



# Educator Field Placement in Rural Areas

## A Policy Brief for the Washington State Legislature

### Executive Summary

#### **Washington's teacher shortage is particularly acute in rural areas.**

Washington State struggles to retain qualified and diverse teachers. This teacher shortage is particularly acute in rural areas. To address this issue, the 2019 State Legislature directed the Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC) to produce a report with policy recommendations for increasing student teachers' field placement in rural areas (under Section 204 of E2SHB 1139.SL). This may create a teacher pipeline for rural districts and lead to more teachers in rural schools.

This policy brief provides recommendations to encourage teacher preparation programs approved by the Washington Professional Educator Standards Board to develop relationships with school districts that are not in their general geographic area (i.e., rural districts) and to provide supervisory support for student teachers' field placement in these school districts.

Based on findings from a literature review, as well as recommendations from the Field Placement Advisory Group and participants in a stakeholder convening, WSAC identified **five primary barriers to field placement in rural districts:**

- Geographic isolation
- Insufficient funding and resources
- Lack of networks and information sharing
- Little preparation to teach in rural schools
- Limited availability of cooperating teachers and field supervisors

To respond to these barriers and increase the number of rural field placements in the state, WSAC and the Field Placement Advisory Group make **five recommendations to the Washington State Legislature:**

1. Provide funding for grow-your-own rural teacher programs and support for adapting program structure.
2. Create and fund incentives for field placements and cooperating teachers in rural areas.
3. Provide funding to pilot partnerships supported by the Beginning Educator Support Team (BEST), with a focus on increasing the rural teacher pipeline.
4. Create and integrate rural-specific curricula for teacher preparation programs.
5. Explore options for broadening who can serve in the role of field supervisor, and provide needed supports.

The barriers and recommendations are summarized in Table 1.

*Table 1. Barriers to field placement in rural districts and recommendations for addressing them*

Barriers to Rural Field Placements	Recommendations to the Legislature
<p>Access, proximity, and teacher preparation program structure limit student teachers' participation in rural field placements.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student teachers in Washington State are likely to take field placements near where they grew up.</li> <li>• Nearly all student teachers in Washington participate in field placements within 50 miles of their teacher preparation program.</li> <li>• Teacher preparation programs may be structured in ways that are not conducive to student teaching far from campus.</li> </ul>	<p>Provide funding for grow-your-own rural teacher programs and support for adapting program structure.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide funding for grow-your-own rural teacher programs to increase rural districts' capacity to generate teachers from their local population who understand the context of rural schools.</li> <li>• Teacher preparation programs need support and technology to adapt their program structure to allow for rural field placements.</li> </ul>
<p>Funding and resources for attracting student teachers and cooperating teachers are limited in rural schools.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rural school districts often lack the resources to provide professional development and incentives to attract student teachers and cooperating teachers to field placements.</li> <li>• Transportation and housing are important resources and significant barriers for field placement in rural areas.</li> </ul>	<p>Create and fund incentives for field placements and cooperating teachers in rural areas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support and fund incentive packages for student teachers and cooperating teachers in rural schools.</li> <li>• Incentives should build upon existing programs the state has established to develop and support the teacher workforce and provide additional funding for rural areas.</li> </ul>
<p>Networking and information sharing between rural districts and teacher preparation programs are limited.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social and professional networking among student teachers and school administrators is a major factor in field placement.</li> <li>• Student teachers may have limited sources of information about schools and districts.</li> </ul>	<p>Provide funding to pilot partnerships supported by BEST, with a focus on increasing the rural teacher pipeline.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide funding to create and pilot rural consortia and build on statewide BEST infrastructure to incentivize partnership building, data-sharing, communication, and alignment among rural schools and districts, educational service districts, teacher preparation programs, and state agencies.</li> <li>• Incorporate existing Washington State infrastructure into the rural consortia awards, including mentor training for cooperating teachers through BEST.</li> </ul>
<p>Student teachers may not be prepared to teach in rural areas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student teachers may have limited knowledge of and experience with rural settings and may not be prepared to teach in rural areas.</li> <li>• Few teacher preparation programs include rural-specific courses.</li> </ul>	<p>Create and integrate rural-specific curricula for teacher preparation programs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore and support the creation of rural-specific curricula for teacher preparation programs.</li> <li>• Integrate rural-specific topics within existing courses.</li> </ul>
<p>Access to rural field supervisors who are connected to rural communities and have deep knowledge of teacher preparation program coursework is limited.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The lack of networking and information-sharing between rural districts and teacher preparation programs limits the pool of candidates for field supervisors.</li> </ul>	<p>Explore options for broadening who can serve in the role of field supervisor, and provide needed supports.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure alignment between teacher preparation program coursework and field placement.</li> <li>• Ensure quality and implementation of evaluation practices and standards.</li> </ul>

## Introduction

Like much of the nation, Washington State struggles to recruit and retain qualified and diverse teachers and administrators (Garcia & Weiss, 2019; Professional Educator Standards Board, 2019). In a recent survey, a fifth of Washington principals and human resources directors indicated that they were in a “crisis mode” and unable to hire qualified teachers (Association of Washington School Principals, 2017).

The teacher shortage is particularly acute in rural areas. In Washington and across the nation, rural schools and districts have faced more severe educator shortages than those in suburban and urban areas (Lazarev, Toby, Zacamy, Lin, & Newman, 2017).

To address this issue, the 2019 Legislature directed the Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC) to develop policy recommendations for increasing student teachers’ field placement in rural areas (under Section 204 of Engrossed Second Substitute House Bill 1139). This may create a teacher pipeline for rural districts and lead to more teachers in rural schools.

A growing body of research is examining the association between field placement and a teacher’s first school of employment after graduation. Two studies in Washington found 15 percent of student teachers were hired as teachers in their field placement school (Krieg, Theobald, & Goldhaber, 2016) and 40 percent of student teachers were hired in their field placement district (Goldhaber, Krieg, & Theobald, 2014). This suggests field placement may be more predictive of a teacher’s first school of employment than their hometown (Reininger, 2012; Boyd, Lankford, Loeb, & Wyckoff, 2013) or the location of their teacher preparation program (Krieg et al., 2016; Goldhaber, Krieg, Naito, & Theobald, 2019a). Schools and districts that have field placements appear less likely to have teacher shortages the following year (Goldhaber, Krieg, Naito, & Theobald, 2019b).

See box at right for definitions of terms used throughout this report.<sup>1</sup>

## Definitions

**Rural** is used broadly in this report to indicate any location, school, or district that is rural, remote, or geographically distant from a teacher preparation program in Washington.

**Field placement**, also known as student teaching, is the period of clinical practice in a classroom for individuals enrolled in teacher preparation programs. During field placement, the student teacher is actively and fully planning and delivering instruction, as well as reflecting upon and assessing learning.

**Cooperating teachers** host student teachers in their classroom, and mentor, advise, and guide them during their field placement. In Washington State, cooperating teachers must be a certificated staff member with at least 3 years’ experience as a teacher. In this report, cooperating teachers are differentiated from mentor teachers, who support first- and second-year in-service teachers.

**Field supervisors** evaluate student teachers and are the connection and liaison between the teacher preparation programs and the field placement, working to ensure continuity between what students learn in their program and what they are practicing in the classroom.

<sup>1</sup> Definitions are derived from Wash. Admin. Code § 181-78A-010 (2019), <https://apps.leg.wa.gov/wac/default.aspx?cite=181-78A-010>.

### About this policy brief

This policy brief provides recommendations to encourage teacher preparation programs approved by the Washington Professional Educator Standards Board to develop relationships with school districts that are not in their general geographic area (i.e., rural districts) and to provide supervisory support for student teachers' field placement in these school districts.

Specifically, this policy brief identifies evidence-based practices and policies to increase student teachers' field placement in rural schools. It draws on information from the following sources:

- **A review of the research on field placement in rural schools**, including over 40 peer-reviewed studies, literature reviews, and meta-analyses.
- **An advisory group** representing key rural education stakeholders in Washington who helped identify participants for a rural education convening (Appendix).
- **A convening of more than 30 Washington stakeholders** to identify and discuss barriers to student teaching in rural areas and strategies to overcome each barrier (Appendix).

In addition, WSAC conducted interviews with four key informants: a student teacher in a rural field placement, two superintendents, and a representative of an educational service district that serves rural school districts.

### What are common barriers to field placement in rural areas?

Geographic proximity, funding and resources, networks and information-sharing, preparation to teach in rural schools, and the availability of field supervisors are all important factors associated with field placement in rural areas.

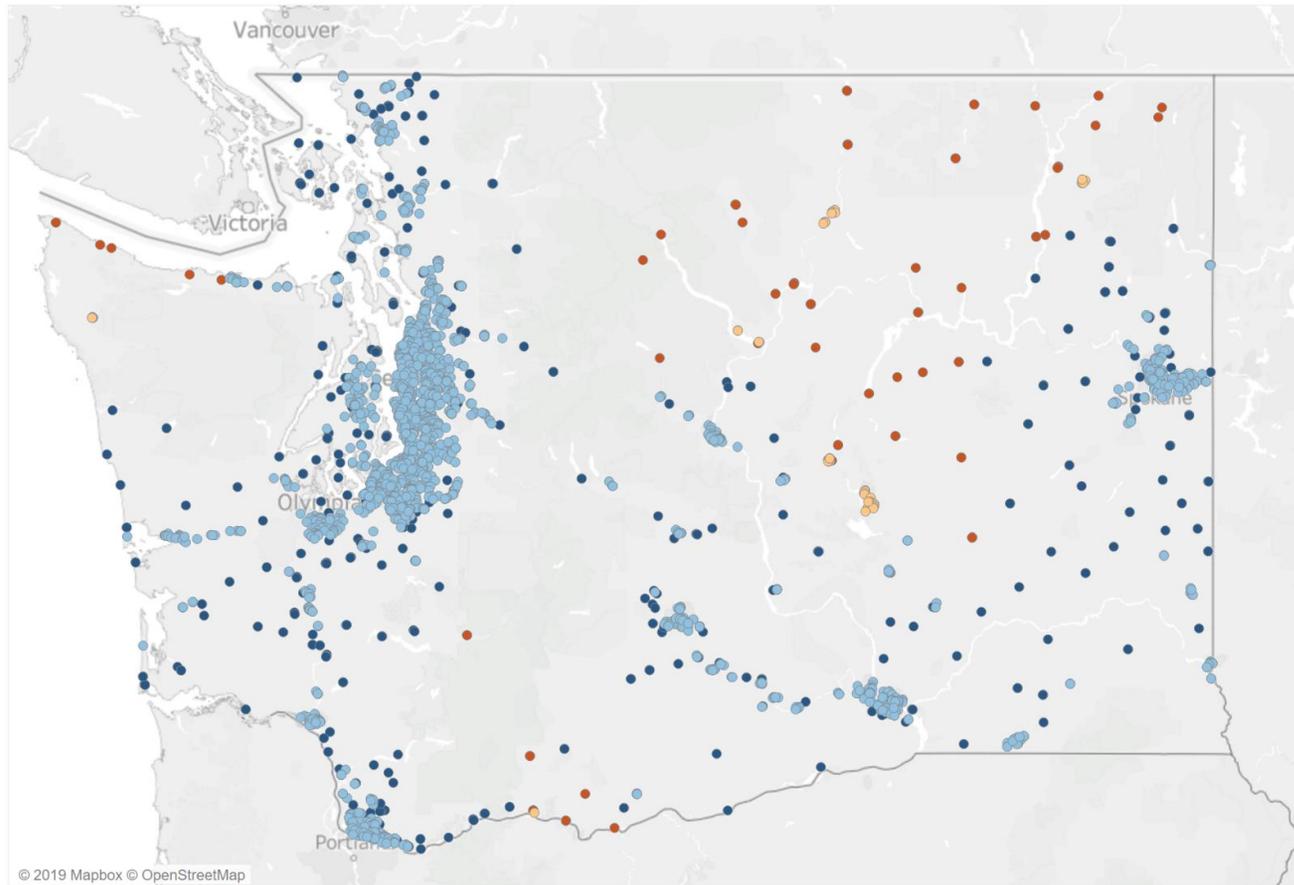
*Barrier 1: Access, proximity, and teacher preparation program structure limit student teachers' participation in rural field placements.*

**Student teachers in Washington are likely to take field placements near where they grew up and attended college** (Krieg et al., 2016). This means student teachers are less likely to take a field placement in rural schools. Similarly, teachers tend to work close to where they grew up, often within 20 miles of the high school they attended (Engel & Cannata, 2015; Reininger, 2012).

**Nearly all student teachers in Washington participate in field placements within 50 miles of their teacher preparation program.** A study using data from 15 teacher preparation programs, representing 81 percent of student teachers in Washington, found that over 99 percent of student teachers were placed within 50 miles of their teacher preparation program (Goldhaber et al., 2019a). Participants in the convening said the result is that some rural districts receive practically no student teachers.

In 2017-18, 27 percent (40 of 148) of all rural and remote schools (as classified by the National Center for Education Statistics) in Washington were more than 50 miles from a teacher preparation program. In comparison, less than two percent (13 of 799 schools) of schools in cities, suburbs, and towns were more than 50 miles from a teacher preparation program (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. Map of Washington schools and distance to the nearest teacher preparation program



- Rural school designation and distance from a teacher preparation program
- Non-rural school within 50 miles of a teacher preparation program
  - Rural school within 50 miles of a teacher preparation program
  - Non-rural school more than 50 miles from a teacher preparation program
  - Rural school more than 50 miles from a teacher preparation program

Source: National Center for Education Statistics data (location of Washington schools in 2017-18) and Washington Professional Educator Standards Board data (location of teacher preparation programs in 2018-19)

Finally, **teacher preparation programs may be structured in ways that are not conducive to field placement far from campus** (Barley & Brigham, 2008). For example, teacher preparation programs may require student teachers to attend classes on campus throughout their field placement or may not allow students teachers to take field placements beyond a certain distance from the campus.

*Barrier 2: Funding and resources for attracting student teachers and cooperating teachers are limited in rural schools.*

**Rural school districts often lack the funding to provide resources to attract student teachers and cooperating teachers to field placements.** For example, these include the funding and resources to support field placement coordinators, to provide professional development for student teachers and cooperating teachers, as well as incentives for high-quality cooperating teachers and student teachers (Lazarev et al., 2017). In addition, convening participants suggest that the intensive time and resource requirements of the edTPA—Washington’s teacher certification assessment administered during field placement—may discourage school districts with fewer resources from accepting or seeking student teachers.

**Transportation and housing are important resources and significant barriers for field placement in rural areas.** When placed in a rural setting, student teachers must have access to reliable and affordable transportation to participate in their teacher preparation program (Monk, 2007). Affordable housing in rural areas was also identified by convening participants and in the research literature as a barrier to field placement in rural areas (Monk, 2007; Lowe, 2006).

Rural areas may also lack access to mobile telephone service and often have limited internet connectivity (Liu, Miller, Dickmann, & Monday, 2018). This limits the number of student teachers able or willing to take rural field placements. It also reduces the availability of supports, such as virtual supervision.

*Barrier 3: Networking and information-sharing between rural districts and teacher preparation programs are limited.*

**Social and professional networking among student teachers and school administrators is a major factor in field placement** (Maier & Youngs, 2009). In Washington, the matching of student teachers to cooperating teachers often revolves around school- and teacher-level connections to teacher preparation programs (Goldhaber, Grout, Harmon, & Theobald, 2018). The relationships between rural schools or districts and teacher preparation programs are often limited, in part because of the physical distance between them (St. John, Goldhaber, Krieg, & Theobald, 2018).

### *A Stakeholder’s Perspective*

“To graduate from a student teaching placement, you have to have a certain amount of hours in classroom teaching. Between all the driving and prep and stuff, I’m spending probably close to three hours more a day than the average student teacher to do the same amount of work...and I’m spending a lot more money to student teach in the area where I’m teaching...The Legislature needs to look at how they’re going to start incentivizing teachers to do so...”

– Student teacher in a rural field placement

**Student teachers may have limited sources of information about schools and districts**, reinforcing their focus on familiarity when deciding where to apply for their first teaching job (Cannata, 2010). Similarly, principals are likely to rely on district resources and network locally to find prospective teachers to fill vacancies in their schools (Engel & Cannata, 2015). These social networks may make it difficult for student teachers and rural schools to find one another for field placements. Systematic information-gathering and sharing between teacher preparation programs and districts may ameliorate this inequity (St. John et al., 2018).

### *A Stakeholder's Perspective*

“One thing that would be helpful would be spending time in our rural schools, getting to know what’s going on in our rural schools. I don’t know how well educated the teacher preparation programs are about what teaching and learning looks like in our rural schools...I think it would be hard for them to encourage prospective students to go to places that they don’t know much about.”

– Rural superintendent

**Barrier 4: Student teachers may not be prepared to teach in rural areas.**

**Student teachers appear to have limited knowledge of and experience with rural settings and may not be prepared to teach in rural areas** (Young, Grainger, & James, 2018). The research literature and convening participants identified negative stereotypes and preconceptions about rural areas as a barrier.

In addition, understanding the rural context is necessary to engage students with instructional practices that are relevant to their cultural, political, and economic background (Eppley, 2015). **Few teacher preparation programs include rural-specific courses** (Yarrow, Ballantyne, Hansford, Herschell, & Millwater, 1999), despite strong calls for these programs in the research literature (Eppley, 2015).

**Barrier 5: Access to rural field supervisors who are connected to rural communities and have deep knowledge of teacher preparation program coursework is limited.**

Student teachers are not the only ones who face barriers related to rural field placement; the educators who supervise them have many of the same challenges. **The lack of networking and information-sharing between rural districts and teacher preparation programs limits the pool of candidates for field supervisors**, forcing districts to rely on local resources and networks to fill those positions in their schools (Engel & Cannata, 2015). Lack of additional compensation for the increased responsibilities of a cooperating teacher may also discourage qualified candidates from taking on this role.

Convening participants both from rural districts and from teacher preparation programs reported difficulties in finding qualified field supervisors for rural field placements. The challenge lies in finding field supervisors trained in a teacher preparation program’s curriculum and coursework who can also access rural settings far from the corresponding university (Eaton, Dressler, Gereluk, & Becker, 2015; Zeichner, 2010), and are connected to that district. Ensuring coherence between coursework and field placement is important, as cooperating teachers may model classroom practices for student teachers that are not aligned with practices they learned in their teacher preparation programs (Valencia, Martin, Place, & Grossman, 2009).

### *A Stakeholder's Perspective*

“The more experience student teachers have in our community prior to student teaching, the longer they stay. We focus too much on coursework in prep programs rather than hands-on [experience].”

– Rural superintendent

## Recommendations

In the following section, we provide recommendations from members of the Field Placement Advisory Group, convening participants, and interviewees on how to address the barriers discussed above. Although many of these recommendations are also identified in the research literature, few have been rigorously evaluated. Therefore, we do not always know whether a given practice or policy is effective or under what conditions it may be effective.

### *Recommendation 1: Provide funding for grow-your-own rural teacher programs and support for adapting program structure.*

WSAC and the Field Placement Advisory Group recommend that the Washington State Legislature **provide funding for grow-your-own rural teacher programs to increase rural districts' capacity to generate teachers from their local population who understand the context of rural schools.**

Grow-your-own teacher programs recruit and train teachers from within communities so that teachers' identities and skills reflect the identities and needs of their students. Some of these programs recruit and train community members and school staff members, such as paraeducators, to become certificated teachers (Greenberg Motamedi, Leong, & Yoon, 2017). Other grow-your-own programs focus on high school students, presenting teaching as a desirable career path and providing opportunities to explore and practice teaching (Greenberg Motamedi, Petrokubi, Yoon, & Leong, 2018).

Grow-your-own teacher programs are partnerships between school districts and teacher preparation programs. They often arrange for student teachers to take some courses online and others locally (Barley & Brigham, 2008; Monk, 2007). They are typically alternative pathway programs that provide students with academic, financial, and

social support along the pathway to a teaching career (Greenberg Motamedi, Leong, & Yoon, 2017; Greenberg Motamedi, Petrokubi, Yoon, & Leong, 2018). Traditional preparation programs may also develop grow-your-own pathways with rural and remote school district partners.

### *What the Research Says*

Recruiting prospective teachers from rural areas is one way of ensuring that student teachers understand the social and cultural context of rural teaching (Barley & Brigham, 2008). Grow-your-own teacher programs build the capacity of rural districts to prepare and recruit teachers from their local population, with the knowledge that teachers are more likely to be hired and remain in teaching positions close to where they grew up (Boyd, Lankford, Loeb, & Wyckoff, 2005; Monk, 2007; Reininger, 2012).

Rural grow-your-own teacher programs may support the creation of systematic field placement practices to ameliorate some of the inequities introduced through differential access to social networks (Goldhaber et al., 2018; Zeichner, 2010). Rural schools can coordinate their efforts with teacher preparation programs to inform prospective teachers of the benefits of teaching and living in rural communities (Miller, 2012), and they can create marketing strategies that illuminate the positive elements of the school district, community, and surrounding area (Lowe, 2006).

### *A Stakeholder's Perspective*

"Begin by looking inward within the community. Looking at who the individuals are within your own community, you might encourage [them to] consider teaching as a profession. That would be the place that I would begin. Many of our districts look outward and go to job fairs and career fairs and end up finding good people, but I'm not so sure those people are choosing to stay there."

— *Rural superintendent*

However, teacher preparation programs may be structured in ways that are not conducive to field placements far from campus or have programmatic barriers to rural grow-your-own teacher programs. **Teacher preparation programs need support and technology to adapt their program structure to allow for rural field placements.** This may include remote participation, local delivery of coursework, field placement supervisor support, and technology for online coursework and virtual supervision (Barley & Brigham, 2008; Liu, et al., 2018).

### *What the Research Says*

Teacher preparation programs often use virtual technology for supervisors to communicate with and provide feedback to student teachers in rural field placements (Liu et al., 2018). However, virtual technology does not replace the need for one-to-one mentoring, high levels of interaction with supervisors, and personalized feedback that student teachers require to become effective teachers (Eaton et al., 2015).

### *Recommendation 2: Create and fund incentives for field placements and cooperating teachers in rural areas.*

WSAC and the Field Placement Advisory Group recommend that the Legislature **support and fund incentive packages for student teachers and cooperating teachers in rural schools.** The packages should be marketed—and information should be disseminated—using teacher preparation program partners as a venue, preferably in the early stages of teacher education.

**Incentives should build upon existing incentive programs the state has established to develop and support the teacher workforce and provide additional funding for rural areas.** These include grants, conditional scholarships, and loan repayment. Incentive packages for student teachers could include dedicated housing or a housing stipend during field placement.

### *What the Research Says*

Incentives for student teachers in rural field placements include free or low-cost housing, a stipend, and transportation vouchers (Monk, 2007; Lowe, 2006). Incentives for cooperating teachers include increased compensation for mentoring student teachers and quality training on how to mentor (Goldhaber et

Additionally, districts could offer a continued stipend to new teachers during the first few years of employment, when teachers are most likely to leave (Elfers, Plecki, & Van Windekens, 2017). Alternatively, incentive packages could include information on the various home loan programs available only in rural areas.

Incentive packages for cooperating teachers could include increased compensation for mentoring student teachers and professional development on how to mentor. This is important because first-year teachers who had a high-quality cooperating teacher when they were student teaching are likely to be more effective than their peers (Goldhaber et al., 2018).

The Beginning Educator Support Team (BEST) created professional development on mentoring for new teachers. WSAC and the Field Placement Advisory Group suggest adapting it for cooperating teachers. (BEST is a comprehensive induction program that aims to “support and retain new teachers and ensure an equitable, high-quality education for every student in Washington.”<sup>2</sup>)

Finally, packages could describe benefits of living in rural areas, like becoming a member of a close-knit community; teaching different subjects and smaller classes; and enjoying opportunities for autonomy, risk-taking, personal influence, and input into decision-making beyond the classroom that may not be available in larger districts. Rural districts should also showcase the strengths of their schools, such as high-quality cooperating teachers and support for new teachers.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.k12.wa.us/educator-support/beginning-educator-support-team>

*Recommendation 3: Provide funding to pilot partnerships supported by BEST with a focus on increasing the rural teacher pipeline.*

WSAC and the Field Placement Advisory Group recommend that the Legislature **provide funding to create and pilot rural consortia and build on statewide BEST infrastructure to incentivize partnership-building, data-sharing, communication, and alignment among rural schools and districts, educational service districts, teacher preparation programs, and state agencies.**

Partnership-building, data-sharing, communication, and alignment will ensure strong connections among partners. Teacher preparation programs hold deep content and pedagogical expertise, but they face geographic, networking, and knowledge barriers that limit their ability to place student teachers in rural schools.

Washington's educational service districts are well-positioned to support the supervision of student teachers in rural field placements informed by local community contexts while building on the current infrastructure of the BEST program. However, it is critical to ensure alignment and strong connection between field supervisors and the preparation program.

Rural consortia can also design curricula for student teachers in rural areas that feature both online and in-person supports, including field supervision. Further, teacher preparation programs and educational service districts can support rural school districts in enacting and satisfying the requirements stipulated in edTPA.

**Incorporate existing Washington State infrastructure into the rural consortia awards, including mentor training for cooperating teachers through BEST.** The BEST program currently serves ESD-led consortia of rural districts, providing systems for technical assistance to partners. In addition, BEST provides professional development for mentors of first- and second-year in-service teachers. This includes training for mentors

assigned to alternative route candidates who serve as teachers of record during their preparation. The training that BEST provides for mentors of in-service teachers could be adapted for cooperating teachers and field supervisors who mentor student teachers in rural placements.

### *What the Research Says*

Creating formal partnerships between districts and teacher preparation programs may increase field placements (Graham, 2006; Liu et al., 2018). In these partnerships, both institutions develop organizational structures to facilitate communication and delineate roles and responsibilities. They should also develop a "curriculum" for the field placement that creates a bridge between teacher preparation and the induction year (Graham, 2006; Quesenberry, Hamann, Sanden, Bates, & Hartle 2018).

In addition to creating and sustaining formal partnerships among key organizations, the funding should stipulate an evaluation component. This will allow participants to continuously improve their work, and it will enable policymakers, practitioners interested in replicating the work, and other stakeholders to benefit from lessons learned. WSAC and the Field Placement Advisory Group also recommend that grant funds be allocated over longer than two years in incrementally decreasing annual amounts to incentivize sustainability.

*Recommendation 4: Create and integrate rural-specific curricula for teacher preparation programs.*

WSAC also recommends that the Washington State Legislature and teacher preparation programs **explore and support the creation of rural-specific curricula for teacher preparation programs to best prepare student teachers for placement in rural areas.** Although neither the Field Placement Advisory Group nor the convening participants provided this recommendation, it is prevalent in the research literature.

The **rural-specific curricula could be integrated into existing courses**, such as on cultural responsiveness and diversity. Teachers need to be prepared specifically to teach in rural areas. Teacher preparation programs should include courses explicitly designed to prepare student teachers for work in rural schools. Along those lines, teacher preparation programs can adopt and develop courses that inform and prepare student teachers to teach in rural schools, as well as modify existing curricula that focus on teaching in diverse settings to include rural areas (Azano & Stewart, 2015; Eppley, 2015). Additionally, teacher preparation programs can facilitate authentic learning opportunities in rural school districts through field experiences and observations (Biddle & Azano, 2016).

### *What the Research Says*

Rural-specific preparation can help dispel stereotypes and deficit thinking about rural communities (Young et al., 2018) by emphasizing the importance of learning the social and cultural context of rural teaching (Eppley, 2015). To that end, teacher preparation programs should link course content to rural field experience (Adams, Bondy, & Kuhel, 2005). This preparation should include explicit instruction on theory and pedagogies for success in rural schools (Azano & Stewart, 2015), meaningful teaching experiences in rural schools, rural school-specific curricula and pedagogies, and courses focused on rural issues (Azano & Stewart, 2015; Barley & Brigham, 2008; Biddle & Azano, 2016).

*Recommendation 5: Explore options for broadening who can serve in the role of field supervisor, and provide needed supports.*

WSAC and the Field Placement Advisory Group recommend that the Washington State Legislature and teacher preparation programs explore options for examining and potentially broadening the definition of who

can serve as a field placement supervisor. This should ensure the alignment of teacher preparation programs and field placement sites, as well as the consistent implementation of evaluation practices and standards.

### *What the Research Says*

Teacher preparation programs and districts may consider redefining the role of field placement supervisors by establishing clinical faculty positions that build partnerships with local schools that focus on student teacher education (Zeichner, 2010).

Field placement supervisors work to **ensure alignment between teacher preparation program coursework and field placement**. Lack of alignment can create confusion, as cooperating teachers may model classroom practices for student teachers that don't align with the practices they learned in their teacher preparation programs (Valencia, Martin, Place, & Grossman, 2009). Field placement supervisors also need to **ensure quality and implementation of evaluation practices and standards**.

Consequently, field placement supervisors should have deep knowledge of both the schools and districts hosting the field placement, as well as the teacher preparation program. This can include having current or former educational service district staff members, principals, and other educators or community members potentially serving as field placement supervisors, as well as adjunct faculty members in the teacher preparation program.

WSAC and the Field Placement Advisory Group also recommend exploring ways in which educational service districts can support small and rural districts by recruiting, coordinating, and supervising field placements. A rural consortia pilot might provide a valuable opportunity to experiment with roles for educational service districts, as well as for a range of individuals to become field placement supervisors.

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### Appendix: Field placement advisory group membership affiliations and convening participation

#### *Advisory Group membership*

- Marisa Bier, University of Washington Seattle Teacher Residency
- Bryan Carter, City University
- Candis Eckert, Pierce College
- Carissa Gran, Eastern Washington University
- Heidi Henschel Pellett, Central Washington University
- Ron Jacobson, Whitworth University
- Jim Kowalkowski, Washington State University's Rural Education Center, Davenport School District
- Ian Loverro, Central Washington University
- Shane Pisani, Seattle University
- Marissa Rathbone, Washington State School Directors' Association

#### *Convening participation*

Members of the Field Placement Advisory Group (above) joined by:

- Greg Barker, Association of Washington School Principals
- Terry Bergeson, Former State Superintendent of Public Instruction (retired)
- Terese Emry, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction
- Mike Esping, Educational Service District 112 and Educational Service District University
- Beth Geiger, Professional Educators Standard Board
- Kim Harmon, Spokane Public Schools
- Maren Johnson, Professional Educators Standard Board
- Matthew Knott, Mead School District
- Jim Meadows, Washington Education Association
- Chris Rust, Toledo Schools
- Mary Sewright, Mt. Baker School District
- Roddy Theobald, American Institutes for Research

#### *Convening facilitation*

- J. Lee Schultz, Washington Student Achievement Council
- Ann Voyles, Washington Student Achievement Council
- Jason Greenberg Motamedi, Education Northwest
- Hella Bel Haj Amor, Education Northwest
- Becca Merrill, Education Northwest

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### *Washington Student Achievement Council*

J. Lee Schultz

## About the Washington Student Achievement Council

The Washington Student Achievement Council is committed to increasing educational opportunities and attainment in Washington. The Council has three main functions:

- Lead statewide strategic planning to increase educational attainment.
- Administer programs that help people access and pay for college.
- Advocate for the economic, social, and civic benefits of higher education.

The Council has nine members. Four members represent each of Washington's major education sectors: four-year public baccalaureates, four-year private colleges, public community and technical colleges, and K-12 public schools. Five are citizen members, including one current student.

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