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Fwd: Bridging the Digital Divide

1 message

Jason Bauer <jbauer@panaschools.com>
To: Nicole Blodgett <nblodgett@panaschools.com>

Wed, Apr 15, 2020 at 4:41 PM

April 20 Board Meeting

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Association of Illinois Rural and Small Schools** <execdir@airssedu.org>

Date: Wed, Apr 15, 2020 at 1:51 PM

Subject: Bridging the Digital Divide

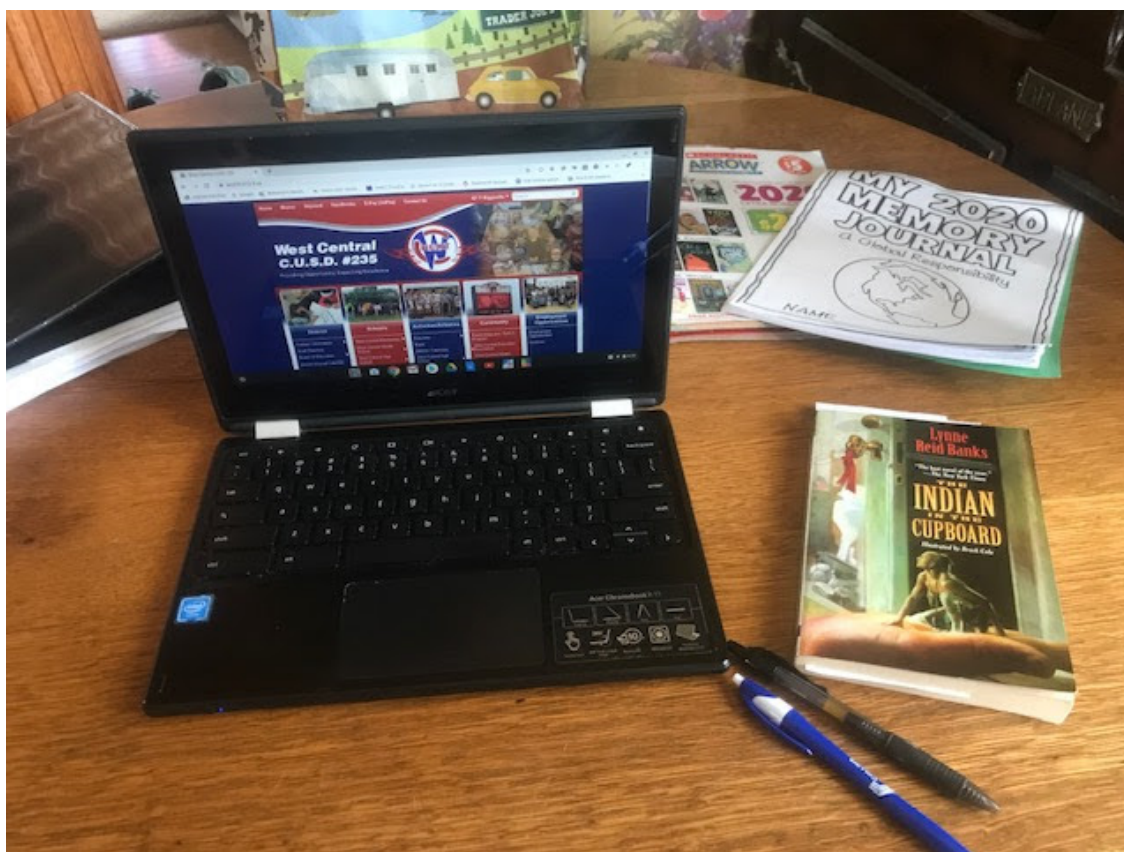
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ASSOCIATION OF ILLINOIS RURAL AND SMALL SCHOOLS

COMMITTED TO THE RURAL ADVANTAGE

Bridging the Digital Divide: Covid-19 Brings an Illinois Community Together



This week we are sharing an in-depth profile on one Illinois public school, West Central CUSD #235, whose community-focused response to the Covid-19 pandemic provides us with a glimpse into the incredible efforts being taken on by rural communities at this time.

Adapting to the new realities of work, home and social life brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in higher levels of stress and uncertainty for most people. These worries are no less true for public schools--- especially in our rural school districts. With this advent of this crisis, rural schools had to quickly transform lesson plans and teaching methods---at times having been given just days or even hours to prepare, while also needing to teach a student body that is typically more dispersed, lacking in critical infrastructure, and less economically stable than their urban counterparts. Despite these challenges rural schools are stepping up to the task at hand and creating effective systems for handling the crisis while boosting school morale and fostering community solidarity in the process.

Situated at the western edge of Illinois along the Mississippi river, West Central CUSD #235 serves roughly 800 students spread across a patchwork of small communities in Henderson County. In many ways, West Central and Henderson County are characteristic of much of rural America, with widespread poverty, an aging infrastructure, and a historic trend of economic,

capital, and population flight.

When Illinois Governor J.B. Pritzker recently ordered schools to close across the state, West Central teachers and staff were forced to recreate curricula and redefine the role of their school in the community. Despite the daunting task at hand, Superintendent Paula Markey is excited with how the response has evolved in Henderson County.

[You can read the rest here.](#)

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4/16/2020

Pana Community Unit School District #8 Mail - Fwd: Bridging the Digital Divide

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