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About The Rural Educator

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The Rural Educator

A Journal about Rural and Small School Issues



The official journal of the National Rural Education Association



Cover photograph: Mexican Hat Elementary, Monument Valley, Utah

If you have pictures and interesting stories about a rural school that you would like to have featured on the cover of future issues of The Rural Educator, please e-mail the editor at duncanh@brandonu.ca

The Rural Educator

A Journal about Rural and Small School Issues

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Guidelines on Submitting Manuscripts

The Rural Educator is a peer-reviewed journal published three times per year. The primary mission of *The Rural Educator* is to provide educators in rural and small schools with research-based articles on timely issues that inform education practice or have implications for rural education policy. The journal is particularly interested in receiving manuscripts related to the impact of federal and state reform policies on rural schools, funding and finance issues related to rural schools, and issues related to specific rural populations and community development. Three types of articles are accepted for publication: General Articles, Research Briefs, and Book Reviews: All manuscripts are submitted to blind peer review without reference to name or institution. Authors will be notified of acceptance or rejection as soon as the review process is completed. Issues of *The Rural Educator* are published in the fall, winter, and spring of each academic year. All manuscripts should be submitted as an e-mail attachment to ruraledu@uwyo.edu

General Manuscript Guidelines

- Submit in MS Word (.doc or .docx).
- Double-spaced.
- 12 point font.
- Use American Psychological Association (APA) 6th Edition for style, citation, and reference guidelines.
- Include tables and figures **within** the manuscript.
- Attach a cover sheet containing the following information about the author: name, institutional affiliation, address, zip code, telephone, fax, e-mail address, and a brief biography. This should be a maximum of 50 words.
- Do not include the author's name on the manuscript.
- The author will be notified of editorial changes made to the manuscript; however, the Editor reserves the right to make such changes without author approval or notification if time does not permit.

Article Guidelines

- Do not exceed 25 pages (including references).
- Include an abstract at the beginning of the manuscript not to exceed 150 words. The abstract should briefly describe the problem or topic, method, participants, findings, and conclusions.

- Include a listing of 3-5 keywords covering the topics addressed in the manuscript for use in keyword searches.

Research Brief Guidelines

The Rural Educator will consider and publish "Research Briefs" to promote the dissemination of novel and important research information in a format that does not require extensive journal space. Studies published as Research Briefs have a very focused and explicit purpose, and applied relevance to rural settings. Research Briefs should be no longer than 8 pages, inclusive of tables, figures, and references. Research Briefs should include the following:

- Introduction - provides a brief context for the current investigation, states its focus and purpose in a clear and cogent way, and identifies one or two main research questions;
- Methods - summarizes participants, instruments, independent or intervention variables, and procedures in a succinct but clear and replicable way;
- Results - presents key results in relation to the research purpose and main question (in tables and figures, whenever appropriate);
- Discussion - identifies key findings and notes important implications in relation to the existing knowledge base, field-based application, interpretive cautions (briefly noting and describing limitations), and possibly future directions; and
- References - includes a very limited number of seminal articles that are essential for readers to understand the nature, purpose, or methods of the research.

Book Review Guidelines

A book review should give readers an engaging, informative, and critical discussion of the work (length 750-1000 words). All references should be made in-text.

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From the Editor

Welcome to the Winter 2014 issue of the Rural Educator. The articles in this edition explore a diversity of interesting topics pertaining to education in rural areas: exploring teachers' attitudes to dialect; comparing professional development provision in high and low performing schools, checking grading bias, and identifying the leadership aspects of school counselors' roles.

In the first article, Brashears studied teachers' attitudes towards the Appalachian dialect, a study which resonated with my own childhood experiences in rural Scotland, where in school we had to speak the Queen's English, yet our playground chatter was in the local Buchan dialect. How we speak belies our origins. Most frequently, to be regarded as educated people, we must conform to specific linguistic patterns and pronunciations. Discrimination because of dialect is prevalent in the US and the UK. Brashears' article invites us to reexamine our assumptions and also to take pride in our origins. I knew little about the Appalachian dialect before reading this article and so learned much during the editorial process.

Because standards-based reform emphasizes improved teaching as the best path to increased learning and improved student performance, we might expect high performing schools to be implementing the most effective professional development practices. Using Sparks and Loucks-Horsley's (1989) framework for effective professional development practices, Wallace explores professional development in high performing urban and persistently low achieving rural high schools in Kentucky. Her findings indicated that while differences existed between the two groups in how well leadership addresses teacher professional development needs and in sufficient training to utilize instructional

technology, characteristics of effective professional development are not being fully implemented in either group of schools.

In the third article, Hardré considers multiple factors that may influence teachers' grading and scoring of students' class work, homework, projects and tests. While grading is to a degree subjective, it need not be biased. Intentional bias is a common criticism of teachers and has been the topic of numerous studies and reports. However, less attention has been given to unintentional sources of grading bias. Hardré identifies some of the issues relevant to teachers' unintentional grading biases and discusses both conventional and innovative ways to reduce it.

Much of my professional work has focused on graduate leadership programs; A common area that principals identify as missing from their graduate work is counseling. However, in rural schools, principals may look to their counselors to collaborate in the leadership role. In the final article, Wimberley and Brickman discuss how counselors in rural schools have unique opportunities to lead by guiding students' education in directions that best fit their career aspirations, thus impacting the region educationally, economically and socially. They discuss the unique challenges and issues present in rural schools and offer suggestions offered as to ways in which counselors can effectively undertake leadership roles.

Finally, the editorial board now invites Research Briefs and Book Reviews as well as regular articles for publication. Full submission details can be found here.

<http://www.nrea.net/index.cfm?pID=7936>

Heather E. Duncan, Brandon University
