Bill Peter to engage in good awareness activities and public relations techniques for SREA.

Committees established for SREA for 1990 and their members are:

**Marketing**

Kathy Lewis
Gail Curry
Paula Waller
Nick Nicholson
Paul DeLargy

**Resolutions**

Frank Howell
Paul Stapleton
Bob Hoffman

**Awards and Recognition**

Bob Malone
Bill Peter
Jack Sanders
Chuck Hulick

**Political Action**

Coy Hammons
Jack Sanders
Bob Stephens
Don Dale

**Publications**

Chuck Hulick
Bob Malone
Bill Kurtz

The meeting was adjourned by consensus.

# Guidelines for Submission of Articles

Manuscripts are welcomed and should conform to the following guidelines. **The American Psychological Association Publication Manual**, 1983 should be used as a guide for style. The articles should focus on topics of interest to the SREA membership which would include matters dealing with rural education. Reports of research, discussion of issues, sharing information, short poems, short essays, and graphics are welcomed. Regular manuscripts should be from 2 to 7 pages double spaced on 8½ x 11 sized paper. The In the Field feature section is intended to be short, practical ideas or instructional methods which would be of particular interest to teachers. Therefore, these articles would typically be 2 or 3 pages in length.

Manuscripts should be submitted in triplicate with a cover sheet which has the title and authors identified on it. The title should also be on the first page of the manuscript. This will facilite the blind review of the articles.

Receipts of the manuscript will be acknowledged.

Manuscripts should be sent to Dr. Chuck Hulick, Editor, Southern Rural Education Association, Journal, 337 Wells Hall, Murray State University, Murray, Kentucky 42071.

***The following agencies and businesses have provided support for the Southern Rural Education Association. Their support is appreciated. Please consider supporting them by using their products and services.***

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**Panhandle Area Educational Cooperative**
411 West Boulevard
Chipley, FL 32428

# CALL FOR PRESENTATION PROPOSALS

## *Southern Rural Education Association*

Sixth Annual Conference
February 6-8, 1991
Grosvenor Resort
Walt Disney World Village
Orlando, Florida

**THEME: RURAL EDUCATION FOR THE NEW MILLENNIUM**

A. **TITLE OF SESSION:** _____

B. **PRIMARY PRESENTER:** Name _____

Title/Position: _____

Institutional Mailing Address: _____

_____ Telephone: _____

C. **ADDITIONAL PRESENTERS:** [Name(s), Title, Institution] _____

_____

D. **CONFERENCE PROGRAM SUMMARY:** [Forty words or less for the printed program]

_____

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_____

_____

E. **ABSTRACT MUST BE ATTACHED:** Abstracts must address and identify by number each of the following five elements. May be published in conference proceedings &/or ERIC/CRESS.

1. Title
2. Duration of Presentation
3. Importance/purpose/rationale of the program or research.
4. Description of the program or research. (Not to exceed two pages double spaced)
5. Other information you consider important to the selection committee's understanding of the nature of the presentation.

F. **MEDIA:** Media requested : _____

G. **ENCLOSURES REQUIRED WITH PROPOSAL:** One self-addressed postal card or envelope. This form completed. Abstract as described in E. above.

All presenters must be registrants of the conference.
Please submit before October 15th to: Gail Curry,
Panhandle Area Educational Cooperative
411 West Boulevard
Chipley, Florida 32428
For additional conference information also contact Gail Curry, SREA Convention Chair, at (904) 638-6131

*Plan Now to Attend . . .*

# SOUTHERN RURAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION
# 1991 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

## February 6-8, 1991

### *Grosvenor Resort Hotel*
### *Disney World Complex*
### *Orlando, Florida*

**Hosted by:** Panhandle Area Educational Cooperative and 42 Florida rural school districts.

**Special Feature:** Disney World Staff will make a presentation on business partnerships with schools.

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*Membership Form for the Southern Rural Education Association*

Name _____

Organization _____

Mailing Address _____

Business Phone _____ Home Phone _____

Type of Membership and Annual Fee:

☐ Individual ($15.00) ☐ Organization ($50.00)

Please list members included in organization (limit of 4)

1. _____
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Please make check payable to SREA and mail to:

**Gail Curry**
**Panhandle Area Educational Cooperative**
**411 West Blvd.**
**Chipley, FL 32464**