

Why Remain a Member of NRCSA?

We are the only organization focused on rural community K-12 school districts and their role in Nebraska's public education system. Depth of membership matters when talking to Senators and other officials. Senators view NRCSA as representing all "rural community districts". The more members we have, the larger the true number of districts and students represented, the stronger our voice. The common theme for membership is being a rural community school, an ESU with a number of rural districts, or a higher ed institution that works closely with rural districts. .

NRCSA can act as a forum for advancing ideas and concerns, whether legislative, Department, or any entity having a role in public education. This has included representing members to groups such as Senators, rural education research groups, rural membership advocacy groups, rural interest groups, collaborative groups, Nebraska Department of Education, and NREA (national) committee participation.

NRCSA offers two annual statewide events (Legislative Forum and Spring Conference) which offer members the chance to learn about issues affecting rural schools, the opportunity to develop professionally, network with personnel representing other districts and interact directly with policymakers and providers as well as NRCSA leaders. Both events are focused on our rural community schools' issues and interests. The Spring Conference is also the event that highlights awards, speakers, scholarships, exhibitors, music groups, many learning and information opportunities, and of course NRCSA food.

NRCSA offers recognition to those who demonstrate outstanding leadership and character in rural schools through exceptional scholarship and awards programs. In 2023, NRCSA awarded twenty-two \$2,000 scholarships (up from 16 \$2,000 in 2021) to graduating students from NRCSA-member school districts.. Twenty of the scholarships went to rural school students who intend to enter college to become an educator. Awards annually recognizes eight outstanding individuals for their efforts in our member districts and ESUs.

NRCSA provides, exclusively sent to Superintendents/ESU Administrator and Board of Education members of member schools, written updates from the Executive Director on current association activities and involvement within the legislative process. In the past the updates have gone only to the Superintendents and Board Presidents. We have expanded our updates to include all Board of Ed members. We are requesting the district Superintendent provide board member email contact information, or at least for the Board President, so the NRCSA communications can be sent to a larger audience directly. We encourage our updates to be used as board meeting information, as well.

NRCSA currently offers leadership roles, ten elected and 59 appointed positions, for superintendents/ESU administrators of member districts to be further involved. Elected opportunities include six NRCSA district (regional) representatives, three presidency cycle offices, and one secretary office as the ten-member Executive Committee. There are ten appointed members of the Scholarship & Recognition Committee, twenty-two appointed members of the Legislative Committee (including seven ex-officio past NRCSA presidents), twelve appointed members of the Rural Teacher Committee, and

fifteen members of the NRCSA Closing the Gap Project Team. The Rural Teacher Committee also includes six representatives from the State Colleges.

NRCSA offers the NRCSA-USbank OneCard program to all member entities statewide as a NRCSA program. The OneCard is a Visa purchase-only card that allows designated personnel to make purchases for the district, thus eliminating the need to carry cash, or for staff to use their personal credit/debit card and go through a reimbursement process. The Superintendent pre-loads the card and all transactions are clearly identified on the monthly statements. It is easy, clean, secure, and can be used for any purchase of any size. NRCSA receives a portion of the interchange income generated by use of the cards. Seventy-two districts and the NRCSA office use the OneCard. This income provides critical support for NRCSA scholarships and awards.

NRCSA provides elective services such as OneCard Purchase Card, Superintendent Search, Principal Search, and Planning Support. Information regarding these services is provided on the NRCSA website and via emails to member districts and will be included as Facebook information.

It is an exciting time for NRCSA and an exciting time to be a member! There are two ways to renew your membership. You may update and return the Superintendent and board member contact information included. Or you may submit an Online Membership Form. Simply go to www.nrdsa.net and click on 'Membership' then, select 'Regular Member'. Click the 'Complete Membership Form Online' link and follow the directions. District dues for 2022-23 remain at \$850.00, due September 15. ***Please note that we are asking for the mobile phone numbers of administrators and board presidents, so please share that information with us. Also we would like to know the day and time on which your regular board meeting occurs (ie. second Monday of the month: 7:00 PM).***

Again this year, NRCSA is offering a discounted membership in the National Rural Education Association (NREA). NRCSA is one of forty-three state affiliates of the NREA and as such, can offer NRCSA member schools a twenty-five percent discount on NREA memberships. There are two membership options: An individual membership (cost \$75.00 per year) and a school district membership (cost \$300.00 per year). The individual membership allows a single person to maintain membership in the NREA, while a district membership allows up to seven (7) people (such as board members or other staff) to be listed as members under the school district's membership. If you would like to join the NREA, as well as NRCSA, simply complete the enclosed registration form and return it to NRCSA along with a check for the cost of membership dues. **A separate check must be submitted for NREA dues, made out to NREA.** The checks and information collected will be forwarded to the NREA. Joining the NREA is an optional addition to NRCSA membership dues, but we encourage you to join the NREA.

Thank you in advance for your continued support of NRCSA and quality education for all students in rural Nebraska. Your membership and voice toward growing your rural and outstate specific education association is vital to our relationships and our efforts on behalf of your schools, students, and communities.

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Jack D. Moles