

Reenergizing Small Communities: A Vital Role for Rural Schools

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Abstract

New ways of participating in rural communities and in community development have evolved as the structure of rural communities has changed. In some communities, the impetus to redefine and reenergize is strong while, in others, ways to move forward have yet to be identified (Pomeroy 1997). Rural schools serve a vital role in recreating communities in a highly mobile, industrialized society. According to Lyson (2005, 26), "It is important for policy makers, educational administrators, and local citizens to understand that schools are vital to rural communities."

This article, which is a follow-up to the author's case study involving a small New Zealand rural school (published in *The Educational Forum* 2003), examines the vital role schools play in recharging small communities.