RESOURCES ABOUT

Rural Education

The NCELA Resource Guides address significant issues, provide annotated bibliographies for further reading, and offer guidance on conducting research on topics relevant to the education of English language learners. For other Resource Guides, visit www.ncela.gwu.edu/resabout

The contents of this Resource Guide, including links to external sites, do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the Department of Education nor does the mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Government. Unless otherwise noted, readers are free to duplicate and use these materials in keeping with accepted publication standards. NCELA requests that proper credit be given in the event of reproduction.

This Resource Guide is available online at www.ncela.gwu.edu/resabout/rural
Educating students in rural school districts in the United States has always held both challenge and opportunity. For those rural school districts that have recently experienced a new and more diverse student population, there is the added challenge of meeting the needs of students from multiple linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

- **Part I: Introduction to the Issues**... a brief overview of the topic and relevant issues.
- **Part II: Bibliography and Webliography**... an annotated list of significant books, articles, and web resources about the topic.
- **Part III: Web and Library Pathfinder**... a guide to finding further information on the topic via the Internet or a library.

The complete Resource Guide is also available for download as a single [PDF](#).

This Resource Guide was published June 8, 2006. Links were accurate and active at that time but NCELA cannot guarantee that all links are currently active.

**To cite any portion of this Resource Guide:**

Educating students in rural school districts in the United States has always held both challenge and opportunity. For those rural school districts that have recently experienced a new and more diverse student population, there is the added challenge of meeting the needs of students from multiple linguistic and cultural backgrounds. The following resource is designed to provide information on the topic of English language learners (ELLs) in rural school districts. It is intended to help educators and communities in rural areas develop more culturally responsive and equitable programs of education for every learner.

**CONTENTS**

**Introduction**  
Characteristics of the Rural ELL Population  
Responding to Professional Development Needs of Teachers of ELLs in Rural School Districts  
Responding to ELL Curriculum and Program Needs in Rural School Districts  
Works Cited

**Introduction**

Educating students in rural school districts in the United States...
has always held both challenge and opportunity. Among other challenges, the sometime vast distances between schools and districts may affect student access to special programs, teacher access to professional development and collegial support, and administrator access to financial resources. Rural school populations may also face the combined challenges of "a shallow tax base, isolation from job-growth centers, aging public facilities, inability to attract teachers and a heavy concentration of households living in or near poverty" (Southern Governors' Association, 2004, p. 2). In two recent studies, rural school district administrators identified such factors as "small school size and geographic isolation as greatly affecting their ability" to attract and retain teachers, and support professional development opportunities (Government Accountability Office, 2004, p. 1; Schwartzbeck & Prince, 2003). Without sufficient and qualified staff, effective education is not possible, as "providing high-quality instruction and programming requires teamwork" (Coltrane, 2003, p. 3).

Along with challenges, rural areas also offer opportunities for the development of strong educational networks and social communities supportive of student achievement. To staff in rural schools, "students and parents come with real faces, seen in school and in the community, too" (Southern Governors' Association, 2004, p. 8). Moreover, rural schools may have smaller student-to-teacher ratios that support individualized instructional practice. The opportunities afforded by rural communities have been enhanced through the introduction of distance education and related technologies that offer more extensive coursework and networking for students and teachers; "through cooperative arrangements to share teachers in specialized subjects among neighboring schools and to deliver professional development services; and through collaboration between high schools and community colleges" (Southern Governors' Association, 2004, p. 9). However, funding and infrastructure for such opportunities is still limited in some areas of the country.
In addition, for those rural school districts that have recently experienced a new and more diverse student population, there is the added challenge of meeting the needs of students from multiple linguistic and cultural backgrounds. In contrast with previous decades, new patterns of mobility have resulted in increasing migration of diverse learners to rural areas. Rural areas of the Southeast and Midwest, in particular, have seen unaccustomed numbers of foreign-born newcomers (Kandel & Cromartie, 2004). Rural school districts in general are more likely than before to see native-born, immigrant, and refugee English language learners (ELLs) entering at all grades with varying levels of English proficiency and education. In addition, although data indicate that nearly one half (44%) of the nation's ELL population lives in rural communities (The Education Alliance at Brown University, n.d.), a given district may have only a handful of ELLs and no teacher qualified to work with them. In rural school districts with small numbers of ELLs, access to federal discretionary grants or other ELL-related funding that would support adequate programming may be limited.

These are among the primary challenges that underscore Secretary of Education Spellings' commitment to the Rural Education Task Force within the Center for Rural Education, and that have spurred the emergence of research on achievement-oriented programs for rural schools. The compilation of resources that follows is designed to provide information on the topic of English language learners in rural school districts, including characteristics of the rural student population, and issues regarding professional development, curriculum, and program requirements for ELL programming in rural areas. The resources presented here are intended to help educators and communities in rural areas develop more culturally responsive and equitable programs of education for every learner.
Characteristics of the Rural ELL Population

New studies and analyses of Census data have helped define the rural school population: It is relatively large, poor, and ethnically diverse (e.g., Kandel & Cromartie, 2004). However, although there are few districts in the United States that have not experienced an upward change in immigration, resources defining the cultural and linguistic diversity of the rural school population are still limited. Even identifying whether a given education community is indeed rural has sometimes been problematic (The Education Alliance at Brown University, n.d.). Title VI of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, for example, defines a local education agency as "rural if the total number of students in average daily attendance at all its schools is fewer than 600, or each county served by that school has a total population density of fewer than ten persons per square mile, and all of its schools meet the definition of rural as described by the National Center for Education Statistics." NCES, in turn, defines a rural town as one that is within or outside a metropolitan statistical area (MSA), has a population of less than 2,500 people, and is coded rural by the MSA. When defined in this way, data indicate that "more than one-fourth of the students in U.S. public schools attend schools in rural areas or small towns with fewer than 25,000 residents, and nearly one-fifth – about 8.8 million – attend schools in the smallest communities of fewer than 2,500" (Johnson, 2005, p. 1). Findings on the ethnic and language minority composition of rural school populations indicate that Hispanic and Native American groups make up a large percentage of the student population in rural areas of Alaska, Arizona, California, Hawaii, New Mexico, and Oklahoma. In addition, the largest percentages of the rural population age five and older who speak English "less than very well" are found in these three states: Arizona, California, and New Mexico (Johnson, 2005).

Important to those planning programs of instruction is that new patterns of migration and immigration have resulted in the concentration of specific language minority populations in areas of
the United States that have not been accustomed to diversity. Although large numbers of immigrants continue to settle in primarily urban areas of New York and California, metropolitan and rural areas of six Southern states – Arkansas, Alabama, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee – have seen large and unexpected increases in their immigrant population. The largest growth has been in the Latino immigrant population. Increasing numbers of Hispanics settling in rural areas of the U.S. accounted for 25 percent of nonmetro population growth during the 1990s (Kandel & Cromartie, 2004). A significant number of these recent immigrants do not hold a high school diploma and may be considered limited English proficient (Kandel & Cromartie, 2004; Kochhar, Suro, & Tafoya, 2005). Overall, immigrants in rural areas are less likely to complete high school than immigrants in urban areas (Huang, 1999). Combined with the other challenges of rural districts, addressing the educational needs of this very different student population has become a priority for rural districts.

Responding to Professional Development Needs of Teachers of ELLs in Rural School Districts

If English language learners are to fully develop their English and academic language proficiencies, programs must be comprehensive and meet both academic and language proficiency needs. However, schools in rural communities may not have access to one of the necessary tools: adequate numbers of professionally trained and highly qualified staff.

Attracting and retaining qualified teachers has been a long-standing challenge for many rural communities, particularly for those districts that are more remote or disperse. Recently, a survey of more than 3,000 rural school superintendents found that 41 percent of districts with 250 or fewer students reported serious difficulty in attracting teachers while 17 percent reported
difficulty in retaining teachers. This compares with an average of 19 and 10 percent, respectively, across all rural districts surveyed. Rural school superintendents surveyed reported that the primary obstacles to attracting and retaining teachers were "low salaries, isolation, housing shortages, schools badly in need of repair or modernization, multiple-subject assignments, and limited opportunities for training in the surrounding area" (Schwartzbeck & Prince, 2003, p. 7). Forty-four percent of rural superintendents attributed teacher shortages to low salaries, 42 percent to social isolation, 38 percent to geographic isolation, and 36 percent to lack of adequate housing (Schwartzbeck & Prince, 2003).

Rural school administrators report using multiple strategies to address teacher shortages, including advertising (74%), recruiting teachers from local populations (72%), recruiting online (66%), and recruiting from substitute teacher lists (63%). Thirty-one percent report that they retrain teachers to fill hard-to-fill subjects. In addition, teachers in rural districts may be asked to teach multiple subjects that they may not be fully qualified to teach. Teacher shortages leading to multiple-subject teaching is an issue for many districts, and for smaller districts in particular. According to rural superintendents surveyed, 57 percent of secondary teachers in districts with 250 or fewer students were teaching multiple subjects, compared with 20 percent of teachers in districts with more than 10,000 students (Schwartzbeck & Prince, 2003). Reported teacher shortages were most common in foreign languages, mathematics, science, and special education (Schwartzbeck & Prince, 2003).

Teachers in rural school districts may also have less experience with diverse learners and thus require additional professional development in such areas as second language acquisition and making content accessible to second language learners. However, the physical and cultural isolation associated with rural schools may affect teachers’ access to mentorship and professional development opportunities that would develop their skills in these
areas. Interactive technology or distance learning is being used in many rural school districts to share and maximize the use of resources among several rural communities, and engage teachers in professional communities (Reeves, 2003). Nearly two-thirds of rural district superintendents reported using distance learning for teacher development, with secondary foreign language coursework the most commonly reported course offered (32 percent) (Schwartzbeck & Prince, 2003). Projects like the Rural Willamette Valley Professional Development Project, a collaborative effort between California State University Long Beach's Center for Language Minority Education and Research (CLMER) and Oregon's Willamette Education Service District (WESD), focus on expanding the numbers of teachers and paraprofessionals qualified to work with English language learners. A few states, such as Missouri, have taken advantage of bulk buying power to provide the infrastructure for distance-learning service in remote areas. For specific examples, see the Missouri Research and Education Network/MOREnet.

Responding to ELL Curriculum and Program Needs in Rural School Districts

For many reasons that include the low-incidence of ELLs in some rural districts, and the resulting limitations of funding, "rural school districts are less likely to have formal policy" (Bérubé, 2000, p. 11) or programs specifically designed for their English language learners than are urban districts. Districts with only a few ELLs or with scattered resources may have more difficulty in providing the comprehensive, cohesive program of learning that results in social and academic achievement. As described in the section on professional development, rural districts may find it difficult to hire or retain qualified bilingual or English as a second language staff. Instruction or support in the native language may not be possible for political and practical reasons. Newly arrived immigrants or migrants may feel academically and culturally
isolated from the school and community.

Building and implementing a comprehensive program that meets academic, language proficiency, and social needs of ELLs requires focusing attention on leadership and instructional capacity, opportunities for collaboration within and across schools, and parent and community involvement (Hill & Flynn, 2004; Wrigley, 2000). Most important is ensuring that ELLs are accorded the recognition and respect that they deserve as full members of the school community (Bérubé, 2000).

In developing an appropriate program of services, it is also necessary to consider individual differences such as previous education, language and literacy proficiency levels in English and in the first language, level of home support, and how well equipped teachers and other staff are to meet ELLs' language and academic needs. A strategy that combines a focus on individual differences with a comprehensive approach is the development of learning support networks, organizational structures "through which school staff, parents, and community members and agencies work together to address student needs" (Tinzmann et al., 1990, p.5). Features of learning support networks include the development and implementation of communication channels for sharing information about student needs, targeted strategies and resources, evaluation of activities, and continual network development.
Works Cited


Reeves, C. (2003). Rural challenges and No Child Left Behind. In implementing the No Child Left Behind Act: Implications for rural schools and districts. Naperville, IL: North Central Regional Educational Laboratory.


This Resource Guide was published June 22, 2006. Links were accurate and active at that time but NCELA cannot guarantee that all links are currently active.

To cite any portion of this Resource Guide:


This toolkit includes procedures for implementing a systematic approach for attracting, selecting, appointing, socializing, and retaining teachers and other school leaders in hard-to-staff rural and small school districts. The toolkit includes the following six tools: Recruitment Brochure Tool; Assessment of Community Resources Tool; Applicant Portfolio Review Tool; Applicant Interview Tool; Personnel Retention Checklist Tool; and Personnel Exit Interview/Survey Tool. Each tool includes a brief description of its purpose, the premise on which it was developed, and procedures for using it effectively.

Bérubé, B. (2000). **Managing ESL programs in rural and small urban schools.** Alexandria, VA: Teachers to Speakers of Other Languages.

This book is designed for use by educators being introduced to English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) learners as well as for ESL professionals who want a resource on state-of-the-art practices. This book describes how a small program of services can fit into the standards movement and how to staff such a program. It also contains suggestions for instruction, student assessment, program evaluation, parent and community involvement, and multimedia resources for the education of second language learners in low density communities.

In this article, Bérubé discusses the three Rs of recognition, responsibility, and respect as they relate to LEP students and the ESL profession in rural school systems. The author suggests that the three Rs appear particularly elusive in U.S. rural communities, where LEP enrollments are low, where the professional staff are commonly unprepared for the changing realities of having LEP children in their midst, and where LEP newcomer children struggle to fit in. Bérubé suggests that the three Rs are holistically integrated in the work schools must do to assure that LEP children are welcome, are challenged, and enjoy the same experiences accorded their English-only peers.


This digest provides general information on the characteristics of English language learners (ELLs) in U.S. preschool and primary school programs and describes learning conditions and instructional practices effective for educating young ELLs. The author suggests that educators must continually strive to provide effective, nurturing environments and developmentally and linguistically appropriate instruction for all learners, taking into consideration the characteristics of young English language learners and their language development, the learning conditions most effective for these learners, and the kinds of instruction that best meet their needs.


This resource guide is designed to help rural school districts with a low incidence of English language learners develop the capacity to build and implement a comprehensive program that meets both the academic and language proficiency needs of ELLs. The guide details MCREL's actual implementation efforts in a Wyoming school district, highlighting the major components of building capacity for leadership, instruction, and parent involvement. The guide offers a list of suggested resource materials and an appendix with sample materials from MCREL's work with the Wyoming school district.

Drawing on information from federal statistics, this report summarizes economic and demographic changes relevant to rural education and calls for more research into their impact on rural education. In light of the relatively strong economic recovery that followed the depression of the 1980s, the report suggests that policymakers and communities should take advantage of this upswing to provide new resources for school improvement, ranging from facility maintenance, staffing, and curriculum improvement to serving special needs of at-risk groups. But the report also suggests that uneven growth across geographic regions and demographic categories has put tremendous pressures on schools in some states, so the need for strong state and federal support seems inevitable.


This study discusses the effectiveness of a culturally responsive teaching program on teachers and students in selected schools in Kanawha County, West Virginia. The program was implemented in a variety of ways at a number of schools, and student achievement measures, classroom behavior observations, and interviews with participants were used to gather data. The report suggests that teachers who learn about culturally responsive teaching practices and who teach standards-based lessons designed to be consistent with culturally responsive teaching principles are more likely to keep students on learning tasks during the day.


This report analyzes the importance of rural education in each of the 50 states and calls attention to the urgency with which policymakers in each state should address the problems of rural education. The report found that half of the states where rural education is most important to the overall educational performance of the state are either in the Great Plains or the Midwest, and that more than half of all rural students are eligible for free or reduced-price meals in 11 states. The report also found that rural schools face challenges associated with factors other than poverty, including students with disabilities, students who cannot
speak English well, and minority students disadvantaged by generations of racial and ethnic discrimination.


This report uses 1990 and 2000 Census data and a typology of county types to examine recent settlement patterns and characteristics of Hispanics in nonmetro areas of the United States. According to the report, by 2000, half of all nonmetro Hispanics lived outside traditional settlement areas of the Southwest, and many Hispanics in counties that have experienced rapid Hispanic growth are recent U.S. arrivals with relatively low education levels, weak English proficiency, and undocumented status. The report suggests that Hispanic settlement patterns warrant attention by policymakers because they affect the well-being of both Hispanics and rural communities themselves.


This study examines the demographic characteristics of six southern states newly settled by Hispanics at state and county levels, examining the economic factors that have led to the increase in Hispanic migration to these areas and some of the policy implications for the region. The report found that underlying the growth of the Latino population in the new settlement areas was an unusually robust economy. The report predicts that as the demands on public services increases, so, too, will Hispanics' contributions to the tax bases supporting these services.

Lawrence, B. K. (2004). **The hermit crab solution: Creative alternatives for improving rural school facilities and keeping them close to home.** Charleston, WV: ERIC Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools.

This book seeks to show that, much the way the hermit crab survives by finding an existing structure and adapting it to its own use, so can rural communities find and reuse cost-effective accommodations to ensure the survival of their schools. The author outlines the benefits of keeping rural schools local and reviews the condition of rural school facilities and the obstacles to their improvement. She offers 11 case studies and shows readers how to apply lessons learned, including how to identify assets and liabilities, navigate policy issues, and obtain...
funding. She suggests that while finding solutions to facilities issues takes time, effort, persistence, and creativity, crafting a school facility that serves all members of the community and helps sustain its viability is a goal worth pursuing.


This article addresses issues related to working with families that are culturally diverse. The world view and communication styles of various cultures are discussed, and specific recommendations for effective transition planning designed to increase cultural awareness and sensitivity are given. The article also suggests ways to expose students and families to a variety of role models. Resources and career options are suggested.


This publication aims to provide policymakers with a research base that can guide their decision making, improve their technical assistance and professional development efforts, and assist them in refining their ELL programs. Though not a how-to guide for implementing ELL programs, the publication synthesizes the research and literature that can help educators meet their goal of increasing the achievement of ELL students in secondary settings.


This publication addresses several issues related to educating English language learners in rural districts. The issue provides specific suggestions and resources for addressing deficient ESL/Bilingual programs, inadequate administrative support, insufficient funding and financial commitments, and a shortage of comprehensive and on-going staff development for teaching and assessing ELLs. The issue also details problems associated with planning for ELL population growth and discusses reactive vs. proactive approaches to addressing these challenges.

This digest considers the relevance and practice of multicultural education in rural schools characterized by lack of ethnic and cultural diversity. It argues that although many rural areas of the United States are relatively homogeneous, multicultural education can help prepare rural students to live in the culturally diverse larger society.


This report summarizes the findings of a nationwide online survey of more than 3,000 rural school superintendents about how rural school districts are meeting the teacher quality requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. In the survey, superintendents estimated high numbers of teachers employed in their districts would be able to meet the federal definition of "highly qualified," although there was some confusion about the definition at the federal vs. state levels.


This report discusses the effect of new demographics on the needs of rural high schools in Southern states and draws on lessons from successful Southern schools with high-minority and/or high-poverty populations. The report presents findings from teams of governor-appointed educators and education policymakers who visited high schools successfully serving high-poverty and/or high-minority student bodies, and provides recommendations for governors who determine their state's educational strategy and momentum.


This book provides a history of immigration patterns and immigrant
policies and details the findings of community fieldwork by researchers who provide a ground-level view of demographic, social, economic, and political changes related to immigration in seven rural towns.


This essay describes some creative ways that schools and communities work together to help students see links between school and the rest of their lives, increase parent and community dedication to their schools, improve coordination among schools and other social service agencies, and provide stimulating educational opportunities across the lifespan. The authors suggest that achieving these goals leads to expanded roles for both communities and schools.


This report presents a case study of an English language learner in a rural Oregon middle school whose performance in social studies dramatically improved under concept-based instruction. The report suggests that methods such as concept-based instruction, which align curriculum and instruction with assessment, may offer solutions for schools serving culturally and linguistically diverse and other "at-risk" students.


This article highlights some promising practices in the area of serving ELLs in rural schools. The article suggests that while the problems and challenges are well known, there are many districts — against all odds — that are making remarkable strides in improving the achievement and high school completion rates of their language minority students.
This resource addresses issues associated with starting an ELL program in a rural school district. The topics are grouped into two general areas: those relating to districts and schools and those addressing the home front. The resource was compiled through interviews with program administrators who have started English Language Learner programs in rural school districts in Nebraska.

This site is designed for persons who are interested in educational changes taking place in rural America. The site provides access to recent data collected by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), as well as to resources available through selected contractors and grantees of the U.S. Department of Education.

This Web site provides a broad overview of the many challenges facing rural schools, and factors that may contribute to overcoming these challenges. The Web site contains research articles, news articles from NEA publications about rural schools, and links to other advocacy organizations.

Part of the North Central Regional Educational Laboratory's Critical Issues Directory, this interactive Web site addresses many aspects of multicultural education and preparing teachers for diverse classrooms. The Web site provides a historical overview of the push for multicultural education, interviews with practitioners, an article about the key elements of effective teacher education for diversity, case studies of universities successfully preparing prospective teachers for diversity,

This Web site brings together a collection of research and development resources to assist rural educators in providing a high quality education for all children. The Web site includes numerous resources, such as written reports; executive summaries; guides and directories; links to Web sites; and toolkits; as well as audiotapes and CDs.

This Resource Guide was published June 22, 2006. Links were accurate and active at that time but NCELA cannot guarantee that all links are currently active.

**To cite any portion of this Resource Guide:**

Part III: Web and Library Pathfinder

The following resources have been chosen to help you learn more about issues concerning English Language Learners in rural school districts. They include links to centers, offices, and other institutions, as well as guided links to a variety of databases and web-based resources.

Selected Web Resources

News Sources
Free Databases
Subscription Databases

Selected Web Resources

American Council on Rural Special Education
The American Council on Rural Special Education (ACRES) is an organization comprised of special educators, general educators, related service providers, administrators, teacher trainers, researchers, and parents who are committed to the enhancement of services to students and individuals living in rural America. ACRES was founded in 1981 by a group of individuals interested in the unique challenges of rural students and individuals needing special services. ACRES is the only national organization devoted entirely to special education issues that affect rural America. The membership of ACRES is geographically diverse, and is representative of all regions of the country. This fact is especially important since rural issues are not only different from urban issues, but also may vary among specific rural areas.
Center for Policy Studies in Rural Education

The Center for Policy Studies in Rural Education (CPSRE) is a National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE) Project. It is designed specifically to meet the needs of state policymakers as they work with small and rural schools in areas related to implementation of No Child Left Behind, the use of technology to bridge "equity in access" gaps, the effects of school consolidation and closure, and school/district and community collaboration. CPRSRE offers technical assistance to state boards of education, state education agencies, state governments, and the federal government.

Center for Rural Education

The Center for Rural Education, located in the Office of Vocational and Adult Education within the U.S. Department of Education, is designed to disseminate information regarding research and practice to stakeholders on a wide range of topics of particular importance to schools and communities in rural America and to bring renewed attention to the problems and issues of students in rural schools.

Journal of Research in Rural Education

The Journal of Research in Rural Education was established in 1982 by the University of Maine College of Education and Human Development. JRRE publishes the results of educational research that is of demonstrable relevance to rural settings. JRRE welcomes single-study investigations, historical and philosophical analyses, research syntheses, and policy analyses. Particularly encouraged are manuscripts dealing with learning and instruction; preservice and inservice teacher education; educational leadership; educational policy; and the cultural, historical, and economic context of rural education. Brief commentary on recently published JRRE articles is welcome as well. In 2004 (Volume 19), JRRE converted to an open-access online journal.

National Center for Rural Early Childhood Learning Initiatives
The National Center for Rural Early Childhood Learning Initiatives fosters original and applied research on the quality, accessibility, and replication of early educational intervention services for at-risk young children and families in rural America. Established in 2004 with a grant from the United States Department of Education, the Center is a program of the Mississippi State University Early Childhood Institute. The center has commissioned analyses of the availability of data about rural young children in national datasets, and further analyses of rural disparities in early childhood services indicators and child well-being indicators in datasets that contain rural markers. See Presentations and Reports for presentations and published reports to date.

National Research Center on Rural Education Support
The National Research Center on Rural Education Support was established in 2004 with funding from the Institute for Educational Sciences of the U.S. Department of Education. This center is based at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. The research and development work of NRCRES will seek solutions that will improve the quality of rural education. The programs conducted by NRCRES will address the following issues in rural education: retention of qualified teachers; student achievement and dropout; availability of and access to opportunities for advanced placement courses; and improvement in teacher quality through professional development. The approach taken by NRCRES will be based on principles derived from empirical evidence. In the process of addressing these issues that face rural education, NRCRES will complete several research programs.

National Rural Education Association
The National Rural Education Association is made up of rural school administrators, teachers, board members, regional service agency personnel, researchers, business and industry representatives, and others interested in maintaining the vitality of rural school systems across the country. The National Rural Education Association (NREA) is the oldest established national organization of its kind in the United States. Formerly known as
the REA, the Association traces its origins back to 1907 when it was originally founded as the Department of Rural Education.

**Navigating Resources for Rural Schools**

*Navigating Resources for Rural Schools*, from the National Center for Education Statistics, is designed for persons who are interested in educational changes taking place in rural America. The site provides access to recent data collected by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), as well as access to resources available through selected contractors and grantees of the U.S. Department of Education.

**Rural Education Special Interest Group**

The *Rural Education Special Interest Group* (SIG) promotes scholarly conversation about the lives of rural people, places, and their schools through research, and provides a forum for dissemination of this research. This SIG is part of the American Educational Research Association.

**Rural School and Community Trust**

The *Rural School and Community Trust* is a national nonprofit organization addressing the crucial relationship between good schools and thriving communities. Its mission is to help rural schools and communities get better together. Working in some of the poorest, most challenging places, the Rural Trust involves young people in learning linked to their communities, improves the quality of teaching and school leadership, and advocates in a variety of ways for appropriate state educational policies, including the key issue of equitable and adequate funding for rural schools. The Trust's goals include: high-quality and place-based education, widely practiced in rural schools and communities; effective, permanent organizations of rural people, active in every state, participating in state and local policy development and ensuring high-quality rural education; and a national agenda where rural people and their issues are visible and credible.

**Rural Sites Network National Writing Project**
This Web site serves as the online home for the Rural Sites Network National Writing Project (RSN), a national, rural, teacher network that links teachers through sites of the National Writing Project. Through conferences, retreats, and mini-grants, the RSN seeks to facilitate cross-site communication, further professional development, increase site capacity, and develop new ways of sharing rural teachers' work at local and national levels. The Web site contains a wealth of information pertaining to rural schools such as grant opportunities, an educational opportunity event schedule, periodical articles, and a free forum.

[back to top]

News Sources

OELA Newsline is the electronic news digest for the U.S. Department of Education's Office of English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement, and Academic Achievement for Limited English Proficient Students (OELA) — Read related articles in OELA Newsline.

Google News gathers stories from more than 4,500 English-language news sources worldwide, and automatically arranges them to present the most relevant news first. Topics are updated every 15 minutes. — Read related articles in Google News.

Yahoo News identifies over 7,000 news sources in 35 languages and offers continuously updated articles from Yahoo! News combined with crawled news sources around the Web. — Read related articles in Yahoo News.

Free Databases
The following databases offer free access to their contents. Wherever possible, we have constructed searches that guide you to resources related to immigration and education issues.

**NCELA Resource Collection**
The NCELA Resource Collection database contains over 20,000 items relevant to the education of English language learners and language instruction educational programs.
— Look for related items in the [NCELA Resource Collection database](#).
Conduct your own search.

**ERIC: The Education Resources Information Center**
Sponsored by the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) of the U.S. Department of Education, ERIC is the world's premier database of journal and non-journal education literature.
— Look for items catalogued with the term “rural education.”
— Look for items catalogued with terms "rural education" and "English (second language)."
— View ERIC descriptors (keywords) related to the term “rural education.”
— Conduct your own search.

**Google Book Search**
Google Book Search identifies and catalogues books provided by publishers and library partners. With Google Books, you can identify a resource, buy it online from a variety of vendors, find reviews, related books and information, and locate books in a library.
— Look for related items catalogued in [Google Book Search](#).
— Conduct your own search.

**Google Scholar**
Google Scholar indexes peer-reviewed papers, theses, books, abstracts, and articles, from academic publishers, professional societies, preprint repositories, universities, and other scholarly
organizations. With Google Scholar, you can search diverse sources, find papers, abstracts, and citations, locate a complete paper, and conduct research in a variety of areas. In many cases, Google Scholar will provide links to library holdings.
— Look for items catalogued in Google Scholar.
— Conduct your own search.

**Population Index**
Produced by the Office of Population Research (OPR) at Princeton University, Population Index is a reference tool to the world's population literature. It presents an annotated bibliography of recently published books, journal articles, working papers, and other materials on population topics. This website provides a searchable database containing 46,035 abstracts of demographic literature published in Population Index in the period 1986-2000.  
— Conduct your own search.

**Subscription Databases**
The following subscription/fee-based databases are useful in conducting controlled and higher-level research. Please contact your local library to determine if you have access to them.

**Academic Search Premier**
Academic Search Premier indexes over 8,000 publications, with full text for more than 4,450 of those titles. PDF backfiles to 1975 or further are available for over a hundred journals, and searchable cited references are provided for more than 1,000 titles.

**Dissertation Abstracts**
Dissertation Abstracts is a definitive subject, title, and author guide to virtually every American dissertation accepted at an accredited institution since 1861.
**Education Full Text/Education Abstracts/Education Index**
Produced by H. W. Wilson, these databases contain over 600,000 items in education related research. The databases provide comprehensive abstracting and indexing for over 475 core international English-language periodicals, yearbooks, and monographic series covering all areas of education from preschool to postgraduate.

**JSTOR**
JSTOR is a not-for-profit organization with the mission to create and maintain an archive of important scholarly journals, and to provide access to these journals as widely as possible. JSTOR offers researchers the ability to retrieve high-resolution, scanned images of journal issues and pages as they were originally designed, printed, and illustrated.

**PsycInfo and PsycArticles**
Produced by the American Psychological Association, these databases index over 2 million items from selected U.S., Canadian, and European psychology journals, as well as comprehensive international book and chapter information.

**Social Sciences Index and Social Sciences Abstracts**
Produced by Cambridge Scientific, Sociological Abstracts contains over 800,000 items in sociology and related disciplines in the social and behavioral sciences.

**WorldCat**
Produced by OCLC, WorldCat is a worldwide union catalog created and maintained collectively by more than 9,000 member institutions. With millions of online records built from the bibliographic and ownership information of contributing libraries, it is the largest and most comprehensive database of its kind. WorldCat will not only identify an item, it will tell you which libraries have it. (Note: Google Scholar and Google Books will also conduct a WorldCat search as part of their query.)
This Resource Guide was published June 16, 2006. Links were accurate and active at that time but NCELA cannot guarantee that all links are currently active.

To cite any portion of this Resource Guide: