



RSA TODAY

News for New York State's Rural Schools

July 2019



I don't live in New York,



I live in New York

"Communities Committed to Educational Excellence"

David A. Little, Esq., Executive Director, dal295@cornell.edu 518-250-5710

Dr. Gretchen Rymarchyk, Deputy Director, gkr1@cornell.edu 607-254-3557

Natalie Mitchell, Administrative Assistant, nam33@cornell.edu 607-255-8709

Fax: 607/254-2896

Rural Schools Association of New York State

Warren Hall 275 Flex

Cornell University

Ithaca, NY 14853

www.RSANY.org

RSA Board of Directors :

- Charles Chafee, Chair
- Doug Gustin, Vice-Chair
- Scott Bischooping
- David Brown
- Eric Burke
- Joseph Burns
- Thomas Crook
- Mark Davey
- Terry Dougherty
- Mickey Edwards
- Norb Fuest
- Gary Furman
- Renee Garrett
- Linda Gonyo-Horne
- John Goralski
- Jesse Harper
- Penny Hollister
- Jennifer Howell
- Thomas Huxtable
- Christopher Kelder
- Linda King
- Julie Lutz
- Kevin MacDonald
- Tammy Mangus
- Kyle McCauley Belokopitsky
- Carolyn Ostrander
- Wayne Rogers
- Nicholas Savin
- Christine Schnars
- John Sipple
- Elissa Smith
- Jason Smith
- Lawrence Van De Valk
- Heather Zellers



**LEARNING, NETWORKING, REJUVENATING
 RSA SUMMER CONFERENCE
 COMBINED THE BEST OF SUMMER WITH
 THE BEST PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

48 hours of learning set astride one of the most picturesque lakes, at one of the most beautiful times of year in one of the country's best facilities, hearing from the state and nation's top educational experts. It's a tough combination to beat, but every year attendees tell us RSA has topped itself once again. This year was no exception.



Dr. Jason Andrews

We began with a pre-conference summit on transforming rural school districts through community and college partnering. NYSCOSS Supt. of the Year Dr. Jason Andrews of Windsor and Cornell's Dr. John Sipple gave us the latest information on collaborating with healthcare providers and universities to do innovative programming and

build school based health centers. With the state education commissioner's pending



Dr. John Sipple



Dr. Kim Wilkins

resignation, we heard from the State Education Department’s Deputy Commissioner Dr. Kim Wilkins on SED’s efforts and focus.

On Monday our focus went national with the National Dropout Prevention Center and Successful Practices Network President Ray McNulty talking about the next chapter in education, while Battelle for Kids’ Chief of Staff Jamie Meade showed us how to build a portrait of a successful graduate (and the changes needed to make it happen for all students!) We heard from the National Rural Educator of the Year, Pennsylvania’s Wade Owlett on doing the hard work of staying in rural



Raymond McNulty

America and the critically important role our rural schools play in that effort. We wrapped up our general sessions with a panel of experts ranging from NYSPTA’s President Lorey Zaman on engaging parents in education, to NYSCOSS’ Deputy Executive Director Bob Lowry on trends in educational focus and concerns, to RSA and Seneca Falls Board Member Heather Zellers highlighting federal advocacy issues and RSA’s own Executive Director Dave Little forecasting the political and demographic environment in rural New York in the coming years.



Jamie Meade

Interspersed amid this powerful lineup was a rare but outstanding summer student musical performance by the Canandaigua Academy Fiddle Club, a networking reception at nearby Brewery Ommegang and the ever popular presentations by the winners of the FFA Statewide Student Oratorical Contest. RSA also honored RSA and Champlain Valley Educational Services BOCES board member Linda Gonyo-Horne for her insightful guidance and advocacy with the Anne Z. Paulin Distinguished Service Award. Current NYSSBA board member and former RSA board member Sandra Ruffo was presented the RSA Appreciation Award for her outstanding leadership at the local, regional and state levels, while current RSA board member and Wayne Finger Lakes BOCES leader Scott Bischooping received the William H. Deming Award for outstanding leadership by a school administrator.



Linda Gonyo-Horne



Wade Owlett



Sandra Ruffo

Finally, the James C. Dawson Lifetime Service Award was presented to NYSSBA Deputy Executive Director and General Counsel Jay Worona, for his 35 years of leadership, advocacy and service to public education. It was a stellar group of deserving recipients.

Of course, the meat of the conference is provided by the many breakout sessions focusing on programs and services already doing great work in rural districts. RSA always selects presentations that can be easily replicated in all rural districts and this year’s choices (selected by a conference planning team led by Tompkins-Seneca-Tioga BOCES DS Jeff Matteson) really hit the mark.



Jay Worona



Scott Bischooping

Attendees networked with over 30 vendors and sponsors at a number of receptions, providing the perfect balance of inspiration, education and relaxation. The coming years are likely to be particularly challenging for our rural schools, but RSA and its Summer Conference will be there to prepare, protect and provide rural schools with the latest and most pertinent information.

See you next year July 12-14 at The Otesaga in Cooperstown!

RSA 2019 Summer Conference Highlights



**Dr Jason Andrews and Dr. John Sipple Open the Conference with
“Transform your District -Transform your Kids”**



Student Musical Performance - Canandaigua Academy Fiddle Club



**RSA Executive Director
David Little
Welcomes Everyone
&
Deputy State Commissioner of
Education, Dr Kim Wilkins
Addresses the
Conference Attendees**



RSA 2019 Summer Conference Highlights



Conference Attendees Engage with Our Vendors



Conference Attendees Enjoy Brewery Ommegang

RSA 2019 Summer Conference Highlights



President, Successful Practices Network Raymond McNulty - Monday Keynote Speaker & Session Attendees



2019 New York State
FFA Student
Oratorical Winners

Rebecca Coombe,
Tri-Valley CSD
&
Austin Nolley,
Stockbridge Valley CSD



RSA 2019 Summer Conference Highlights



Chief of Staff, Battelle for Kids, Jamie Meade - Monday Presenter & National Rural Teacher of The Year Wade Owlett - Monday Evening Keynote Speaker



RSA Award Winners & Wrap - Up

Plan now to join us for the Rural Schools Association July Conference at the Otesaga in Cooperstown, NY July 12-14, 2020

More Conference Photos Are Available at The Following links:



Sunday Photos

<https://www.danlittlephoto.com/proofing/rsa-conference-sunday>



Monday Photos

<https://www.danlittlephoto.com/proofing/rsa-conference-monday>



Ommegang Brewery Photos

<https://www.danlittlephoto.com/proofing/rsa-brewery-ommegang>

RSA COLLABORATES WITH FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TO ADDRESS THE RURAL WORKFORCE CRISIS

To say that rural New York communities are being challenged is a dramatic understatement. The Great Recession took rural jobs away. Roughly a million rural New Yorkers have left in the last decade, markedly lowering rural school enrollment. Making matters worse, the 2020 U.S. Census will decrease rural New York's representation in both Washington and Albany. Last month our state's decidedly urban-centric leadership passed a farmworker's rights bill that puts additional pressure on the rural economy. What to do?

If history is any indication, efforts to address the issue will probably start with pulling up our own bootstraps. RSA helps lead a joint task force of the U.S. Department of Labor and the U.S. Department of Agriculture on invigorating the rural workforce. Called the Rural Workforce Innovation Network (RWIN), it strives to provide new approaches to the age old question of "How do you keep 'em down on the farm?" The task force is hosting four national meetings on rural workforce development. RSA is proud to host the Northeast meeting, with attendees from New England and the East Coast to Ohio.

We know that rural schools and their communities have a symbiotic relationship and so we invite you to be part of this critically important discussion. Take a look at the program and you'll see that the summit will feature top level experts, be interactive and will focus on discussing workable solutions to what RSA considers to be a crisis with potentially permanent implications for rural life. So Save the Date: September 13, 2019 at Cornell's Warren Hall. Let's make sure our federal officials have the benefit of New York's rural schools as we work to educate the rural workforce of tomorrow!



Save The Date

Northeast Region

Rural Workforce Summit

September 13, 2019
Cornell University, Ithaca, NY



There's no question that rural communities are under considerable stress. Northeast Region Summit is intended to inform policy makers of ways to support the rural workforce. Hear from top level experts, then be part of the solution through round table discussions.

Registration information coming soon





Workforce Development Conference
Cornell University
September 13, 2019

9:30 Registration

10:00 to 10:15 Introduction David Little (Host)

Kathryn J. Boor, the Ronald J. Lynch Dean of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, Cornell University

Richard Mayfield State Director USDA (<https://www.rd.usda.gov/about-rd/leadership/state-directors/richard-mayfield>)

10:15 to 12 Why Rural

- Why rural matters **Rob Mahaffey**
Director King Whetstone Northeast NASS USDA Census
(https://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics_by_State/Pennsylvania/Contact_Us/index.php)
- **Dr. Scott Sheely**, D.ED., CWDP Special Assistant for Workforce Development, Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture
- **Steve Bulger** SBA Regional Director (<https://www.sba.gov/about-sba/sba-team/sba-leadership/steve-bulger>),
- **Karen Coleman**, Deputy Commissioner of Workforce Development and Governor 's Office Advisor on Workforce Policy and Innovation
- Question for panelist

12 – 1:00 Lunch and networking

Guest speaker Lt. Governor, on her calendar

1:00 – 2:00

Marion Terenzio President SUNY Cobleskill (<https://www.cobleskill.edu/about/leadership/presidents-office/president-terenzio.aspx>)

2:00 – 2:15 Break

2:15 – 3:45 Panel and open discussion Success stories and best practices...

Pam Buffington Co-Director, Science and Math Programs (<https://edc.org/pam-buffington>)

Rebecca Lewis Senior Project Director (<http://ltd.edc.org/people/rebecca-lewis>)

John Sipple Associate Professor (<https://cardi.cals.cornell.edu/people/john-sipple>)

Robin Blakely-Armitage (<https://devsoc.cals.cornell.edu/people/robin-blakely/>)

3:45 – 4:45 Round table discussion group one question from table interaction and open form

We'd love to have you share a sector-based best practice related to workforce, for example in the manufacturing, healthcare, avionics, telecommunications, veteran-focused, or another sector.

- Provide a question per table
- Questions
- Take backs and future

4:45 – 5:00 Closing remarks Richard Mayfield, David Little, Julie Suarez

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE!

Whenever I encounter a veteran (usually identified by their cap) I make a point of saying “Thanks for being there for us.” I hope that it conveys my understanding that they weren’t there for themselves, but for those of us back home. What I’m hoping to say is that no matter whether they were in a trench, on a deck, in an aircraft or behind a desk, they were there on our behalf, at their own personal expense. It’s something that was impressed on me by having my father and three uncles in separate branches of the military from the Battle of the Bulge through Korea, the Cold War and Vietnam. They all served differently, but they served all of us when called on.



Commissioner Elia was a stalwart leader and liaison for rural education. Here she is shown at one of many appearances at the RSA Summer Conference.

As Commissioner Elia announced her pending resignation, the phrase immediately came to mind again. She came at a time when we needed her. We were bickering about testing, evaluations and mired in our seemingly never ending cycle of under-resourcing our schools that are in the most financial need. Commissioner Elia helped change the discussion, helped work us through it and particularly the arduous process of determining how our state would respond to the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA.) She refocused the discussion on funding equity. It wasn’t easy duty.

For rural schools, her leadership helped in a number of ways, including ensuring that they were represented in policy development. Through RSA, rural schools helped develop the state’s ESSA plan. We worked together to help SED focus on equity in how we fund our school districts. The 2015 RSA summer conference was her first public presentation as commissioner and she was steadfast in her efforts to include rural schools in policy development. She worked with RSA to have the BOCES District Superintendents become a liaison between rural schools and SED and prior to their meetings with her, RSA and BOCES DS Mark Davey now review our concerns, our activities and our needs so that he can present them to the group for review and action.

My father in law recently went on an Honor Flight to Washington, D.C. It was a glorious recognition of service for our veterans. More than 100 from the Capital Region, including a 93 year old WWII vet had a sendoff worthy of their service. Bands played, choirs sang, there was a motorcade and at the airport, Members of Congress spoke eloquently. I believe that my father in law felt sheepish that his own service had been in Arizona during the Cold War-until a fellow vet said to him. “It was the Army. You did what they told you to do. You’re as deserving as anyone here.”

I feel the same way about Commissioner Elia and our rural school leaders. All have served as best they could at what you were called to do. So to Commissioner Elia and to all of you “thanks for being there for us!”





**FROM ARGENTINA TO NEW YORK
STATE AND BACK
THE RURAL AMERICAS PROJECT**



Last year saw the jumping off point for a multi-national collaboration between New York’s rural schools and rural schools in Argentina. Enthusiastic students and staff from E.S. 11 Guanaco in Pehauajo, Argentina worked with students in Seneca Falls to better understand each other and to benefit from the creativity and talents of the other. The project’s leader, Karina Belletti is looking for this year’s partner. Is it your district?

Below, Karina has laid out a plan to collaborate with a rural school here in New York State. Look it over. Collaborating with these Argentinian schools would require some coordination with state curricula. The cultural impact on your students could be far reaching and deeply meaningful. RSA’s experience in helping arrange this partnership has proved to be rewarding. Both students and staff from Pehauajo are an unstoppable force. For instance, recognizing that their town had little to offer from cultures outside of their region, they built their town a theater where video, music and film presentations can inform their community. Working with them can make a lasting and favorable impression on your students!

Here is Karina’s suggested plan for this year’s collaboration. She is very willing to tailor the effort to your needs and parameters. Take a look and see if your district can bridge time and space between the Americas!

2019/2020 PILOT PLAN “RURAL AMERICAS” – VIRTUAL STUDENTS INTERCHANGE BETWEEN ONE RURAL DISTRICT FROM NEW YORK STATE AND FOCUS GROUPS FROM 4 SCHOOLS IN THE TOWN OF PEHUAJO:

Estimated number of students involved: 200

Schools:

- **NORMAL SCHOOL:** 3 classes (1st, 2nd and 6th years) – Escuela Secundaria N° 7 (secondary school). It is one of the only two public institutions of the province of Buenos Aires that offers a multilingual program (English and French) from kindergarten to secondary education combined with courses such as theatre, art and music. The reason we chose this institution is that it opens up the possibility of including FRENCH in the interchange and art education is one of the study plans students can select for the last three years of their secondary studies.

- **NATIONAL SCHOOL:** 3 classes (3rd, 4th and 5th years) – Escuela Secundaria N° 6 (secondary school). The reason we chose this institution is that there is a school radio in there that again, would help us make our program more interesting and enriching to our students. In addition, communication plan is one of the study plans students can choose to take in the last three years of their secondary studies.

- **GUANACO:**
SECONDARY SCHOOL 11 and ELEMENTARY SCHOOL 7:
Secondary level classes and 3 grades from elementary school (three last years). The enrollment here is rather small but will allow us to have a wider age range with students from 9 to 18 years old.

Possible activities

- Warm up activities to get to know us:

Videoconference in both languages coordinated by teachers and principals in Argentina and U.S.

Power point slide show or short video: “A tour to our schools”.

Preconceptions and questions about our cultures and towns in both languages.

Selection of a platform to share videos to introduce ourselves: “Hello from Argentina and Hola desde Estados Unidos”.

- Tasks:

Book trailers: Students choose a culturally relevant writer from their country or home town and shoot a video, prepare a slide show (photos, drawings, etc.), stage a mini play or sing a song to present the short story, poem or play selected in the target language and then, send the link to the writer’s production in their mother tongue.

Example:

“The English Devil”, a short story by María Elena Walsh, on the invasion of England to Argentina in 1806. It is a fictional and funny story of a “gaucho” (our cowboys) and an English soldier.

The students perform a mini play, sing a folk song, make a slide show, read a poem in English to tell their friends in New York what the short story is about. They will then send the link to their peers with the text in Spanish.

American students do the same but work on the trailer in Spanish, select the text in English and send the link to their Argentinian peers.

PANDORA’S BOX - RADIO:

Students in Argentina and U.S. write fictional stories, poems, letters and express their feelings in their mother tongue and submit their writings anonymously or not to their teachers or put them in a box. The teachers will select the productions by topics and read them live on the radio.

Example:

A radio show on FREEDOM: One or two radio hosts (teachers and/or students) introduce the topic to the audience and air songs in both languages that have to do with freedom such as “I want to be free” from Queen or “En el país de la libertad” by León Gieco <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ueAfy0RI9Tk>.

Hosts read “Forbidden Birds”, a short story by Eduardo Galeano, a Latin American writer and American Book Award winner. <http://translatedliterature.blogspot.com/2012/06/forbidden-birds.html>

Galeano, Uruguayan writer, was a victim of censorship and forced into exile during the military government in the 70’s.

We reflect and discuss what being free means to us. We read what the students say about freedom.

The show is recorded and uploaded to a platform such as Soundcloud so that our American friends can listen to it.

American students do the same but select culturally relevant songs and stories from their town and country and upload the recorded show to make it available to their friends in Argentina.

DANCE, PHOTO, SHORT FILM Contests:

TRADITIONAL DANCE:

Students choose a folk song and perform a traditional dance (tango, folklore, country music). The video is uploaded and shared with their friends in U.S. or Argentina.

PHOTO/SHORT FILM CONTEST:

Students take pictures of their home town and work together on a photo collage.

Students shoot a short film on a given subject and work together on the script, direction, roles, scenes, etc.

As you can see, the possibilities are endless and the potential of this project is big. We are open and ready to find more tasks and activities with the school district that would be willing to work with us.

Thanks for this amazing opportunity and we can't wait to hear from you,

Kind regards,
Karina Belletti,
English Teacher
E.S. 11 Guanaco, Pehuajó



National Rural Ed Director Discusses Impact of 5G

"PRESS RELEASE: 5G For Everyone: Closing The Education Gap For Rural America

By: T-Mobile

5G will unleash a massive new round of innovation, and the New T-Mobile will be poised to deliver a truly transformative 5G network across the country. With the combined assets of T-Mobile and Sprint, along with a significant investment in building out a new supercharged 5G network, the New T-Mobile will be able to quickly develop and deploy 5G for all. 5G will usher in a wave of change and innovation, bolstering the economy and helping bridge the digital divide. The impact will be far-reaching.



To get a better sense of that impact, we've sought out experts in their respective fields to share their own vision of how 5G for all will empower people across this diverse country.

Here, <https://www.t-mobile.com/news/closing-the-education-gap-for-rural-america> we talk with Dr. Allen Pratt, the executive director of the National Rural Education Association, an organization of rural school administrators, teachers, board members, business leaders and others that has served as an outspoken advocate for rural communities and schools throughout the country for over 100 years. He is also an in-demand keynote speaker on the topic of rural education, and is an affiliate of the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga School of Education and Educational Leadership.

With more than half the Tennessee population living in rural areas, Dr. Pratt—a native of the state—is acutely aware of the education gap that persists on that side of the digital divide, from lack of connectivity for online learning to teacher shortages.

“A big part of change needed in rural communities is we’ve got to level the playing field,” he says. “If we do that for students, you’ll see amazing things happening in rural communities. But first we have to give them the necessary tools, so they can meet educational challenges and be the next creators and innovators to lead our country. Having 5G universally across the U.S. will open up doors that are currently not open to our rural students and their communities.”

Dr. Pratt offers insights as to how 5G will revolutionize education for students in rural America, and give its residents a voice equal to the rest of the country—and the world.

Let’s jump right in: How will 5G help to bridge the digital divide for rural students in this country?

There currently is a homework gap where students in rural and remote areas don’t have access to the same connectivity for online learning as students in more suburban and urban areas. If we have connectivity and technology at the fingertips of these rural students, the sky’s the limit on what they can accomplish. Virtual and augmented realities will allow students to make biological dissections, and take virtual fieldtrips and other technical training currently out of their grasp.

5G will further open the door for virtual and augmented realities to expand our students’ learning and give them a leg up to be successful in life.

Do you see the very idea of a physical classroom being transformed then?

School is not necessarily just about the brick and mortar experience anymore. With online learning we can create a personalized or blended learning approach. I think when you look at rural areas, if you can connect virtually with another school or an online educational platform, that can help fill the gap that current rural schools can't provide because of things like teacher shortages, which is a very real problem in rural America. But we're not on an equal playing field right now in terms of network connectivity and speeds. Lag time is a very important issue, especially when we're dealing with online testing, which there is a growing demand for in a lot of states these days.

There are places in Tennessee where two students may live in the same county, but they live in totally different communities. The ones that sit closer to a suburban area have full connectivity at home. They can do homework and research away from the classroom. Whereas the other student that's rural or remote may have to wait until she or he gets back to school the next day to complete that assignment. Add in other complications—inclement weather like snow, for example—and not being able to get to school to get online becomes a huge miss for rural students. Lack of connectivity and broadband issues are one of the top five educational barriers many rural communities list as pressing issues.

How will 5G help students in rural America feel more heard?

I think it's very important for rural students to be the documentarians of what America's different towns and communities are all about—personally telling those place-based education stories of why it's significant to be from a certain community or rural town in terms of our country's entire history. To do that virtually so everyone in America can share and hear their story about why it's important to live in the rural community is key, and 5G connectivity will empower more students to do just that. I think that's an aspect that people don't always think about. Each year our foundation does video essay contests from middle school and high school students. They explain why it is important to live in rural communities. They explain the highlights of their rural schools and why they are so special. It is very important to not let the outside world define rural.

Speaking of the outside world, what sort of impact will 5G have on helping rural students gain global perspective?

I think the connection between classroom to classroom globally is very important. It is vital our rural students understand and learn from other cultures. It is valuable for us to learn viewpoints through many different lenses. To do this makes our rural community stronger and more accepting.

Many school systems across the U.S. that are in rural areas have a hard time finding instructors that are actually native speakers of another language, Spanish or German or whatever it may be. It's hard to find that person to live in your community. I think the online access and being able to video chat with someone and connect from country to country is important, to actually have that interaction. And I think having that ability in your pocket on a smart phone is very important as well, so you're never out of touch with that connection for learning.

I also look at it from a sense of it's an immersion. So, you're being kind of full tilt into the world of learning another language, connecting your community with a foreign community and having students teach students. With 5G, rural students in America will be able to fully realize that the world is their oyster."

NYSSBA's EVALUATION TOOLS



Take a **FREE** Test Drive!

SuperEval is offering a **FREE test drive** for the NYSSBA Board Self-evaluation rubric or Superintendent Evaluation rubric **until August 30th**.

If you decide to sign up for the 2019-2020 school year, SuperEval will waive your start-up fee – a \$150 value! (All SuperEval tools are BOCES aid-able.)

Our evaluation process was vastly improved compared to previous years.
SuperEval definitely saved us a lot of time and energy as Board members.

– PAUL E. STEIMLE, BOE President, Amherst CSD

Start your free test drive
at supereval.com/test-drive/
or call **Bob Hartz at 1-844-312-EVAL**.

