# WISCONSIN RURAL SCHOOLS ALLIANCE

## ADVOCACY AGENDA

# What is Best for Children in Rural Wisconsin

**Give students the tools to be successful in life by:**

- Maintaining high standards and providing access to a robust curriculum
- Continuing support for research-based educational best practices
- Guaranteeing high-quality educators
- Adequately and equitably financing a uniform P-16 system across Wisconsin

**In order to guarantee high quality educators, the state should support local and regional efforts for:**

- Competitive educator compensation packages
- Appropriate licensure flexibility options
- Mentoring for new educators and ongoing professional development opportunities
- Recruiting and retaining high-quality educators

**In order to guarantee high quality leaders, the state should support local and regional efforts for:**

- Innovative leadership models to sustain rural schools

**In order to help schools better utilize technology to support students, the state should:**

- Implement technology standards for schools and provide funding to erase gaps in school broadband access
- Ensure the quality of distance learning opportunities
- Promote and support online and blended instruction as delivery models in rural schools

**In order to free school districts from unfunded mandates, the state should:**

- Repeal unnecessary mandates
- Secure funding or provide flexibility to support newly mandated goals, programs or activities
- Ensure that state rules and regulations match federal standards
- Create an accountability system that is reflective of the uniqueness of small, rural districts

**In order to support new models of delivering education in the 21st Century, the state should:**

- Allow school districts to establish a flexible learning year including hours, days, and calendars without restrictions
- Allow school districts flexibility to establish creative partnerships to deliver instruction

**An investment in education that works for rural students will provide:**

- A stable state funding stream that is indexed to inflation to eliminate reliance on operating referendums
- Full funding of the state's special education formulas
- Direct state funding for court mandated placements
- Funding formula that addresses property tax payers' issues throughout the state
- Funding formula that addresses high-poverty levels in rural districts
- Increased threshold for districts to qualify for sparsity aid
- Adequate support to remove disparity of transportation costs for rural districts
- Differentiated funding sources for rural schools with declining enrollment
- Adequate funding to maintain the high quality of education in rural schools