

STRENGTHENING RURAL COMMUNITY COLLEGES

Association of Community
College Trustees



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

ACCT, with support from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, will assess the needs of rural community colleges across the country.



Impact

There are over 260 rural community colleges which educate nearly 670,000 students (U.S. Dept. of Ed.)



Rural Challenges

Funding
Geography & Internet
Access to Basic Services
Changing Demographics
Economic Development



Innovative Strategies

Community partnerships
Institutional partnerships
Dual enrollment programs
Digital learning

Rural Community College Landscape

5 State Partners

North Carolina

Kentucky

Iowa

Texas

California



Federal

Higher Education Act Reauthorization
First 100 Days following 2020 election



State

Engage governors and state legislators



Local

Partner with local businesses, community
organizations, and service providers

Policy Opportunities

Rural (remote):

“More than 25 miles from an urbanized area and more than 10 miles from an urban cluster.”

The Department of Education definition of rural is based exclusively on distance from urban centers.

Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwa Community College

Lakeshore Technical College

Mid-State Technical College

Nicolet Area Technical College

Southwest Wisconsin Technical College

Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College

Wisconsin's Rural Community Colleges

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

February 2021- Report publication

Through these convenings and research report we hope to:

- Increase public awareness of issues facing rural community colleges
- Gather new information about challenges faced by rural institutions to develop state and federal policy solutions to support their long-term viability.
- Determine avenues to continue and broaden this work.

Visit our website to receive project updates and provide us your feedback:

rural.acct.org

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