

RURAL EDUCATION COUNCIL

Purpose and Agreements



PURPOSE OF RURAL EDUCATION COUNCIL

The Rural Education Council provides rural superintendents and organizations that support rural areas regular opportunities to interact with and advise the Colorado Education Commissioner about the needs, challenges and opportunities of rural districts (C.R.S. 22-5-122 (5) (a)). Serving as an important two-way communications channel, the council provides the following functions:

- provides feedback on CDE practices and policies so the application of policies in rural settings can be more fully understood by department staff;
- conveys rural perspectives on various statewide issues so the commissioner can convey that context during policy discussions with the State Board of Education and state legislature;
- provides the commissioner the opportunity to give rural communities a statewide perspective on various legal and policy considerations; and
- allows the commissioner the opportunity to collect feedback on critical issues facing rural communities, generate ideas and communicate information.

WORKING AGREEMENTS FOR PARTICIPANTS

The Rural Education Council was created to provide meaningful dialogue between the commissioner and rural communities, in which the full context of issues can be explored and discussed in confidence. For that to happen, a culture of trust between all parties must exist along with an acknowledgement that multiple perspectives should be honored. There also should be an agreement of what information can be communicated out of the meetings and what should be kept confidential.

Further, the meetings should provide a venue where constructive, problem-solving dialogue can be shared and a positive and civil spirit among participants should be encouraged, where everyone's voice is accepted and all points of view are honored.

Rural Education Council

The Rural Education Council is comprised of superintendents representing each of the eight regions in Colorado; a rural principal; representatives from the Colorado Association of School Boards, the Colorado Association of School Executives and the Colorado BOCES Association; two rural board of education members and the Colorado Rural Schools Alliance.

For meetings CDE staff will:

- provide clear agenda with expected outcomes ahead of council meeting;
- ask for input prior to council meeting to ensure meetings are productive;
- strive for fewer presentations to enable more problem-solving discussions; and
- keep council meetings focused on strategic issues.

Where can I learn more?

- Rural Education Council website: www.cde.state.co.us/ruraledcouncil
- Rural Education Council Fact Sheet: www.cde.state.co.us/communications/ruraleducationcouncilfactsheet
- View all CDE fact sheets: www.cde.state.co.us/communications/factsheetsandfaqs