

Rural Revolution: What's Ahead for Delivery of Services in Rural Indiana.

Christopher Lagoni

765-437-2636

www.indwes.edu

Assistant Professor, Indiana Wesleyan University
christopher.lagoni@indwes.edu

www.indianasmallandrural.org

Executive Director, indianasmallandrural.org

www.nexttierproducts.com

Owner, info@nexttierproducts.com

About Us

- 501c4
- Board of Directors- School Superintendents, University Professors, 1 School Board Member, and 1 Ex Officio Member, Indiana Farm Bureau
- Meet at the Indiana Farm Bureau Building in Indy.
- One Part Time Executive Director-Registered Lobbyist



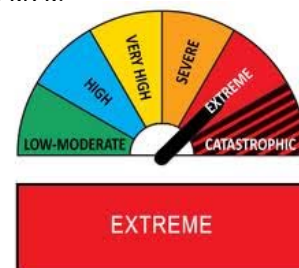
The Obvious Problems

Rural Indiana

- low AV and population density.
- the service economy focuses on population density.
- extreme weather and climate change
- the sharing economy continues to evolve.
 - less durable goods are produced which is not great for manufacturing
 - the sharing economy has not yet fully integrated into rural areas.

Threats and issues faced by our members.

- Changes in Assessed Value
- Decreasing Population
- Ag Economy
- Closing Schools to Right Size the District (Charter Issues)
- Lack of Housing for Staff
- HLC Requirements for Dual Credit. 18 hrs. of graduate credit in licensing area.
- Rural Broadband
- Opioid Population Bomb 2020. Special Education
- Teacher Pay
- Safety Issues
- Funding
- Graduation Pathway Requirements



No Margins Means No Investment and Retraction of Services



Funding For Schools

- The populations of rural Indiana communities are decreasing.
- Less people means less funding. The dollars follow the students.
- Communities are getting older. Look around a meeting at the leaders.
- Funding per student went up, health care costs went up, and enrollment went down so less dollars are available to settle contracts.

2.0% New Money

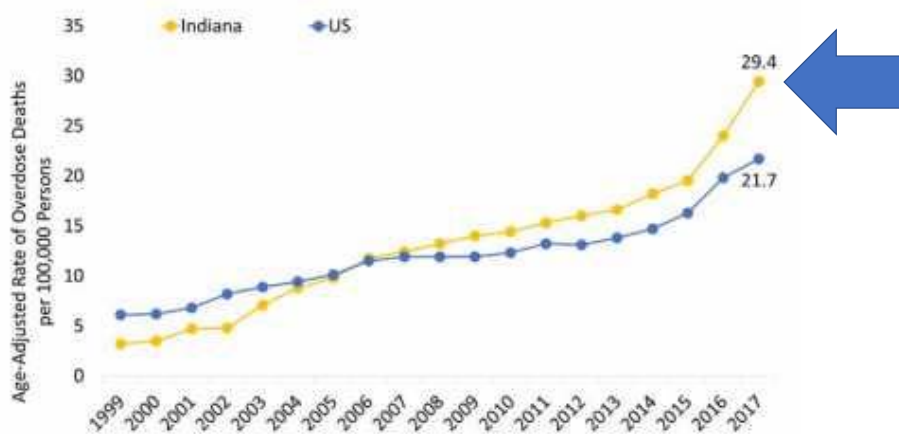
5% Healthcare Premium Increase

29 students less= \$200,000 less in funding

Rural Broadband and Schools

- Schools for the most part have Fiber. They have paid for it.
- eRate Funding like Libraries. FCC has recommended cuts to eRate.
- Students lack high speed connections at home.
 - flipped classrooms
 - online classes offered by schools or dual credit.
 - fewer locations for shared access Starbucks, Panera Bread, or etc.

Opioid Kindergarten Special Needs Population Explosion



Add 5 years to this date.
We have a huge population
of special needs students
Headed to school in
2020
2021
2022

<https://www.drugabuse.gov/drugs-abuse/opioids/opioid-summaries-by-state/indiana-opioid-summary>

The Graduation Pathways and School Accountability

- Students need access to internships and work based learning to graduate
- Policy makers want these to be aligned with a pathway plan and career choices.
- Required for graduation.
- CTE-Vocational programming access.
- Distance-Time issues
- Business and training access issues



Dual Credits

- Student earns high school and college credit.
- Saves the families money
- Policy makers want only dual credits aligned with career plan.
- Requires the teacher have 18 graduate credits in the subject area:
 - math
 - biology
 - English
 - Social Studies

Indiana Rural Teacher Survey Results 2019

Survey of Rural Schools and Communities

RURAL SCHOOLS COLLABORATIVE

www.ruralschoolscollaborative.org

NREA

www.nrea.net

TNTP

www.tntp.org

ISRSA

www.indianasmallandrural.org

Indiana's Survey Results

- 270 Indiana Responses.
- 205 of the responses identified as a rural teacher.



Distance from Work



35% of Indiana rural teachers live in the community they work.

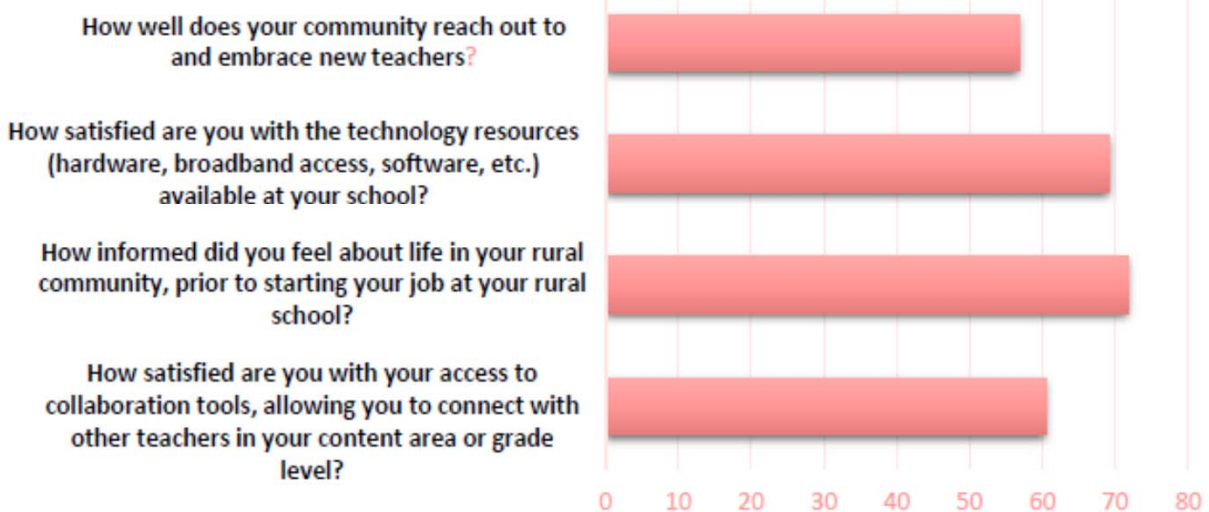


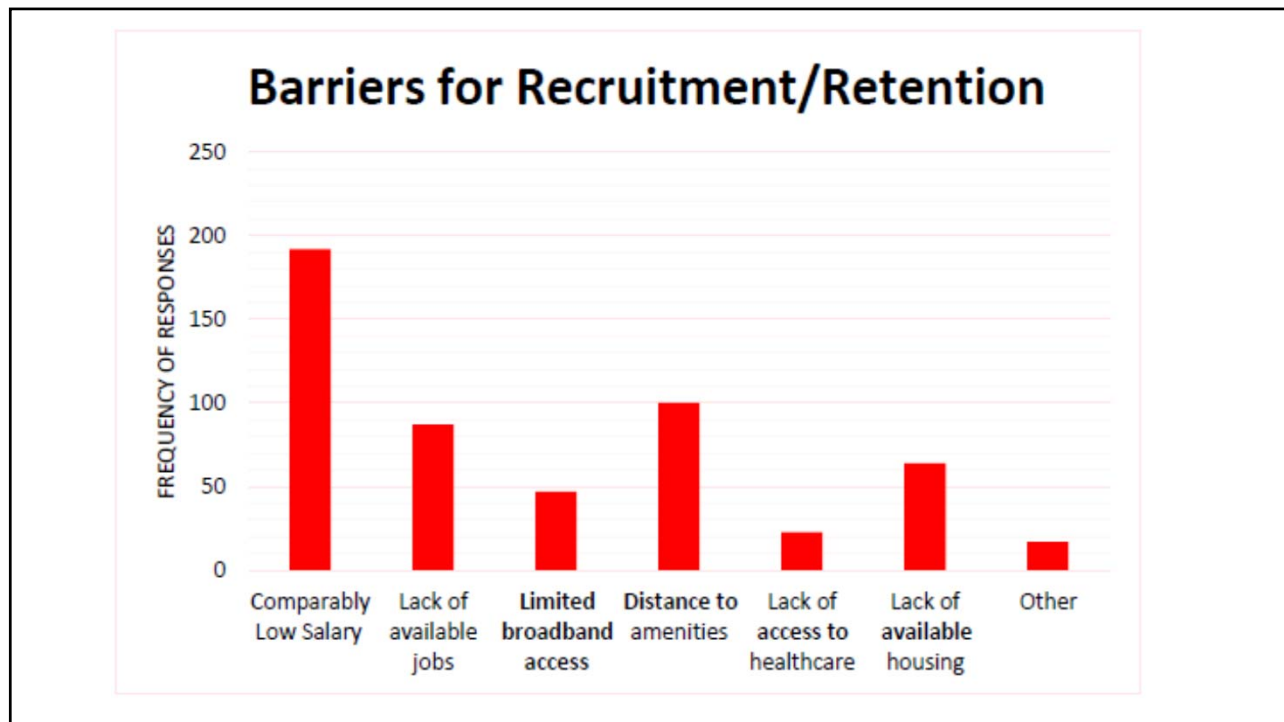
33% live within 30 miles from their school.



28% live more than 30 miles from their school.

Average of Satisfaction Rankings





Additional Barriers:

- Low income; many special needs students; favoritism
- preservation of past ideologies & structures, lack of business opportunities, lack of attraction for Millennial generation
- negatives on education and salary
- **high insurance cost**
- School is too out of date. Community is too protective of school and try to keep it the same as it was when they were in school here.
- high cost of health insurance
- Childcare

Lack of people in their age category; friends live elsewhere.

- demands of the job/ decline in student behavior
- Lack of work-site daycare for newborns
- Lack affordable housing for new teacher
- More opportunity offered elsewhere and higher-level education and peer ability elsewhere
- The reliance on high stakes testing to evaluate teaching.
- low incentives, too much stress and responsibility
- Preschool teachers are required to drive to school on a 2 hour delay for daycare purposes even when the roads are too dangerous to drive on, putting our lives at risk
- Cost of healthcare
- insurance costs

Comparison of Indiana to Other States



Ohio responses focused on opioid crisis not salary or healthcare.



Illinois noted low salary but did not cite health care costs.

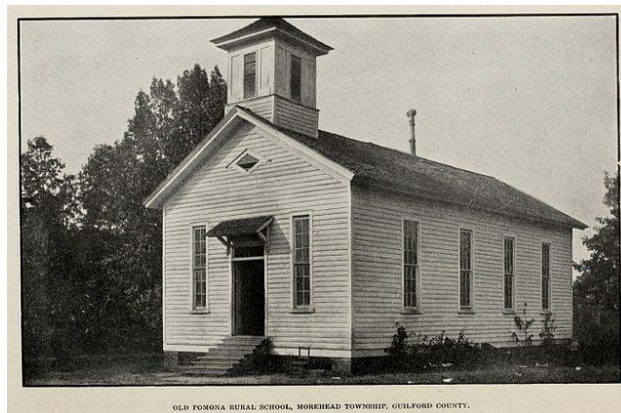


Kentucky data mentioned low salary but did not focus on health care but access to health care.

Opportunities For Rural Areas



Don't paint rural schools with the same brush.



In order to create more opportunities we need cross division communication

County Wide School Board Meeting

- Tippecanoe County
- Once a Year
- Discuss Operational Savings
- Shared Services.
- Every County In the State Should Examine This Model



Topics for communication

- Economic Development
- TIF Districts/Redevelopment Commissions
- Cabling Projects and Bids
- Libraries, Hospitals and Schools
 - Cost factor for each division when installing fiber. Each entity to pay for a share.
 - Sheriff's office to the school.
 - Economic Development Person stay up to date with cabling projects to create connections.

Rural Broadband From The School Perspective

- We have large campuses with 50 acres or more.
- We have the communication tools already in place to send messages to stakeholders.
- Schools were often built in the center of a county or community.
- Amplifiers and repeaters for fiber networks need space
 - schools could be a great partner.

Telemedicine

- Schools have space.
- Focus on community wide health.
- Connect students with initial resources for mental health.
- Don't need to build a space.
- Re-purpose an empty classroom.



Medicaid Funding Opportunities

Medicaid School Special Education IEP Reimbursement Totals:

Ohio \$224 Million

Illinois \$171 Million

Michigan \$235 Million

Indiana \$10.6 Million



Time for the Governor and FSSA to Amend Indiana's Medicaid Plan.

Based on population IN missing out on about \$114 Million in reimbursements for schools!!

School Consolidation



- We have no problem with school consolidation.
- We believe it should be a local decision based on local needs.
- Every time we hear about school consolidation we offer free support to do analysis and research.
- We are opposed to forced consolidation driven by people in the big towers on Capitol Avenue.
- They don't know local geography, work and population commuting patterns or local history.
- We favor local control.
- Schools need to right size based on their population footprint.

School Closures

- Right Sizing the district based on enrollment.
- Indiana Code requires a Charter School has a right to claim the building
- Local School district has to lease a building for a \$1.00
- <https://www.jconline.com/story/news/2019/09/12/west-lafayette-schools-sue-indiana-call-1-charter-law-unconstitutional-land-grab/2273698001/>

Online Class vs. Virtual School

Schools offer online classes and students can access all types of courses.



Opportunities for the sharing economy

- Shared working spaces in rural areas.
- Mentor and create more entrepreneurs
- Maker Spaces with a twist.
 - Training for the space to use it.
 - Training aligns with soft skill needs of local employers.



Police and Security Opportunities

- How can schools, towns, and counties work together to provide SRO's
- We can't escape the costs.
- How do we provide the program in the most efficient manner without duplicating services for the taxpayer.
- Common bids and group purchasing for security enhancements
 - fiber between the school and sheriff's office
 - hardening of school site and county locations.

Soft Skills Support

- Does the prosecutor enforce attendance?
- Are cases of education neglect prosecuted?
- Rural communities could manage a focused attendance intervention program.
- Poor employee attendance starts with poor school attendance.
 - schools have no legal ability to compel attendance.
 - schools refer attendance issues to law enforcement.

Co-Op Models

- Rural Areas have a history of cooperation.
- Co-op models exist in lots of programs.
- We may need to look at expanded co-op agreements
 - Alternative Schools
 - Special Programs
 - Foreign Language

Policy Progress

- Commend Governor Holcomb for Rural Broadband, Teacher Pay creativity with the Pension buy down.
- Opioid Crisis
- School Closure Process moved from 2 years to 90 days.
- School Funding is a hot topic.
- Lt. Governor and OCRA are doing some great things.
 - water treatment, housing, and community development.