

**Invitation to Present at the  
2025 Rural Schools Association Annual Summer Conference  
The Future of Rural - Our Time to Shine  
July 13-15 - Lake Placid Conference Center**

Dear Friends of Rural Schools,

The Rural Schools Association is excited to announce its 2025 annual conference, **The Future of Rural - Our Time to Shine**, to be held at the Lake Placid Convention Center from July 13-15, 2025.

We are reminded that rural schools are vital pillars of hope, growth, and progress. By embracing innovative programs, these schools can lead the way in shaping brighter futures for their students and communities. We are seeking applications from school districts and/or BOCES districts that have any unique and successful programs currently in operation that include but are not limited to:

**AGRICULTURE IN SCHOOLS**

Programs like FFA (Future Farmers of America), Ag in the Classroom, and Farm to School initiatives not only teaches essential skills but also connects students to their local communities and industries, making schools a beacon for agricultural education and sustainability. Topics to consider include: expanding agricultural education in schools, agricultural community engagement, and hands-on agricultural activities.

**PREPARING STUDENTS FOR LIFE BEYOND P-12**

Whether through career and technical education, workforce development, apprenticeships, or partnerships with higher education and trade schools, these programs allow schools to be a shining light guiding students toward success in the workforce. Presentation partners could include: Higher Education, Trade Schools and other agencies serving the P-12 community.

**STAFFING ISSUES**

Addressing staffing issues, such as retention, labor negotiations, and hiring quality staff, ensures that schools have the dedicated educators and leaders to support the next generation.

**DISTRICT COLLABORATION**

Finally, fostering district collaboration through advocacy, building positive district culture, implementing successful technology initiatives, and strengthening community connections further solidifies schools as the heart of their rural communities, guiding them toward operational success and shared growth. We encourage you to share your innovative approaches that make your schools a beacon of light for students, families, and the broader community.

Presentation proposals should be limited to 500 words or less and must be submitted electronically **by midnight February 14, 2025 by visiting <https://rsany.org/2025-proposal/>**. Feel free to share this link with others who you feel may be interested in participating.

The selected sessions will be scheduled for **Monday, July 14 and Tuesday morning, July 15**.

Sessions are an hour in length, please plan for approximately 45 minutes of presentation time and 15 minutes for Q&A. Proposals will be reviewed by the Rural Schools Association Conference Planning Committee. The selected presenters will be notified by March 10th. Presenters will be asked to pay the registration fee appropriate to their conference participation.

If you are a vendor interested in presenting with a district, please contact [Scott Bischoping](mailto:sbischoping@rsany.org) at [sbischoping@rsany.org](mailto:sbischoping@rsany.org).

The importance of rural communities and their schools has never been more evident. If our rural districts are to successfully build a new approach of educating this unique generation of learners and navigating the ever changing fiscal and educational environment, they'll need the most insightful, successful and replicable programs and approaches. With these breakout sessions, RSA intends to provide them just that.

Thank you very much for your continued support of the Rural Schools Association. If you have any questions concerning the proposal process, please contact Heather Zellers at [hzellers@rsany.org](mailto:hzellers@rsany.org).

Sincerely,

The Rural Schools Association Conference Planning Committee  
Heather Zellers, Director of Advocacy and Information Services