



# Agenda

## National Rural Education Association Conference Sessions: A Selection of REL-Developed Tools and Research for Rural Practitioners

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**Friday, October 12, 2018**

**2:45–5:00 p.m. MT**

**Location: Hyatt Regency Tech Center**

**7800 E. Tufts Avenue Denver, Colorado 80237**

**Room: Mesa Verde A**

### Description

This event will feature two back-to-back, 1-hour-long session presentations by Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) researchers at the National Forum to Advance Rural Education. The first session will provide examples of REL-developed tools for instructional improvement (REL Central), continuous improvement (REL Northeast and Islands and REL Midwest), counseling guidance on postsecondary planning (REL Northwest), and evidence-based career counseling (REL Southeast). The second session will provide information on projects focusing on teacher recruitment, mobility, and retention (REL Central and REL Northwest) and on the integration of technology into instructional practices (REL Midwest). Both sessions will also include a brief presentation about the Ask A REL process.

### Session 1 objectives:

- To increase rural practitioners' and other stakeholders' knowledge of evidence-based research conducted by RELs.
- To increase rural practitioners' and other stakeholders' knowledge of Ask A REL resources.

### Session 2 objectives:

- To increase rural practitioners' and other stakeholders' knowledge of practitioner-oriented tools developed by RELs.



- To increase rural practitioners' and other stakeholders' knowledge of Ask A REL resources.

## Agendas

### Session 1

#### **2:45–2:49 p.m. Introduction to Session 2 and Welcome**

*Facilitator: Douglas Gagnon (REL Central)*

Attendees will be introduced to the session, agenda, and objectives.

#### **2:49–2:58 p.m. Presentation 1: Instructional Improvement Cycle Toolkit**

*Presenters: David Yanoski (REL Central)*

The presenter will provide an overview of the Instructional Improvement Cycle Toolkit. The toolkit provides teachers with three tools to implement an instructional improvement cycle by testing and reflecting on a specific instructional strategy. Attendees will learn to use the toolkit planning guide, Excel analysis tool, and reflection guide.

#### **2:58–3:07 p.m. Presentation 2: Continuous Improvement Model**

*Presenter: Pamela J. Buffington (REL Northeast and Islands)*

The presentation will highlight how input from the rural advisors has enhanced REL Northeast and Islands projects designed to support rural school and district leaders, specific to topics and tools such as an ESSA progress-monitoring workshop for high-need rural districts, universal preK in a rural context, and measurement of nonacademic skills within a rural high school setting. The presenter will also highlight the use of continuous improvement as an approach to educational change.

#### **3:07–3:16 p.m. Presentation 3: Cross-Sector Counseling and Advising Professional Learning Community Project**

*Presenter: Jacqueline Raphael (REL Northwest)*

The presenter will provide an overview of REL Northwest's Cross-Sector Counseling and Advising Professional Learning Community project. In this project, REL Northwest and state leaders are supporting five cross-sector professional learning communities across the state in an effort to improve student transitions to and success in postsecondary education and careers, particularly for rural and other students historically under-represented in higher education. The



presenter will highlight the use of a continuous improvement process by the participating high school counselors, community college advisors, and other professional learning community stakeholders who are examining ways to align and better support student planning, advising, and placement.

**3:16–3:25 p.m. Presentation 4: Evidence-Based Career Counseling**

*Presenter: Kevin Smith (REL Southeast)*

The presenter will provide an overview of REL Southeast’s Florida Career Readiness Research Alliance, a new researcher-practitioner partnership. The alliance has been actively working to build training on evidence-based career counseling with a focus on rural schools. The presentation will highlight how alliance members helped prioritize best practices from the research, provided examples of effective strategy implementation in schools, and gave feedback on early drafts of the training.

**3:25–3:34 p.m. Presentation 5: Iowa Learning and Technology Networked Improvement Community – Tools for an NIC**

*Presenter: Jonathan Margolin, Marshal Conley (REL Midwest)*

The presenters will describe REL Midwest’s Iowa Learning and Technology Networked Improvement Community, which brings together educators from rural districts in Iowa to engage in continuous improvement research activities to identify effective ways of integrating technology into instructional practice. The presentation will highlight a set of professional learning modules that can be used to engage in continuous improvement activities: a facilitator guide, slide deck, and handouts related to each activity.

**3:34–3:41 p.m. Presentation 6: Ask A REL**

*Presenter: David Yanoski*

The presenter will describe the Ask A REL service and share the types of questions the service can answer. The presenter then will demonstrate how to access the Ask A REL service on the IES website.

**3:41–3:50 p.m. Overall Session Q & A**

*Facilitator: Douglas Gagnon*

Audience members will have the opportunity to ask questions of the presenters.



### **3:50–3:55 p.m. Session 1 Closing**

*Facilitator: Douglas Gagnon*

The facilitator will provide closing remarks, and attendees will be asked to fill out a brief feedback survey.

### **Session 2**

#### **3:55–3:59 p.m. Introduction to Session 2 and Welcome**

*Facilitator: Douglas Gagnon*

Attendees will be introduced to the session, agenda, and objectives.

#### **3:59–4:13 p.m. Presentation 1: Understanding Rural Teacher Retention, Mobility, and Attrition**

*Presenters: Stephen H. Meyer, Emma V. Espel, Shelley H. Billig (REL Central)*

The presenters will discuss REL Central’s four-state study of rural teacher retention, mobility, and attrition conducted in partnership with state education agencies in Colorado, Missouri, Nebraska, and South Dakota. Attendees will learn about the study’s design to provide information about teacher entry into, mobility within, and exit from state public school systems. They will also learn about characteristics of teachers, schools, and districts related to mobility and attrition. The presenters will provide an overview of the study purposes, design, measures, and analysis and reporting plans, and they will discuss how regional stakeholders have been involved in study development and implementation. A Q & A session will follow.

#### **4:13–4:27 p.m. Presentation 2: Educator Retention in Rural Alaska**

*Presenter: Ashley Pierson (REL Northwest)*

The presenter will discuss REL Northwest’s work with the Alaska State Policy Research Alliance to address problems of recruitment and retention in rural districts. Attendees will learn about the investigation into educator retention patterns in different types of rural school locations across the state, including rural schools not on the road system. The presenter will discuss data leading the alliance to focus on retention issues, and findings on retention patterns and the school, district, and community factors related to higher retention rates. Finally, the presenter will describe promising strategies that superintendents and other education stakeholders have identified to increase rural educator retention. A Q & A session will follow the presentation.



**4:27–4:41 p.m. Presentation 3: Iowa Learning and Technology Networked Improvement Community**

*Presenter: Jonathan Margolin, Marshal Conley*

Attendees will learn about REL Midwest’s Iowa Learning and Technology Networked Improvement Community project, which brings together educators from rural districts in Iowa to engage in continuous improvement research activities in order to identify effective ways of integrating technology into instructional practice. Presenters will describe the research study *Instructional Technology Practices Among Rural Public High Schools in Iowa*. They will present the development of policies and supports for technology integration in rural settings, and will provide an overview of the study’s focus, including teachers’ access to technology resources, current practices, perceptions of the potential benefits and drawbacks of integrating technology, and the challenges they are experiencing in these efforts. A Q & A session will follow the presentation.

**4:41–4:51 p.m. Ask A REL**

*Presenter: David Yanoski*

The presenter will describe the Ask A REL service and share the types of questions the service can answer. Attendees will learn how to access the Ask A REL service on the IES website.

**4:51–5:00 p.m. Session 2 Closing**

*Facilitator: Douglas Gagnon*

The facilitator will provide closing remarks, and attendees will be asked to fill out a brief feedback survey.

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