

RCCA POLICY AGENDA

Adopted November 2003

The Rural Community College Alliance is a network and advocacy group that helps build the capacity of member community colleges to improve the educational and economic prospects for rural America. The Alliance is an advocate for its members and the distressed communities they serve. *An Alliance goal is to position and fund rural-serving community colleges as catalysts and coordinators of community development leading to sustainable regional economies.*

Our Beliefs

We believe America's rural-serving community colleges offer a unique "place-based" capacity to engage rural people, institutions and communities in the process of building and sustaining better places to live, learn, work and grow. To that end, rural community colleges must build an ability to influence and support policies across multi-sector appropriation and authorization processes.

We believe these community colleges offer our governmental jurisdictions a yet-to-be realized community-centered platform that can focus policies of education, commerce, health, human services, agriculture, homeland security, defense, transportation, labor, interior, housing, workforce development, small business development, telecommunications and others.

We believe the significant role of rural-serving community colleges in workforce training and in community economic development must be formally recognized in federal and state policies and practices.

Advocacy Principles

1. Center advocacy on developing cross-sector, multi-jurisdictional, place focused revenue streams to support the currently unfunded community and economic development mission of rural community colleges.
2. Forge a research and policy development partnership with regional and land-grant universities and engage member institutions in relevant research.
3. Build upon and do not duplicate the work of others.

Advocacy Strategies

1. Position rural community colleges as place-based catalysts and coordinators for regional community development leading to the sustainable economic growth of our rural communities.
2. Collaborate with the American Association of Community Colleges and its Rural Roundtable, the Association of Community College Trustees, and other advocates for community colleges and rural America.
3. Maintain mutually supportive relationships with MDC, Incorporated, the North Central Regional Center for Rural Development, the Southern Rural Development Center, the Rural Policy Research Institute, and the MidSouth Partnership for Rural Community Colleges.
4. Build additional linkages with regional and land-grant universities, rural development organizations and agencies, and rural policy research and advocacy organizations.
5. Participate in public dialogue with federal and state policy makers on rural campuses and other venues including the annual Fall conference of the Alliance.