



## Printable Edition

**Note:** This resource includes all articles from the July 2010 Rural Policy Matters newsletter.

### Facts and Figures About States That Have More Than Half Their Schools in Rural Communities

**Question:** In which 15 states are more than 50% of schools located in rural communities?

**Answer:** South Dakota (76.9% of schools are located in rural communities); Montana (74.9%); North Dakota (72.1%); Vermont (71.3%); Maine (67.4%); Alaska (65.5%); Nebraska (59.6%); Wyoming (57.0%); Arkansas (54.2%); Iowa (54.2%); Oklahoma (52.5%); New Hampshire (51.9%); Alabama (51.6%); and West Virginia (51.4%).

(Source: *Why Rural Matters*, 2009, based on data from the U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data, Public School Universe, 2006–07.)

### West Virginia Community Story Tells Much About School Consolidation

*Editor's note: Links are free and current at time of posting, but may require registration or expire over time.*

Most school consolidations don't happen out of the blue. Momentum builds over time as local politics, economic circumstances, and state policies change. This ebb and flow can become so much part of the life of the school and community that many local residents quit paying much attention to it.

Meadow Bridge in West Virginia has been a potential target of school consolidation for the better part of 40 years, and the community is once again in the throes of trying to protect its school.

"Since the push for consolidation started in West Virginia, the vast majority of elected Fayette County school board members have supported our community schools." says Carolyn Arritt, a Meadow Bridge resident, retired teacher, and former Fayette County school board member." However, in 1975, 2001, and 2010, a couple of board members who believed that economies of scale with new buildings would improve curriculum and learning have pushed hard for consolidation."

Arritt continues, "Most of the high schools in West Virginia have been consolidated during the last 30 years, but students, according to published reports, are lagging behind. Apparently, consolidated schools are not the solution, but the state continues to focus in that direction."

The story of Meadow Bridge has many of the elements common to school consolidation fights around the country. Arritt, who is also a fellow with [Challenge West Virginia.challengewv.org](http://ChallengeWestVirginia.challengewv.org), which works to improve small community schools and give citizens a voice in educational policy, shares her perspective on what's happened. *RPM* distills (in the yellow inset boxes) themes that are common in school consolidation initiatives around the country. We hope this story will help readers understand some of the pressures on rural schools in their own communities and states.

#### The Rural Context: Meadow Bridge

Meadow Bridge is an isolated community, located at the far southeastern edge of Fayette County in south central

West Virginia. It is just one-tenth of a mile from the Summers County line and nine miles from the Greenbrier County line, but 30 miles from Fayetteville, the county seat town. Situated at 2,800 feet, the school occupies the highest elevation of any school in this mountainous county. This past winter, the region received more than 200 inches of snow.

As consolidations in neighboring Summers and Greenbrier counties have moved schools more to the center of those counties, students have transferred to Meadow Bridge, making it serve more as a regional school and saving students from long bus rides in their own school districts.

The elementary school (K–6) and the middle/high school (7–12) share adjacent campuses and together serve about 450 students. The schools are part of the county-wide Fayette County school district. Six communities in the county have high schools and nine communities have elementary schools. A little over 70% of Meadow Bridge students qualify for free/reduced lunches, the second highest rate in the county.

### **Consolidation: Building Momentum**

"It was about 1975 when the county decided they wanted to consolidate some schools, so they got up a bond initiative [to raise money for new schools]," says Arritt. "People in Meadow Bridge didn't want to lose our school, so enough people got involved and helped defeat the bond."

Meadow Bridge wasn't closed, but about a year later, the consolidation effort did result in the combining of two existing small high schools (Ansted and Nutall) into Midland Trail High School. Three additional high schools were built in Oak Hill, Fayetteville, and Valley.

"Now they're saying the schools are crumbling," says Arritt. "The buildings *are* in need of required maintenance, and some schools need more," she adds. "But the buildings haven't been maintained like they should have been all along. So that's part of the reasoning to consolidate now."

In response to maintenance needs at Meadow Bridge, local residents got together two years ago and painted classrooms, hallways, and restrooms, replaced needed ceiling tiles, and refinished flooring. "We couldn't do the big maintenance items, but we did do cosmetic things to make the school look better," Arritt explains, adding that the effort was a matter of pride and commitment to students as well as a statement of intent to keep the schools in the community.

### **State Facilities Process**

West Virginia, like many states, requires local school districts to come up with a long-term facilities plan. The Comprehensive Educational Facilities Plan (CEFP), as it is known in West Virginia, is developed in a supposedly community-based process led by a committee appointed by the local board and governed by state regulations.

"In 2001, they came up with a consolidation plan," says Arritt, describing a Fayette County CEFP process. "West Virginia says this is a local process, but the force for consolidation is from the state."

She continues, "The CEFP is to take into consideration such facts as student health and safety, economies of scale, and demographics and travel. Of these three, it seems that economies of scale - middle schools of at least 450 students, or 150 a grade, and high schools of at least 600, or 200 a grade - is given more weight. The state population is said to have decreased over the last 30 years, but the numbers in the economics of scale have not decreased proportionally."

West Virginia has set travel time guidelines for bus rides of 30 minutes for elementary students, 45 minutes for middle schools, and 60 minutes for high schools.

"Apparently Fayette County's CEFP Steering Committee did not take student health and safety or the demographics and travel time into consideration," says Arritt.

Consolidation of schools within districts is a "local school board decision" in most states. But many state

*RPM Observation:* Schools threatened with consolidation are often located at the edge of the county away from the population center. Smaller schools in multi-school districts are more vulnerable than schools in small districts with their own governance structures. Poorer schools in less politically influential communities are more vulnerable than other schools.

*RPM Observation:* Schools in which maintenance has been neglected are more vulnerable to consolidation than facilities that are in good condition. Ongoing preventive maintenance reduces the likelihood of major renovation expenses. A clue that a school is targeted for consolidation is neglect of maintenance. Some states that push consolidation deny state funding for maintenance to targeted schools.

departments of education encourage, push, or force local districts to close smaller schools and sometimes tell the local board they have to close schools for academic or economic reasons or to be eligible for certain funding streams.

In larger multi-school districts, there is usually some tension over consolidation. Often, residents of larger towns in no danger of losing their schools believe that consolidation will bring more opportunities or resources into their places and so they support it. New school construction can mean money, sales, and jobs for some local firms and residents, so some interests view consolidation as a means for generating short-term construction activity. Pressures from the state to consolidate exacerbate and often skew these tensions away from important local considerations that residents hold in balance.

In some cases, state pressures are slow and steady, in some cases quick and extreme.

Fayette County's consolidation pressures have been both steady and more extreme.

"The bond initiative for the 2001 consolidation plan didn't pass, 86% of the people didn't want it," says Arritt. That's when things really began to get difficult. "There was a new superintendent brought in just to push consolidation," she says.

### **Bad Politics, Local Governance Chaos**

For the next several years, the fights went on. Arritt was elected to the county school board in 2002, shifting the balance on the 5-member board to one that favored keeping schools in communities.

But Arritt's election didn't end the pressures for consolidation. School politics got more heated. "In the last ten years, we've probably had about ten superintendents," Arritt says. "There's so much in-fighting, many teachers have gotten disgusted, lots of good teachers have retired, things have just been a mess."

### **More State Involvement**

Amid this turmoil, Fayette County began again to develop its ten-year CEFP plan in October 2008. By this time Arritt was no longer serving on the school board, but was still involved as a citizen and advocate for good schools. "The first meeting I was asked to attend was not a CEFP meeting, but a board meeting," she says. "We were given options concerning possible consolidations. Since a Needs Project was due to the State Department of Education, another meeting was scheduled for the following week. I thought it would be a meeting to discuss possibilities, but the next week they handed out surveys about consolidation. The next thing I knew, the school Board is putting up a bond to combine four high schools together."

"When that happened," Arritt continues, "they quit working on the CEFP and started working to promote the bond."

But the bond failed, with more than 75% of votes against it.

In January 2010, fifteen months later, work on the CEFP began again. Then the state took over the school system in February.

Arritt explains that all the trouble in the county school system had put Fayette County "in the spotlight" and that many local residents were not unhappy to see the takeover in hopes that it would bring some stability and direction.

But those hopes soon turned sour with the release of an Office of Educational Performance Audits (OEPA) report that included misinformation about some of the schools, including Meadow Bridge.

"The report made the school look like it has problems that it doesn't," says Arritt. "It said we didn't offer classes that we do. And it had silly things, like high school students have to walk 25 feet to the cafeteria that is shared between the two schools, like that's some kind of big problem. It seemed to us like they were trying to justify

*RPM Observation:* The facilities planning process in most states involves a mix of both state guidance and local planning. This process is an important one in which consolidation decisions can be set in motion or averted. Many planning processes include regulations that bring subtle pressure to consolidate on communities without their knowledge. Learning the state's facilities rules is one of the most important actions that local residents can do to protect and plan for their school's future.

*RPM Observation:* Schools are publicly governed institutions that are part of the democratic fabric, so naturally they are subject to political pressures at times. But when school politics get especially dirty or when schools become objects used for other political ends, some citizens disengage. It becomes hard for teachers and administrators to do their jobs and school morale and productivity suffer. Schools are at risk for closure when there is sustained political fighting at the district level. Citizens need to stay involved in the important education matters at stake.

consolidation."

In fact, Meadow Bridge students are doing better than Fayette County and West Virginia statewide averages in most all subjects, despite their high poverty rate, according to Arritt. "The graduation rate is over 90% (state is 78%), and the school has been asked to take at-risk students from other schools in danger of not making AYP. Attendance is also high at over 95%, and the student discipline rate is the county's lowest. Almost 90% of students participated in extracurricular activities. The community gave six community-funded college scholarships, ranging in value from \$250 to \$2,500, to 2010 graduates."

She adds, "For the last two years, *U.S. News and World Report* selected Meadow Bridge High School as a Bronze Medal recipient in recognition for it being a top-rated public school."

The Meadow Bridge Local School Improvement Council quickly developed and distributed a response to the OEPA report, correcting misinformation and outlining actions the school and community had taken in response to reductions in resources. It also produced a brochure sharing strengths and accomplishments of the high school.

### **New Consolidation Plan**

The academic strengths of Meadow Bridge High aren't offering protection to it now. There's a new consolidation plan; this one would send 6th to 8th grade students from Meadow Bridge to a school 23 miles away.

"High school students would be sent to a new 'state of the art' school whose location has not yet been determined," says Arritt. "[One likely] area located half-way between Meadow Bridge and Fayetteville does not meet requirements for a specific school construction project."

Travel would also be difficult, especially for the Meadow Bridge students. "The roads between Fayetteville and that location have about one curve per mile on six miles of four-lane highway," explains Arritt, "while the roads between there and Meadow Bridge have approximately five curves per mile on seven miles of narrow two-lane road."

Arritt continues, "Some kids live ten miles on the other side of Meadow Bridge, many on one-lane roads, so that's more than 30 miles for the middle schoolers - not accounting for all the bus stops. Most of our kids would be on the bus for three to four hours a day, in good weather, which more than doubles the state guidelines."

The mountainous terrain complicates things further. "These are dangerous mountain roads our kids will have to ride the bus on," says Arritt. "When we ask about bringing kids into Meadow Bridge from somewhere else, we're told that 'oh, that's too far and way too dangerous.' Well, what's the difference in taking our kids out, it's the same roads, same distance. Are our kids in less danger, or does it just matter less for them?"

The process has been so fraught with chaos, rumor, and lack of transparency that it's hard for most residents to know where things stand. "It seems there have been multiple votes by the CEFP committee," says Arritt. "It's not clear exactly who's on the committee or who can vote, and many people believe they kept bringing up the consolidation vote, with people coming and going from the meeting, until they got a majority in favor."

And there have been other problems, says Arritt. "The way of taking votes was also different at different meetings. At some meetings the members were grouped and had to have a consensus vote from each of the groups; in other meetings each person had a vote. Also, it's been noted that consolidations of the middle and elementary schools were never voted on by the committee, but they are included in the final report."

Earlier this month, the county held a required public hearing for the CEFP. "This was not a closure hearing, but it is the first step toward that end," says Arritt. "The closure hearings are just a show," she adds, echoing the observations of hundreds of rural people who have been through similar meetings around the country. "They don't even have that meeting until the consolidation decision is made and they know they have the votes."

It's not clear yet how things will actually go in this troubled West Virginia school district. "We are hoping that we won't be forced into

*RPM Observation:* The spread of negative misinformation and misleading stories about schools targeted for consolidation is common and helps build a rationale for closing a school.

Reductions in district resources make it harder for targeted schools to meet state requirements, which are used as an excuse for closure.

High-performing small rural schools are often targeted for consolidation, especially those that serve large portions of low-income or minority students.

*RPM Observation:* By the time a consolidation proposal is brought to vote by the local school board or to a public hearing, the decision has usually been made to close schools. It is important for small school advocates to keep their schools strong and to stay involved in and aware of school board

consolidation," says Arritt. "We have a good school at Meadow Bridge and a close knit community. Most people in the county don't want school consolidation, you see that in the bond vote. But in those places that have lost their school and the community has died away and in those places where there's a school that's not really part of a community, it's just harder for people to be connected to their school, harder to see why or how it matters."

and central office policies and activities *before* a consolidation proposal is made.

That's not the case in Meadow Bridge. "Many of the people most active in response to the CEFP process have been from Meadow Bridge," says Arritt. "The thing about a small school is that everybody knows everybody. If something happens with your child, you can rely on someone to take care of it until you can get there. The kids know someone is looking out for them, even the ones whose parents aren't always paying much attention. That's what makes our school successful. We don't want to lose it."

## Arkansas Groups Gear Up for Action on Formula Fairness Campaign

Arkansas Rural Education Association (AREA) and the Rural Community Alliance (RCA), both co-sponsors of the Formula Fairness Campaign, geared up for the Title I formula fight almost certain to be part of the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act by asking Rural Trust Policy Director Marty Strange to address leadership gatherings in July.

The RCA summer conference at Conway, Arkansas, brought together about 100 chapter leaders and other key activists from across the state for a wide ranging series of discussions. The Title I session focused on giving the leaders a good grounding in the Title I formula and the inequities imposed on rural and small schools. More detailed training on campaign strategies and actions will take place in early September.

The conference also featured sessions on website development, building community assets, community organizing, engaging youth, and interactive sessions with invited state legislators.

"It's really a pleasure to see the growth, not only in the numbers of committed leaders and local chapters, but also in the political sophistication and self-confidence of the group as a whole," commented Strange.

Responding to Lavina Grandon, the organization's founder and President who introduced Strange by saying he had mentored the organization from the beginning, he said, "We may have mentored you for 15 minutes but we've been trying to keep up with you ever since."

At the AREA annual conference in Eureka Springs, Arkansas, Strange briefed the membership on the Title I formula issues and the Formula Fairness Campaign objectives, and urged them to do three things to help the effort.

First, keep AREA itself a strong organization capable of bringing pressure on the Arkansas congressional delegation. Second, he said, encourage members and others to go on-line to the campaign website ([www.formulafairness.com](http://www.formulafairness.com)) to learn the issues, sign the petition, and sign-up to receive action alerts.

Finally, he urged, "Help us 'humanize' this issue. It's a lot about numbers and formulas, and we need to make it about people. We need profiles of real schools and kids, and educators who are hurt by the Title I formula. We need to be able to tell people what you could do with the Title I money you should be getting but are not because of the discrimination against rural and small schools."

## Formula Grant Successful in Rural Schools, Flexibility Key

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Amid the rising battle over the role of competition in federal grant-making, a new [report](#) has found that school districts participating in the federal Rural Low-Income Schools (RLIS) program used their funding well and for activities directly related to improving student achievement. The findings are important because funding to eligible districts was awarded on a formula rather than a competitive basis. Districts credited the program's flexibility, allowing them to use funds for specific local needs, as key to its success.

In recent months, an increased emphasis on competitive grants in the U.S. Department of Education has raised serious concern among advocates for rural and high poverty areas. Competitive grants are awarded to agencies submitting grant applications that evaluators view as compelling or deserving. Formula grants, on the other hand, are awarded on the basis of eligibility along specified criteria. Formula grants are especially important for communities and agencies where funds and personnel for writing competitive grant applications are scarce.

The report, *Evaluation of the Implementation of the Rural and Low-Income Schools (RLIS) Program: Final Report*, found that RLIS schools used the funding for activities aimed at improving instructional quality and improving student achievement in particular subject areas.

Further, the report found that the rate of academic improvement in mathematics and reading for RLIS districts was significantly greater than for non-RLIS districts from the 2002–03 school year to the 2007–08 school year, although the report did not examine causality and could not attribute these gains to RLIS funding.

## **What is RLIS?**

RLIS is one of two federal programs collectively known as the Rural Education Achievement Program (REAP). The programs provide funding to rural districts to help them make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) as required by No Child Left Behind and to meet challenges associated with small size and population sparsity.

To be eligible for RLIS funding, the district must enroll more than 600 students; at least 20% of students must live in families with incomes below the federal poverty line; and all schools located in the district must have a National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) Locale Code of 6, 7, or 8, meaning all schools are in communities with fewer than 25,000 people and located outside of a metropolitan area or rural communities of fewer than 2,500 people located within a metropolitan area.

RLIS funding goes to states that then distribute it to eligible districts. States have the option of awarding funding on either a formula or competitive basis. All nine of the states studied in-depth in the report awarded funding on a formula, although districts were required to fill out applications and participate in a planning process for use of the funding.

The second REAP program is the Small, rural School Achievement program (SRSA), which provides funding on a formula basis directly to rural districts with fewer than 600 students enrolled or to districts located in very sparsely populated areas. SRSA was not covered in this report.

RLIS provided about \$86 million to 41 states, which distributed it to 1,497 districts, in the 2009–10 school year. Districts received, on average, \$57,000 or about \$29 per student.

## **Characteristics of RLIS Districts and Uses of Funds**

Districts used funds for activities authorized under Title I, Part A, primarily educational technology, professional development, teacher salaries, and instructional materials. The most common goals cited by districts for the use of RLIS funding were improving instructional quality and improving student achievement in particular subject areas.

Districts reported that the flexibility of RLIS program allowed them to use funds to meet needs specific to their districts.

The report notes that rural school districts with high rates of low-income students also tend to have a reduced property tax base, which is critical to local district funding. Districts receiving RLIS funding did have lower per pupil spending levels in 2006–07 than other districts. RLIS districts spent an average of \$9,842 per pupil, compared to \$11,777 for all districts nationally, and \$11,965 for other rural districts.

RLIS districts had higher proportions of students eligible for free/reduced lunch and slightly higher proportions of students with Individualized Education Plans than other rural districts or all districts nationally.

Most RLIS districts are located in the South (69%), where large county-wide school districts predominate. RLIS districts were larger than non-RLIS rural districts, but smaller than other districts nationally.

Compared to other districts nationally, RLIS districts had higher percentages of African-American, American Indian/Native Alaskan, and White students and lower percentages of Hispanic and Asian/Pacific Islander students. Compared to other rural districts, RLIS districts had higher proportions of African American and Hispanic students.

The report notes, "As the RLIS is intended to help rural school districts that serve students from low-income families, the RLIS program is targeting districts as intended."

U.S. Department of Education, Office of Planning, Evaluation and Policy Development, Policy and Program Studies Service, *Evaluation of the Implementation of the Rural and Low-Income Schools (RLIS) Program: Final Report*, Washington, D.C., 2010.

This report is also available on the Department's Web site at <http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/opepd/ppss/reports.html>.

# School Discipline: An Occasional Series on Developments in School Disciplinary Policies and Practices

## ***Reports in Louisiana and Texas Document Overuse of Harsh Discipline***

*Editor's note: Links are free and current at time of posting, but may require registration or expire over time.*

In recent years, many schools have increased the use of harsh discipline practices, including suspending and expelling students — often for minor offenses. Some of this practice is the result of laws that force schools to implement specific punishments for student behaviors that schools have traditionally handled on their own. But in many cases schools are expanding their discretionary use of harsh disciplinary tactics. The consequences can be dire with many students ending up in the justice system, or out of school for days or weeks, often for minor or only alleged infractions. Around the country, families and others concerned about the use of harsh discipline and are working to implement alternatives that promote positive behavior and keep young people involved in the educational process.

### **Related Articles**

- [Connecticut Reduces Suspension Rate](#)
- [Delaware Raises Minimum Reporting Age](#)
- [Georgia Restricts Disciplinary Restraints](#)

## **Louisiana Report Documents Disparate Use of Harsh Discipline**

In Louisiana, the National Economic and Social Rights Initiative and Friends (NESRI) and Families of Louisiana's Incarcerated Children (FLIC) collaborated to produce "[Pushed Out: Harsh Discipline in Louisiana's Schools Denies the Right to Education.](#)" According to statistics cited in the report, Louisiana has higher-than-average suspension rates. In the Recovery School District in New Orleans, which many, including Governor Bobby Jindal, are promoting as a model for the state, one student in four is suspended at least once each year.

According to the report, Louisiana's expulsion rate is five times the national rate.

The report also found that, overall, school districts with larger percentages of African-American students and students living in poverty utilize more punitive and exclusionary discipline practices and have higher rates of suspensions and expulsions than other districts. NESRI and FLIC documented greater difficulty in obtaining discipline rates in charter schools due to a lack of transparency. In the Recovery School District in New Orleans, 57% of students attend charter schools.

The report makes several recommendations, which include:

- creating legislation to mandate the use of Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS), an approach to discipline that teaches and promotes appropriate behavior and has been shown to decrease behavior problems and improve overall school climate;
- placing caps on the number of days students can be suspended; and
- expanding data collection and reporting on school discipline.

## **Texas Report Focuses on Expulsion**

The Texas Appleseed public interest law organization recently released *Texas' School-to-Prison Pipeline: School Expulsion — the Path from Lockout to Dropout*. The report is the second in a series.

The first [Pipeline](#) report documented the over-representation of minority and special education students who were discretionarily suspended by districts, that is, excluded from school for infractions for which suspension is not mandated by law.

The new report has found the same trends in school expulsion. Among its findings, the report notes that the majority of students who are expelled in Texas are expelled discretionarily, for offenses for which expulsion is not mandated by law.

One of the discretionary offenses for which a student *can* be expelled in Texas is "serious or persistent misbehavior" while in a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DAEP). In Texas, DAEP programs are meant to be a stopgap for students at risk of school exclusion. But *Pipeline* reports that they are often just a temporary stop before expulsion with students being expelled for dress code violations and other infractions that would not trigger expulsion in any other setting. The report also notes that questions about the quality of DAEP programs in Texas are raised in many quarters.

The report finds that Texas expels students of color at much higher rates than other students. It cites a study that found that African-American students are more likely to drop out of school for discipline reasons than members of any other racial or ethnic group.

Among the report recommendations are the implementation of PBIS programs, elimination of some offenses for which schools can discretionarily expel students, and closer oversight of DAEPS.

*Read more:*

*Pushed Out*, the Louisiana report and local news coverage:

- [www.nesri.org/fact\\_sheets\\_pubs/Pushed\\_Out\\_Report.pdf](http://www.nesri.org/fact_sheets_pubs/Pushed_Out_Report.pdf)
- [www.louisianaweekly.com/news.php?viewStory=2688](http://www.louisianaweekly.com/news.php?viewStory=2688)

*Pipeline*, the press release:

- [www.texasappleseed.net/index.php?option=com\\_docman&task=doc\\_download&gid=297&Itemid](http://www.texasappleseed.net/index.php?option=com_docman&task=doc_download&gid=297&Itemid)

*Texas' School-to-Prison Pipeline: School Expulsion – the Path from Lockout to Dropout*, the report:

- [www.texasappleseed.net/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=21&Itemid=102](http://www.texasappleseed.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=21&Itemid=102) (scroll down to find reports)

News coverage:

- [www.statesman.com/opinion/fowler-expulsions-equal-dropouts-640250.html](http://www.statesman.com/opinion/fowler-expulsions-equal-dropouts-640250.html)

## Delaware Raises Minimum Reporting Age

*Editor's note: Links are free and current at time of posting, but may require registration or expire over time.*

The state of Delaware has made a small but important change in its school crime reporting requirements. Previously, the law required schools to notify law enforcement upon certain actions by all students 9 years-old and older. School officials, and in some cases, law enforcement officers and courts had no discretion in how to handle these offenses, regardless of the circumstances.

The new law moves the mandatory reporting age from nine to twelve years old.

The legislation emerged from a multidisciplinary School Discipline Task Force that also made other recommendations about reducing student exclusion from school. In their [January 2010 report](#), the Task Force also recommended that codes of school conduct be standardized across the state and that all districts create a plan for reducing discipline referrals and suspensions.

*Read more:*

Read the Task Force Report here:

- <http://www.whyy.org/podcast/news/delaware/100127meschool.pdf>

## Connecticut Reduces Suspension Rate

*Editor's note: Links are free and current at time of posting, but may require registration or expire over time.*

Advocacy groups in Connecticut are praising the state's schools for reducing the number of exclusionary discipline actions, even before a state law limiting conditions under which students can be suspended went into effect on July 1. The law was passed in 2007 but its implementation was delayed until this year after some education groups objected that it would be too expensive for schools to follow.

The new law limits suspensions to two conditions. Students may be suspended if the local district determines they pose a danger to persons or property or they disrupt the education process. And, students may be suspended if they have a history of discipline problems that would have resulted in suspension or expulsion *and* the school can document it has already used non-exclusionary discipline measures, including positive behavior support strategies, to address the problem.

Connecticut Voices for Children (CTVFC) had been reporting on and publicizing Connecticut's high out-of-school

suspension rates. In 2006–2007, Connecticut students lost more than 250,000 school days due to out-of-school suspensions.

CTVFC also released two reports on the subject. [\*Missing Out: Suspending Student from Connecticut Schools\*](#) (2008) found disproportionate rates of suspension, with African-American students four times and Latino students three times more likely than white students to be suspended; students in special education were twice as likely to be suspended as regular education students. [\*Teaching Discipline: A Toolkit for Educators on Positive Alternatives to Out-Of-School Suspensions\*](#), documents strategies schools used to reduce the number of suspensions.

Already, out-of-school suspension rates have dropped from 7.1% in 2006–2007 to 5.1% in 2008–2009. Advocates credit statewide publicity for the falling rates.

*Read more:*

News coverage:

- <http://www.courant.com/news/education/hc-school-suspensions-0604-20100603,0,7920650.story>
- <http://www.ctmirror.org/story/6299/schools-find-alternatives-suspensions-6410>
- <http://www.ctnewsjunkie.com/ctnj.php/archives/entry/op-ed-keeping-children-out-of-school-is-costly-to-connecticut/>

CTVFC *Toolkit*

- [http://www.ctkidslink.org/pub\\_detail\\_515.html](http://www.ctkidslink.org/pub_detail_515.html) (toolkit)

CTVFC *Missing Out*

- [http://www.ctkidslink.org/pub\\_detail\\_423.html](http://www.ctkidslink.org/pub_detail_423.html)

## Georgia Restricts Disciplinary Restraints

*Editor's note: Links are free and current at time of posting, but may require registration or expire over time.*

Georgia's State Board of Education has banned seclusion rooms, chemical restraints (medications), and the use of prone restraints, in which a student is held face down on the floor. Under the new rules, parents must be notified within one day if any physical restraint has been used on their child.

Nationally, special education advocates have been publicizing mistreatment of students by schools using these techniques, and U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan called for all states to review their policies on student restraint.

Gainesville, Georgia was the location of one of the most tragic examples of how these techniques fail, when, in 2004, a 13-year-old student hanged himself while in a seclusion room in a Hall County public school.

Advocates in Georgia and nationwide are also pushing for schools to keep data on the use of restraint practices and for sanctions for schools that do not limit the practice. The Georgia State Superintendent of Education has said he expects a data collection system to be in place soon.

*Read more:*

Background on the policy's progress:

- <http://www.gwinnettdaily.com/home/headlines/93606049.html>
- <http://www.ajc.com/news/georgia-politics-elections/seclusion-restraints-could-be-525752.html>

Coverage of one of the public hearings on the proposed rule:

- <http://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/safe-schools-initiative-challenges-the-state-board-of-education-to-strengthen-rule-prohibiting-restraint-and-seclusion-in-georgia-schools-95979879.html>
- <http://www.gainesvilletimes.com/news/archive/34136/>

Coverage on the rule's passage:

- <http://www.ajc.com/news/georgia-schools-ban-seclusion-566901.html>

### ***RSFN Special Series:***

## **Financing Rural Schools: Characteristics of Strong Rural School Finance Systems**

*Editor's note: Links are free and current at time of posting, but may require registration or expire over time.*

*In this series, Rural School Funding News is reviewing general principles of school finance and sharing information about school funding systems that support rural schools and their unique characteristics and needs. While there are no easy answers to questions about how to fund schools, especially in this economic climate, we hope that these articles will provide you promising practices, ideas for advocacy, and guidelines that are easily transferable in your analysis and work on your own school finance systems. If you are new to the series, you can review a brief introduction to the subject and discussion of Characteristic 1: A Strong Foundation Formula, [here](#), and Characteristic 2: Effective Use of the Judicial System, [here](#).*

### **Characteristic 3: Fair Accounting for Cost of Living and Geographic Differences**

States are increasingly incorporating some variable in their school funding formula that tries to account for regional differences in the cost of providing an education. These variables have the potential to help cover costs associated with specific regional characteristics such as population sparsity, rough terrain, isolation, or even severe climate conditions. Unfortunately, many of these provisions are biased against rural areas. Therefore, it is important to learn what factors are in your state's formula and whether they are helping or hurting rural schools.

**Geographic Difference Factors.** Factors that help cover costs associated with geography can mean schools don't have to divert money (or as much money) from instruction to cover extra expenses associated with necessary but non-instructional items. (Think things like transportation expenses in sparsely populated areas and costs for meeting state administrative and curriculum delivery mandates in isolated places.)

When you read the provisions of state law that contain the funding formula, look for key words like "remote," "sparse," or "geographically isolated" to find out if schools that meet the specified criteria are getting extra state aid. Further research can help determine whether additional aid is rationally calculated or large enough to make a difference and whether it is going to the all the rural schools that need it.

**Cost-of-Living Adjustments (COL).** Cost-of-living factors are supposed to help districts that have trouble recruiting teachers because living costs, often pegged to average housing costs, in the area are high. However, the way these costs are calculated can make a huge difference in who benefits, and many COL factors favor wealthy districts with high property values or high average salaries.

For example, many COL measures assume that housing costs are lower in rural places and therefore teachers can live on a lower salary. But these same measures are usually developed without knowledge of what resources are actually available in rural places. Housing costs are lower, on average, in many rural areas because the available housing stock is poor or limited. In such cases new rural teachers may discover that there is no appropriate housing available; longer term rural teachers often find that new construction costs are higher than in urban places and that rural homes are less likely to appreciate in value in normal housing markets than are houses in more urban locales.

Other amenities are unavailable in many rural places and teachers may encounter hidden costs associated with accessing health care, shopping, and services taken for granted in prosperous urban areas.

In such circumstances as well as in rural and lower-wealth schools that are located near wealthier suburban areas, *higher* salaries are needed to attract and retain teachers.

The bottom line is that unless funding levels account for the actual "cost" of getting teachers to accept an assignment in a high poverty school with many disadvantages, COL adjustments generally send more state aid to places that already have a wealth advantage.

**Making a Difference in Your State** Working on cost factors can be tricky. In states where no acknowledgement is made of the differences in financial needs of rural schools, advocates can work for inclusion of appropriate measures. However, it is equally important that cost factors do not discriminate against rural schools.

The Rural Education Finance Center can help with this analysis, locating experts who can help calculate measures that will make your state's school finance system more supportive of rural schools, and in strategizing for

advocacy.

For more discussion of COL adjustments, read the Rural Trust report on the effects of Pennsylvania's "location cost metric" [here](#).

For more information on the impact of adjusting teacher salaries to other salary averages, see "[Options for Fixing Title I Inequities: Tying Allocations to Average Local Salaries Makes Things Worse.](#)"

## Second California Lawsuit

*Editor's note: Links are free and current at time of posting, but may require registration or expire over time.*

As reported in June RSN, a second school funding has been filed in California. Plaintiffs in the latest suit, *Coalition for Quality Education v. California*, are public interest and community organizations representing underserved communities in the state. The lawsuit also includes individual student and parent plaintiffs, along with taxpayer representatives.

The action asks for a ruling that says that the state has a duty under the California Constitution to ensure sufficient funding for schools and that the state has failed in this duty. The suit asks for a new funding system that provides every child a "reasonable opportunity to obtain a meaningful education that prepares them for civic, social, and economic success in the 21st century."

The lawsuit also asks for expanded preschool opportunities and a data tracking system in addition to funding reform. Only 12% of California 4-year-olds are enrolled in the State Preschool Program for low-income children

The suit cites the large numbers of California students who fail the exit exam and the high drop out rate (nearly 1/3 of students do not graduate from high school in four years) as evidence of the state's failures. The suit also notes the large numbers of students who are learning English as a Second Language and/or are living in poverty as evidence of the need for a new funding system that addresses the needs of these students.

The suit was filed in Alameda County, as was a separate school finance suit brought in May by nine school districts and the California PTA and School Board Association. Partner Rohit Singla, of Munger, Tolles & Olson, one of the law firms representing the Coalition *pro bono*, stated, "Our clients filed their own suit because it allows grassroots community members and their constituents — primarily low-income parents and students — an independent voice so that they will have a direct say in their and their children's future."

*Read more:*

Local news coverage:

- [www.insidebayarea.com/oaklandtribune/localnews/ci\\_15499576](http://www.insidebayarea.com/oaklandtribune/localnews/ci_15499576)
- <http://latimesblogs.latimes.com/lanow/2010/07/embargoed-till-930-am-a-second-lawsuit-seeks-billions-more-for-california-schools.html>
- [www.theislandofalameda.com/2010/07/second-school-finance-suit-filed/](http://www.theislandofalameda.com/2010/07/second-school-finance-suit-filed/)

Coalition for Quality Education website:

- [www.fairschoolsnow.org/](http://www.fairschoolsnow.org/)

Video with students and parents of California explaining why they are suing the state:

- [www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bl4praACvMA&feature=player\\_embedded](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bl4praACvMA&feature=player_embedded)

## Arkansas Lawsuit Makes Agricultural Claims

*Editor's note: Links are free and current at time of posting, but may require registration or expire over time.*

Another lawsuit challenging the consolidation of a small school district has been filed in Arkansas, this time in federal court. Friends of Weiner School District have asked for a declaratory judgment to prevent the application of Act 60, the state's consolidation statute, to the Weiner school district, which is being forced to merge with neighboring Harrisburg because Weiner's enrollment dropped below the minimum 350-student threshold, triggering Act 60.

The lawsuit claims that closing rural schools violates the Arkansas Constitution by failing to provide an equal opportunity for education for rural students. In addition, the lawsuit makes several unusual claims related to

agriculture. One of these is that application of Act 60 violates another section of the state constitution that requires laws supporting agricultural interests be passed. Plaintiffs also claim that the denigration of rural communities that results from closing local schools interrupts the food supply chain of Arkansas and the nation, thereby interrupting interstate commerce in violation of the U.S. Constitution.

The lawsuit, filed in the U.S. District Court in Jonesboro, also cites the U.S. Department of Agriculture's strategic plan calling for the strengthening of rural communities.

The closure of Weiner School District has also become an issue in the Arkansas governor's race with both candidates weighing in on whether Act 60 should be repealed. Gubernatorial challenger Jim Keet wants an exception to Act 60 made for Weiner, which had an average student population of 342 last year. Incumbent Governor Mike Beebe has said that there is no provision for exemption from the law and that any action on behalf of Weiner would invite lawsuits from other districts and potentially reopen the school funding suit.

Weiner's House Representative, Buddy Lovell, proposed a change to the law that would allow for all four of the school year's quarters to be considered in calculating enrollment. Currently, only the first three quarters are counted. Some small school advocates point out that the three quarter rule hurts rural schools because enrollment often increases in rural schools in the spring due to increases in the number of farm laborers with children in school.

The legislation did not pass last session, but Lovell has promised to reintroduce the bill if re-elected.

*Read more:*

Local coverage including links to lawsuit documents:

- [www.arkansasonline.com/news/2010/jul/01/lawsuit-filed-over-ark-school-consolidation-law](http://www.arkansasonline.com/news/2010/jul/01/lawsuit-filed-over-ark-school-consolidation-law)
- <http://arkansasnews.com/2010/06/27/keet-taking-on-tricky-issue-of-consolidation/>
- <http://arkansasnews.com/2010/07/01/lawsuit-forced-consolidation-unconstitutional-poses-terrorism-risk/>
- [www.apsrc.net/Newsletter/NewsletterDisplay.asp?p1=99&p2=Y&Sort=](http://www.apsrc.net/Newsletter/NewsletterDisplay.asp?p1=99&p2=Y&Sort=)

Coverage of various politicians' discussion of consolidation:

- [www.talkbusiness.net/article/KEET-SUPPORTS-WEINER-SCHOOLS-EXCEPTION-SHORT-ON-SPECIFICS-/502/](http://www.talkbusiness.net/article/KEET-SUPPORTS-WEINER-SCHOOLS-EXCEPTION-SHORT-ON-SPECIFICS-/502/)

## Indiana Says No More Bus Fees

*Editor's note: Links are free and current at time of posting, but may require registration or expire over time.*

A just-published Attorney General's opinion states that charging students school bus fees violates the Indiana State Constitution because it is a form of tuition. Attorney General Greg Zoeller said that transportation has been defined as part of the uniform system of education and that funding transportation is the sole responsibility of the school corporation (Indian's term for district). In 2006, the Indiana Supreme Court ruled that mandatory fees charged to all students were unconstitutional, which Zoeller cited in his opinion letter.

The State's Board of Accounts Examiner asked for the opinion after Franklin Township, one of Indiana's largest corporations made plans to charge the fees to help offset budget cuts. Currently approximately 10% of Indiana districts charge bus fees.

Other states have implemented school bus fees over the past year, some reaching \$300 per student. Indiana school officials have indicated they plan to examine other cost-saving measures in transportation including limiting routes and reducing the number of bus stops.

In 1988, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld a school busing fee for low-income children in North Dakota. See "[\*\*No Small Matter: Kagan, Stevens, Marshall and a Rural Child Named Kadrmas\*\*](#)" for more information.

Indiana's tax caps on local revenue collection has contributed to the school budget crisis and many districts are reaching a "circuit breaker" provision which limits the amount of property taxes they may collect.

*Read more:*

Local coverage:

- [www.indystar.com/article/20100713/NEWS04/7130341/State-attorney-general-gives-school-bus-fees-a-red-light](http://www.indystar.com/article/20100713/NEWS04/7130341/State-attorney-general-gives-school-bus-fees-a-red-light)
- [www.wthr.com/Global/story.asp?S=12801735](http://www.wthr.com/Global/story.asp?S=12801735)

Link to the opinion:

- [www.theindychannel.com/download/2010/0712/24226858.pdf](http://www.theindychannel.com/download/2010/0712/24226858.pdf)

## Wisconsin Schools Stand to Gain in New Funding Formula Proposal

*Editor's note: Links are free and current at time of posting, but may require registration or expire over time.*

A new school funding proposal could give Wisconsin schools an additional \$900 million if it is successful in the next legislative session. Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Evers is the author of the proposal, which will probably not be debated until after fall elections. Elements of Evers' plan include providing a minimum level of state aid for all students, adding a poverty factor to the formula, and expanding aid for rural schools.

The Wisconsin revenue system is notoriously complicated and efforts to rework both the school funding and tax system have been underway for years. Currently, state aid, which constitutes about 50% of school funding, is distributed based on local property wealth. Wisconsin districts pass local levy referenda to make up the difference, but because the state imposes revenue caps, many districts have been unable to keep up with rising costs without holding referenda to exceed the revenue caps.

Evers' plan would remove the School Levy Tax Credit that currently flows to municipalities to reduce property taxes and send those funds directly to schools in a new state aid formula. Evers has said this would not result in a net increase in taxes.

*Read more:*

Local coverage here:

- [http://host.madison.com/wsi/news/local/education/local\\_schools/article\\_3cb04408-7fa7-11df-a1f4-001cc4c002e0.html](http://host.madison.com/wsi/news/local/education/local_schools/article_3cb04408-7fa7-11df-a1f4-001cc4c002e0.html)
- <http://www.fox11online.com/dpp/news/education/wisconsin-Reaction-to-school-funding-proposal>
- <http://www.fox21online.com/news/wisconsins-top-education-official-calls-new-school-funding-plan>

Evers' webpage on his plan, 'Fair Funding for our Future:'

- <http://dpi.wi.gov/sprntdnt/fairfundingq.html>

## Montana Considers Draconian Cuts

*Editor's note: Links are free and current at time of posting, but may require registration or expire over time.*

As the state's budget crisis worsens, many in Wisconsin see the budget-cutting options as violating a court ruling on school finance.

The Montana Legislative Services Fiscal Division (LFD) has recommended that the state's share of education funding be reduced to 30% and that local property taxes be raised by two-thirds. Other proposed cuts included the consolidation of very small districts, cutting funding for dropout prevention, and reducing full-day kindergarten to half-day.

Montana School Board Association delegates reviewed and rejected these proposals and are hopeful that legislators on the Finance Committee will work with them to find other ways of dealing with the shortfalls. Many Montana school officials were shocked by the severity of the proposals and see the potential cuts as contradictory to the last ruling in the *Columbia Falls v. State*.

The *Columbia Falls* finance lawsuit decision in 2004 resulted in \$31 million in additional funding, but much of that was in the form of one-time earmarks that were not maintained as the economy declined. Plaintiff districts returned to court in 2008 to ask for a new ruling that the state was not complying with the original order to fund a "basic system of free, quality" schools. The judge noted problems in teacher salary levels, teacher recruitment in rural districts, and other issues, but refused to grant additional relief. His decision did note, however, that state share of education funding should be increasing. Overall, that share has dropped significantly in recent years.

*Read more:*

Read coverage of the Montana School Board delegates' response to the LFD report here:

- [www.clarkforkchronicle.com/article.php/20100612084157874](http://www.clarkforkchronicle.com/article.php/20100612084157874)

- [www.flatheadnewsgroup.com/articles/2010/07/01/hungryhorsenews/news/news\\_8723299606\\_04.txt?story](http://www.flatheadnewsgroup.com/articles/2010/07/01/hungryhorsenews/news/news_8723299606_04.txt?story)

Read an editorial about the proposed budget cutting measures here:

- [http://billingsgazette.com/news/opinion/editorial/gazette-opinion/article\\_fb6c00d0-769c-11df-a364-001cc4c002e0.html](http://billingsgazette.com/news/opinion/editorial/gazette-opinion/article_fb6c00d0-769c-11df-a364-001cc4c002e0.html)

Background on the Columbia Falls suit, and the plaintiffs' attorneys:

- [www.bozemandailychronicle.com/news/article\\_d57e20ef-d1b5-57da-b837-d52f07722bea.html](http://www.bozemandailychronicle.com/news/article_d57e20ef-d1b5-57da-b837-d52f07722bea.html)

## **New Louisiana Law Offers Freedom From Many School Regulations**

*Editor's note: Links are free and current at time of posting, but may require registration or expire over time.*

The Louisiana Federation of Teachers has filed suit challenging a new Louisiana law that gives superintendents and school boards broad authority to waive many state laws and regulations.

The "Red Tape Reduction Act," championed by Governor Bobby Jindal, went into effect this summer. The lawsuit challenging it as unconstitutional was filed immediately, claiming that the Act gives legislative responsibility to the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education.

Under the law, school superintendents, with their local board's approval, could ask the State Board for a waiver of a number of education laws and regulations and propose an alternative plan. Specifically, the teachers union is concerned about language in the Act that allows school officials to waive "any combination of such laws, including but not limited to those related to instructional time, curriculum, funding, personnel, student-to-personnel ratios and student support." The waiver request would have to include how the plan would benefit students. It is unclear whether any district will have time to secure a waiver before the opening of the 2010–11 school year.

In other Louisiana news, a study group is being formed to consider the school finance system. One potential change to the funding system that is under consideration is student-based budgeting, sometimes referred to as backpacking.

Student-based budgeting moves budget decisions to the school level, with principals being made responsible for an allocated amount available for each student at the school. The funding method is similar to that used for most charter schools.

Louisiana faces a potential \$2 billion drop in its state budget next year, and some education officials have questioned the availability of money for a school funding study. Louisiana's state aid formula, called the Minimum Foundation Program, supplies about 40% of school funding, with the rest coming from local tax dollars. State aid for public schools was frozen at current levels again this year, the second year in a row.

*Read more:*

Local stories about the LFT lawsuit:

- [www.nola.com/news/t-p/capital/index.ssf?/base/news-8/127805223336310.xml&coll=1](http://www.nola.com/news/t-p/capital/index.ssf?/base/news-8/127805223336310.xml&coll=1)
- [www.thetowntalk.com/article/20100709/NEWS01/307090084/LFT-decries-Red-Tape-Reduction-Act-](http://www.thetowntalk.com/article/20100709/NEWS01/307090084/LFT-decries-Red-Tape-Reduction-Act-)

Coverage of the school funding freeze:

- [www.2theadvocate.com/news/96809284.html](http://www.2theadvocate.com/news/96809284.html)

Coverage on the potential school funding study:

- [www.2theadvocate.com/news/97781759.html](http://www.2theadvocate.com/news/97781759.html)

## **Washington Lawsuit Moves Forward**

*Editor's note: Links are free and current at time of posting, but may require registration or expire over time.*

A special education lawsuit in the state moved forward last month when the Washington Supreme Court heard oral arguments by the Alliance for Adequate Funding of Special Education, which brought the suit in 2004. The twelve member districts claim that the state's failure to fully fund special education programs is a constitutional violation. Over 70 other school districts filed amicus briefs in the case.

In 2009, the State Court of Appeals upheld a lower court decision finding the funding system constitutional. The Alliance then appealed that decision to the state's highest court.

Funding shortfalls for special education run in the millions in some districts, and the coalition argues that the state is approximately \$130 million short in meeting its obligation overall.

The trial court did rule that the state's cap on special education was unconstitutional. Previously, Washington funded special education for no more than 12.7% of the total number of students in a district.

Previous court rulings in Washington in the 1980s found that the state must provide special education funding and that some safety net measures were needed to supplement the budget.

*Read more:*

Local coverage:

- [www.issaquahpress.com/2010/06/29/supreme-court-hears-arguments-in-special-education-suit-spearheaded-by-issaquah/](http://www.issaquahpress.com/2010/06/29/supreme-court-hears-arguments-in-special-education-suit-spearheaded-by-issaquah/)

Read the court filings in the case by searching under the case's hearing date of June 22, 2010 here:

- [www.courts.wa.gov/appellate\\_trial\\_courts/coaBriefs/index.cfm?fa=coabriefs.briefsByHearingDate&courtId=A08&year=2010#a20100624](http://www.courts.wa.gov/appellate_trial_courts/coaBriefs/index.cfm?fa=coabriefs.briefsByHearingDate&courtId=A08&year=2010#a20100624)

Read about the lawsuit's history here:

- [www.issaquah.wednet.edu/news/alliance/Default.aspx](http://www.issaquah.wednet.edu/news/alliance/Default.aspx)

## Oklahoma Ballot Initiative Faces Opposition

*Editor's note: Links are free and current at time of posting, but may require registration or expire over time.*

A significant battle is brewing over State Question 744, which will be on the ballot in November in Oklahoma. If approved by voters, the resulting constitutional amendment would require Oklahoma to increase per-pupil spending to at least the regional average of six surrounding states (Arkansas, Kansas, Colorado, Missouri, New Mexico, and Texas).

Public school advocates gathered more than 250,000 signatures in order to put 744 on the ballot. The measure would force the state to increase spending from about \$6,900 per student now to about \$8,300.

Opponents, however, predict major cuts to other state services as a result of the potential increase in education spending; state workers' groups contend their jobs are at stake; chambers of commerce charge 744 will precipitate a tax increase; and, the Oklahoma Farm Bureau says that 744 threatens agribusiness. Several groups have formed the 'One Oklahoma' coalition to battle the measure, and Oklahomans for Responsible Government and others are also organizing against the measure.

The Legislature, meanwhile, passed its own ballot question that proposes to prohibit the use of a set formula, such as the one used in Question 744, to make any spending decisions for the state.

If both measures pass, legal experts say sorting out the contradiction could take years in court.

*Read more*

Local coverage:

- [http://newsok.com/fight-over-school-funding-to-be-big-issue-in-oklahoma-fall-vote/article/3469827?custom\\_click=headlines\\_widget](http://newsok.com/fight-over-school-funding-to-be-big-issue-in-oklahoma-fall-vote/article/3469827?custom_click=headlines_widget)
- <http://newsok.com/business-labor-coalition-to-oppose-oklahoma-education-initiative/article/3470852>
- [www.newson6.com/Global/story.asp?S=12808720](http://www.newson6.com/Global/story.asp?S=12808720)

Coverage of the 'One Oklahoma' press conference:

- <http://newsok.com/article/3471064>

Website of proponents of the measure:

- [www.yeson744.com/](http://www.yeson744.com/)

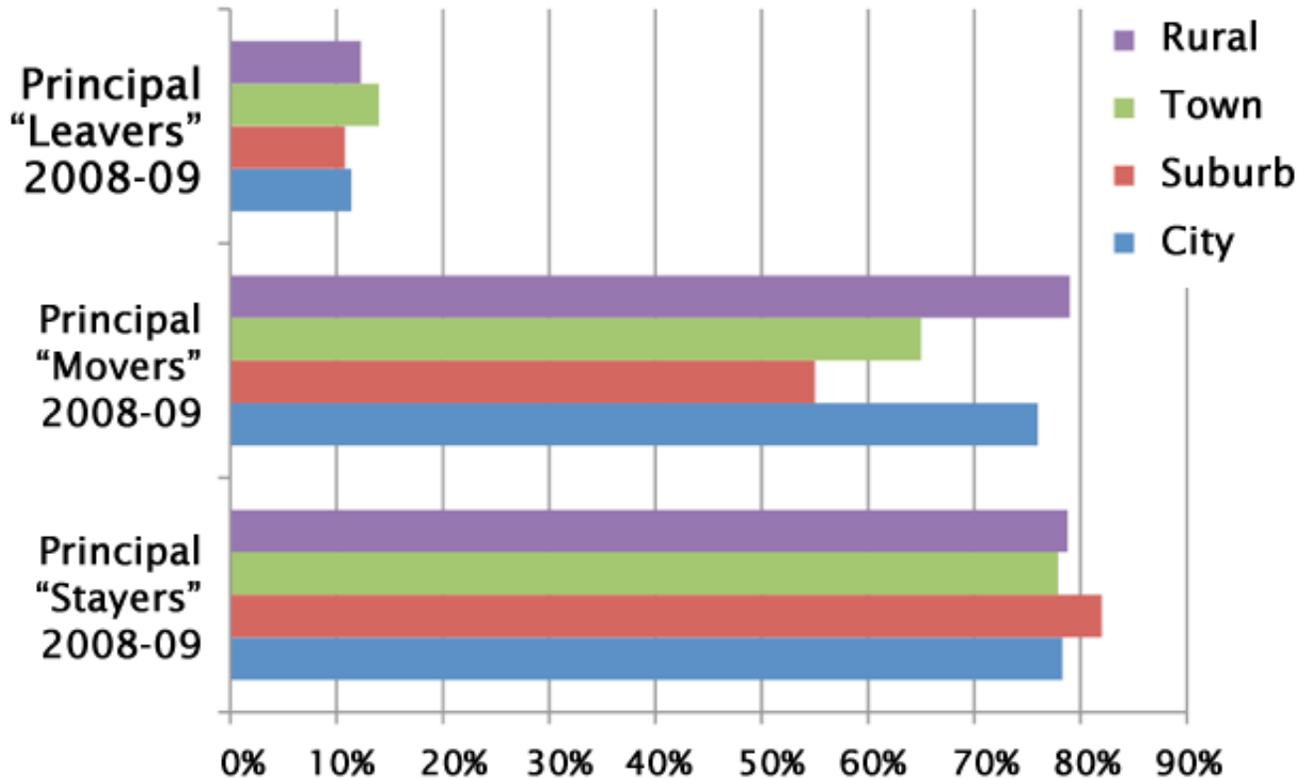
Website of opposition:

- [www.stop744.com/](http://www.stop744.com/)

## Graph

### Principal Mobility by School Locale, 2008–09

*Editor's note: Links are free and current at time of posting, but may require registration or expire over time.*



*NOTE: "Stayers" are 2007–08 principals who were principals in the same schools in 2008–09. "Movers" are 2007–08 principals who were principals in different schools in 2008–09. "Leavers" are 2007–08 principals who were no longer principals in 2008–09.*

*Source: Battle, D. (2010). Principal attrition and mobility: Results from the 2008–2009 Principal follow-up survey. Washington, DC: Institute for Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. Retrieved from <http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2010337>*

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