STRENGTHENING RURAL COMMUNITY COLLEGES

Association of Community College Trustees
With support from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, ACCT is assessing the needs and strengths of rural community colleges across the country.

Convene
Convene trustees, presidents, and community stakeholders

Research
Research the needs facing rural communities

Advocate
Develop policy solutions to support the viability of rural community colleges and their students
5 State Partners

North Carolina
Kentucky
Iowa
Texas
California
Rural Community College Landscape

Definitions

Challenges

Strengths
Timeline

- **October 2019 - December 2019**
  - Developing research methodology, scheduling interviews, soliciting input from wide variety of stakeholders

- **January 2020 - August 2020**
  - Field work (interviews and convenings) with trustees, presidents, legislators, local business leaders, and other community members

- **August 2020 - January 2021**
  - Information synthesis and report writing

*Spring 2021 - Report publication*
Through these convenings and research report we aim to:

**Collect** information about challenges faced by rural institutions.

**Increase** public awareness around issues facing rural community colleges.

**Develop** state and federal policy solutions to support their long-term viability.
WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE RURAL?
Federal Definitions

“Any place with fewer than 50,000 inhabitants.”

“Any place with 10,000 or fewer inhabitants.”

“Areas with a population density between 7 and 1,000 people per square mile.”

“Any place with fewer than 5,000 inhabitants.”

“A populated area with boundaries at least 40 miles apart, which is not contiguous to a large urban area, and considered “rural in character.””
“Rural county means a county with a population of less than 50,000”

“Rural county means a county with a population of less than 60,000”

“Rural county means a county that has a population of not more than 125,000”

“Rural county means a county that is outside the boundaries of a primary metropolitan statistical area or a metropolitan statistical area”
“More than 25 miles from an urbanized area (population of 50,000 or greater) and more than 10 miles from an urban cluster (population of 2,500-50,000).”
Cedar Valley College
Clarendon College
Grayson College
Northeast Texas Community College
Vernon College
WHAT’S CHANGED?
Needs Assessment Interview Data

- Broadband
- Recruitment/Retention of staff
- Transportation
- Making rural living attractive
- Basic Needs
- Poverty
- Population Decline

Comparison of June and February data.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Opportunities</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Federal</td>
<td>Hold interagency discussion at NLS 2021. Leverage the first 100 Days following 2020 election &amp; new Congressional session</td>
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<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>Engage governors and state legislators</td>
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<tr>
<td>Local</td>
<td>Explore and highlight partnerships with local businesses, community organizations, and service providers</td>
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</tbody>
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Federal Resources

**USDA Community Facilities Direct Loan & Grant Programs**—provides affordable funding to develop essential community facilities in rural areas.

**Department of Education’s Child Care Access Means Parents in School Program (CCAMPIS)**—to support or establish campus-based child-care programs primarily serving the needs of low-income students. Grants may also be used to serve the child-care needs of the community served by the institution.

**National Science Foundation’s Project Vision**—provides funding, expertise, and professional development opportunities to assist colleges in discovering and matching innovative ideas with NSF funding opportunities.
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