



MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

More than 90 years ago, the Austin Peay Normal School was founded on the premise that the most important part of an educational system is the preparation of teachers for rural schools. Dr. Philander Claxton, the former U.S. Commissioner of Education under President Taft and Austin Peay's second president, captured the essence of this mission when he said, "I accepted the presidency of Austin Peay Normal School because it had been founded for the purpose of preparing teachers for the rural schools. As long as I was president, I did all I could to hold it to that purpose, which was and still is the most difficult and important part of an educational system."

The Center for Rural Education rests on that same historical foundation. Today, we see this center serving as a hub of innovation, research and partnerships with the rural schools of the state. Specifically, we seek partnerships with rural schools to help with teacher recruitment, retention and professional development. The center is poised to be on the cutting edge of rural education research and support.

The purpose for this center is to encourage post-secondary goals for rural Tennessee students, support pre-service teaching candidates from rural areas, enhance the professional opportunities for rural teachers and contribute to the profession with relevant rural research. By doing this, we'll ensure that all students receive the quality education they deserve. Please consider partnering with us so we can make a difference in these communities. Thank you for your interest in this important new initiative, and I hope to hear from you soon.

Sincerely,

Prentice T. Chandler

Prentice Chandler
Dean, Eriksson College of Education

For additional information or ways to support the Center for Rural Education, contact us.

Center for Rural Education
Cheryl Lambert, Ed.D., Asst. Professor
Dept. of Teaching and Learning
931-221-6195
lambertc@apsu.edu

University Advancement
Vonda St. Amant
Asst. Executive Director
931-221-7199
stamantv@apsu.edu



**CENTER FOR
RURAL EDUCATION**



PURPOSE

The Center for Rural Education (CRE), housed within Austin Peay State University's Eriksson College of Education, was developed to enhance the educational experiences of children in nine rural Tennessee counties — Houston, Benton, Humphreys, Decatur, Perry, Wayne, Hickman, Lawrence and Lewis.

MAKING THE CASE

CHALLENGES

- Teacher shortages
- Higher per-pupil costs
- Declining populations
- High teacher turnover
- Limited resources for innovation

SOLUTIONS

- Recruit teaching candidates from these communities
- Develop scholarships targeting students from these areas
- Provide school districts with professional development
- Pursue grants to provide school districts with needed resources

REALIZING OUR MISSION

COLLABORATION

Nine rural Tennessee counties — Houston, Benton, Humphreys, Decatur, Perry, Wayne, Hickman, Lawrence and Lewis — comprise the River Ribbon Collaborative. The Center for Rural Education will serve as an educational hub that delivers professional development activities and support for teachers through on-site and virtual learning opportunities. APSU's Office of Teacher Education and Partnerships currently provides support and resources through partnership agreements with the Tennessee Department of Education for Stewart, Sumner, Robertson, Dickson, Cheatham and Montgomery counties.

TEACHING TRAINING

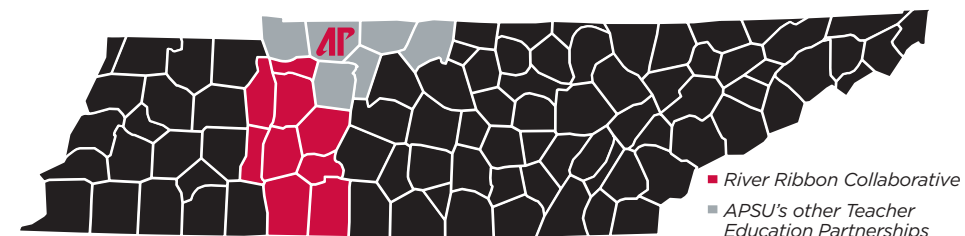
The center's Rural Education Scholars Program provides teaching candidates committed to teaching in rural areas with scholarship opportunities in their junior and senior year. The Rural Education Scholars Program is an identified cohort that will engage in targeted activities designed to strengthen student abilities to teach in rural areas.

OUTREACH

The center will distribute information to high school students and graduates about the advantages and ways of obtaining a teaching license. Interested individuals will be invited to Austin Peay, where they'll attend classes and learn about the admission process. Rural school administrators and leaders also will be encouraged to strengthen their leadership skills through the Austin Peay's doctoral degree in educational leadership.

RESEARCH

Austin Peay faculty will conduct scholarly research on issues affecting rural schools. By increasing the body of knowledge on rural schools, the center will serve as a national leader in this field. The center will also engage national researchers, practitioners and policymakers in discussions about trends and important topics related to rural education research.



FOCUS

- **COLLABORATION**
Develop partnerships with school districts in areas with high poverty rates, declining populations and isolated locations.
- **TEACHING TRAINING**
Identify individuals interested in serving those rural areas and obtaining teaching positions in rural schools.
- **OUTREACH**
Promote the teaching profession to rural students.
- **RESEARCH**
Examine ways to increase teacher performance and retention in these school districts.