



# Collaborative Action in a Rural Setting: Insights from Resilient Southern Illinois

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THE EDUCATION REDESIGN LAB



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## About the Education Redesign Lab

Based at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, the Education Redesign Lab (EdRedesign) supports mayors, superintendents, and civic and community leaders in redesigning, aligning, and integrating systems of education, child development, and health to accelerate positive outcomes for all children, particularly those living in poverty.

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# Introduction

Cross-sector collaboration has become a popular strategy for addressing entrenched social issues. Increasingly, communities are using this approach to create systems of support and opportunity for children that can ease the burden on schools to meet the vast array of children’s needs. While collaborative action<sup>1</sup> has received greater attention in education policy conversations in recent years, national efforts have primarily focused on urban contexts and are just recently beginning to explore partnerships with rural communities. Despite common narratives that often depict collaborative action as difficult to accomplish in rural areas due to challenges related to distance and a general lack of infrastructure and resources, many rural communities are in fact already engaged in formal and informal cross-sector efforts locally. Understanding the strengths and challenges specific to rural cross-sector collaboration can help change the perception of what is possible while also supporting efforts to expand this work more broadly.

This case features Resilient Southern Illinois (Resilient SI), an initiative of the statewide nonprofit [Partnership for Resilience](#) (P4R) which “works to improve academic, health, and social outcomes for children by fostering trauma-responsive schools and effective family, school, health, and community partnerships.”<sup>2</sup> At its inception, P4R forged a strong connection between the Illinois Education Association (IEA) (the state’s National Education Association teacher’s union affiliate) and the Illinois Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, which has been instrumental in facilitating Resilient SI’s overall work. Resilient SI’s experiences implementing trauma-responsive practices in 15 small school districts in rural southern Illinois can inform national efforts to support collaborative action in rural areas. Resilient SI is the first rural site of the Education Redesign Lab’s (EdRedesign) [By All Means](#) initiative, which embraces a cross-sector approach to improve outcomes for children and youth affected by poverty, bringing together elected officials, superintendents, and civic and community leaders.

Resilient SI operates in a former coal-mining area which has many local assets, including committed educational leadership, a strong sense of communal responsibility, and proximity to Southern Illinois University. However, the area also faces several challenges, such as a declining population, high rates of poverty and child abuse, and the opioid epidemic.<sup>3</sup> Demographically, the region in which Resilient SI operates is majority white.<sup>4</sup> Important differences also exist across the seven counties that Resilient SI serves, with median household incomes ranging from around \$34,000 to nearly \$60,000 and the percent of households with broadband internet subscription rates ranging from about 50% to over 75%.<sup>5</sup>

Recognizing the racial, economic, and cultural diversity within and between rural communities, Resilient SI offers a highly informative, though not necessarily generalizable, case. This case first provides some background on rural communities and examples of collaborative action. Next, it maps the trajectory of Resilient SI’s efforts over the three years since its founding, highlighting key organizational assets and challenges at each stage of development. Finally, the case distills key takeaways from Resilient SI’s

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experience that demonstrate the potential for successful collaborative action in rural areas. Knowledge of Resilient SI's history, culture, and operating procedures has been gleaned from organizational documents, formal interviews, and informal conversations with Resilient SI and P4R staff and stakeholders.

## Rural Context

Nationally, over 8.9 million students attend rural schools—more than the enrollments of New York City, Los Angeles, Chicago, and the next 75 largest school districts combined.<sup>6</sup> When compared to non-rural areas, rural settings experience a gap in the availability of essential services, including fewer mental health workers<sup>7</sup> and fewer doctors per capita.<sup>8</sup> Similarly, rural areas experience double the non-rural rate of adolescent suicide,<sup>9</sup> higher rates of diabetes and coronary heart disease,<sup>10</sup> higher rates of poverty,<sup>11</sup> and higher rates of childhood trauma.<sup>12</sup> Similar to urban communities, cross-sector collaboration is a promising strategy to address the root causes of persistent gaps in resources and opportunities in rural areas.

Despite existing challenges, rural areas have received disproportionately less access to philanthropic support<sup>13</sup> and focus from national initiatives for much of the past few decades. The 2016 election, however, illustrated the political and geographic divides within the country, often splitting urban and rural communities. There is a growing awareness of these divides and the needs of rural communities, which are even more acute due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Many national organizations began to take a hard look at their rural investments, or lack thereof, and many have since sought to rebuild their connections to rural areas.<sup>14</sup>

In undertaking this work, it is important that national efforts deepen their understanding of rural communities and the many assets that they bring to cross-sector efforts, including their diversity and locally-led collective work. Unfortunately, many national conversations still involve inaccurate narratives that portray rural communities as both racially and culturally homogenous and don't make space for the voices and needs of rural youth of color.<sup>15</sup> In fact, extensive demographic, economic, historical, and cultural diversity exists within and between different rural communities. In her book, *Why Rural Schools Matter*, Dr. Mara Tieken reminds readers that:

*Rural America covers Native American reservation communities in the West, small mostly white New England fishing villages, midwestern farm towns with growing Latino populations, African American communities scattered along the Mississippi Delta, and isolated hamlets tucked into the Appalachians and the Rockies... Rural America is a vast diverse expanse, stratified by the same race and class lines that slice urban America.*<sup>16</sup>

In addition, while the number of people living in rural areas had been declining, that trend has now reversed itself due largely to growth in rural Latinx populations countering population losses among white communities.<sup>17</sup>

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Well-established local collaborative efforts represent another asset of rural areas. Such undertakings have existed in rural communities for quite some time. For example, [Partners for Education](#), an initiative of Berea College in Kentucky, has implemented a cradle to career approach in their eight offices across the Appalachian region. In some partner counties they have seen a doubling in kindergarten readiness as well as significant increases in high school graduation.<sup>18</sup> Similarly, [Transforming Rural Experiences in Education](#) (TREE), located in rural Washington County, Maine, aims to support the whole child by empowering students and promoting social, emotional, cognitive, and ethical development through partnerships with higher education faculty, mental health providers, teachers, and administration. Partners in Education and TREE represent just two examples of rural collaborative action; a scan would likely identify countless others across the country. As such, the work of Resilient SI is grounded within a tradition of rural collaboration.

# Bolstering Child Wellbeing through Collaborative Action

## Getting Started and Governance

In 2018, Partnership for Resilience (P4R) founded Resilient Southern Illinois (Resilient SI) after an informal listening tour suggested that districts and community members in southern Illinois were eager to address the impacts of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) on their students. With the help of the Illinois Education Association (IEA), Resilient SI's initial efforts brought together over 170 educators from across 16 counties for a three-day training on the effects of toxic stress and strategies to support students who had experienced trauma. Following the convening, educators returned to their respective districts to assemble resilience teams—containing administrators, teachers, social workers, and other staff—tasked with implementing trauma-responsive practices in their schools with the ongoing support of Resilient SI, IEA, regional mental health providers, and other educators involved in the initiative.<sup>19</sup>

During its first year, Resilient SI was able to form close partnerships with district leaders and gain credibility as a helpful platform for increasing support for students locally. Resilient SI's ability to quickly overcome many of the roadblocks that often face newly established organizations was aided both by P4R and IEA's strong backbone support and the essential role played by local leadership and the teachers' union.

### *Backbone Support*

P4R provides staffing capacity—or backbone support—to Resilient SI. Backbone organizations typically provide the logistical support and capacity to sustain cross-sector partnerships.<sup>20</sup> However, P4R and Resilient SI's strategies differ slightly from many urban backbone organizations seeking to coordinate stakeholders within a single city. While Resilient SI serves as a connective force between district efforts *within* the region and a compass for the local efforts, P4R provides a crucial link to state and national



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collaborators located *outside* of southern Illinois. For example, Resilient SI has been able to leverage P4R’s partnership with a program evaluation firm in order to administer a yearly staff beliefs survey and to tap into P4R’s connection with EdRedesign to connect with urban initiatives similarly focused on trauma-responsive practices.

In addition to P4R, IEA provides crucial backbone support to Resilient SI. The teachers’ union allocated an in-kind, part-time director position to the cross-sector initiative. This dedicated staffing capacity has been invaluable, enabling Resilient SI to accelerate its collective work. Resilient SI has also leveraged IEA’s infrastructure, including its offices, technology, and support staff, to undertake its daily operations.

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### *Local Leadership*

While Resilient SI has benefitted from partnerships with external collaborators, its early success was also fueled by strong local leadership who identified culturally-relevant interventions and tapped into existing networks of trust and sense of communal responsibility. At its creation, Resilient SI was led by one part-time staff member and a locally-based advisory committee. (The initiative now has one full-time and one part-time staff member and plans to hire another part-time position shortly.) During the inaugural committee meeting, it became clear that stakeholders had deeply personal motivations for engaging in this work, with at least half the leaders present sharing that they had themselves experienced childhood trauma. Further, Resilient SI’s leaders grew up in the region and have developed lifelong connections and relationships through careers in education, child health care, active involvement in the faith community, and myriad forms of civic engagement. One Resilient SI member expressed:

*The world is much smaller than it seems, in that we are connected. Even things like going to church; I've got the state's attorney that goes to church with me. And so we can get her to different things... I'm able to cross sectors and be a part of conversations and translate language back and forth. How does the state's attorney talk about these needs of our young children or the needs of our parents that have opioid abuse disorders? ...And then how can I be a bridge when the time comes? So I guess one of the huge strengths is that our paths cross all the time, and we know each other.*

These deep relationships helped to generate buy-in for Resilient SI’s work and have also allowed for frequent access to key regional leaders.

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In addition, IEA played an important role in cultivating support for Resilient SI. The union provided credibility for the initiative among teachers and helped disseminate information through its existing network. According to a Resilient SI leader, although “people in rural areas are skeptical of new programs coming in,” Resilient SI’s close ties to the teachers’ union and district leaders allowed it to gain traction in the region.

Resilient SI leaders also attributed the development of buy-in and support for the effort to the cooperative spirit of local communities. While a paucity of resources in rural communities is an obvious obstacle, many interviewees explicitly named this challenge as the cause of a perceived asset. Community leaders who remain in the area consider collaboration and generosity as key tools for extending the reach of limited local resources.

In assessing the difference between urban and rural efforts, one leader noted, “I do continue to be impressed by the collaborative culture there... people really pitch in. ... there is less need for credit. I just find that to be exciting.” Thus, while the development of informal relationships and building trust have been major themes in EdRedesign’s urban By All Means communities, Resilient SI’s local leadership has provided a significant advantage in these areas.

## Working Together to Support Every Child

Since 2018, Resilient SI has focused on implementing trauma-responsive practices in local school districts and, in recent years, has expanded its work to include elevating student voice through personalized Success Planning and aligning early childhood services. Like Resilient SI’s early efforts, these programs continue to benefit from existing networks of community support. However, as their work has progressed, Resilient SI has needed to seek creative solutions to emerging challenges, including disparate access to educational and health resources between districts and school district leaders’ limited capacity.

### *Implementing Trauma-Responsive Practices*

Continuing its work to develop the capacity of local education professionals, during the 2019-2020 school year, Resilient SI hosted 15 trauma-responsive training sessions and two 8-week book studies with approximately 900 participants, including teachers, school support staff, and administrators. These trainings were followed by meetings between Resilient SI staff and each district’s resilience team to craft a school-specific plan for implementing trauma-responsive practices. Resilient SI has been able to track the effect of trainings on teacher knowledge and self-efficacy over time through administering staff beliefs survey. Resilient SI then works with district resilience teams to interpret school-level results and identify future training topics and groups of school stakeholders who would benefit from additional participation. Overall, survey results indicate that educators and other school staff understand the impact of adverse childhood experiences (ACES) on students and are aware of how each school member can help foster a trauma-sensitive setting.<sup>21</sup>

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Given the increased focus on supporting students and their social-emotional skills in response to the pandemic, Resilient SI is well positioned to engage its existing network of school administrators and teachers who have been trained in trauma-responsive practices. This year, Resilient SI is offering “bite-size” training modules that directly respond to current district needs and are flexible enough to fit into rapidly changing school schedules. In partnership with P4R, Resilient SI is also continuing to adapt training sessions to recognize racism and its effects as a personal, communal, and systemic trauma and is engaged in ongoing learning on this front.

In their programming related to trauma-responsive practices, several key Resilient SI leaders expressed the importance of identifying novel strategies to address distance and transportation as essential for enabling equitable district participation. Leaders quickly identified that, of the original 18 districts who initially signed up to participate in the initiative, those with the greatest resource gaps were also the most remote districts who had to travel the farthest to centralized Resilient SI programming. In response, Resilient SI sought to adapt the P4R model by holding professional learning community meetings in two different parts of the region and designating a point person to liaise with the more remote districts, intentionally identifying a staff member who lives in closer proximity to the remote areas.

Additionally, well before the Covid-19 outbreak, Resilient SI began to experiment with the use of virtual technologies such as Zoom (for virtual meetings) and basecamp (for virtual community space, document sharing, etc.). Leaders report that basecamp has been particularly successful at aligning student support services locally. For example, Resilient SI staff maintain a regional calendar of events, including food drives and health screenings, among others, which district leaders can then share without having to handle all the coordination themselves. While relying on this type of technology is still difficult in remote areas without reliable access to internet, Resilient SI is optimistic about its growing potential.

Despite Resilient SI’s efforts to make its own programming accessible to all districts, remote partner schools face the ongoing challenge of identifying cross-sector partners to strengthen student wellbeing. One Resilient SI leader explained:

*People don't want to be [in certain areas] because nobody else wants to be there... So we end up with these inequities from district to district that kids really have no responsibility for—for where they were born or where they're living at that particular time—but we find these inequities across the entire area. And then you can overlay that with what types of community organizations, social services, and civic organizations are available in those areas.*

Thus, the most remote areas struggle to attract and retain health care and other providers while districts located closer to Southern Illinois University, for example, have access to a larger resource pool.



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## *Elevating Student and Family Voice through Success Plans*

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*“Our long-term goal is to build a Success Plan for students that will capture the whole child [and serve as a] living document that students can speak to throughout their elementary-secondary school experience.”*

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In partnership with Resilient SI, Unity Point school district has enhanced its efforts to provide wraparound services by instituting individualized Success Planning for all students in grades pre-K-8. The district launched this initiative in the spring of 2019 to guide 8<sup>th</sup> grade students through a smooth transition to high school. By the beginning of the fall of 2020, all 540 students and their families started the year with an in-depth meeting with a teacher to reconnect and build relationships as well as assess students’ and families’ academic and other needs. The district has trained teachers, who serve as advisors, to develop meaningful connections with students and families, identify their individual strengths and needs, and collaboratively design a plan to support children’s learning, growth, and wellbeing. According to a local superintendent, “our long-term goal is to build a Success Plan for students that will capture the whole child [and serve as a] living document that students can speak to throughout their elementary-secondary school experience.”<sup>22</sup> Through Resilient SI and EdRedesign, Unity Point has been able to connect with an array of urban communities engaged in similar efforts, sharing best practices and addressing challenges as they emerge. (EdRedesign produced two guides—one on [adult navigators](#) and another on [data platforms](#)—which feature additional information about Unity Point’s Success Planning.)

Unity Point has made remarkable progress in scaling Success Planning, directly communicating with every family and identifying the needs of every child. The pandemic has made these needs even more acute for most families. The district is grappling with the impact of this knowledge on teachers and the increasingly strained network of district-run student support services. Undeterred, district leaders are seeking creative solutions through cross-sector collaborations, recognizing that a broader movement is needed to support child wellbeing in the area. The district is exploring whether it might be able to draw on a local university’s social work program to offer teacher mental health supports and hopes to pursue, in collaboration with Resilient SI, the creation of a local children’s cabinet, a structure described in the next section of this case.

### *Creating a Seamless Pre-K-12 Continuum of Care*

Resilient SI’s most recent effort—Resilient SI 2.0—began in the fall of 2020 with the goal of engaging early childhood providers, recognizing that supports for child wellbeing must start at a very early age. This initiative seeks to strengthen and align partnerships between school districts, pre-K, and Head Start

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programs. Currently, Resilient SI 2.0 includes three districts and their “feeder” early childhood programs. These early childhood programs have joined their corresponding district resilience teams. By leveraging existing trainings on ACEs, trauma-responsive practices, and practitioner self-care and administering the staff beliefs survey, Resilient SI aims to develop a common language among the providers and formalize communication structures for the transition to kindergarten.

## Exploring the Potential of Rural Children’s Cabinets

National conversations around collaborative action often focus on the importance of formalized backbone organizations, established funding streams, and structured action plans for systems-level change. However, Resilient SI leaders who live and grew up in the southern Illinois region described a somewhat different orientation toward community impact centered on notions of communal responsibility, mutual support, and the ongoing goodwill of community members. One Resilient SI leader expressed confidence in the effort’s sustainability not because of funding or formal capacities, but because of the willingness of people in the region to pitch in and take on key roles using infrastructure and positions they already have.

While a sense of communal responsibility will undoubtedly continue to drive much of Resilient SI’s work, recently community members are also beginning to identify the need for a more strategic engagement with community members in positions of power who may be less naturally inclined to join such efforts—growing support beyond the “familiar faces.” As such, Resilient SI is exploring the potential of local Children’s Cabinets. While community members might cross paths frequently in their personal lives, the more structured cabinet environment would ensure that members take the time to develop a shared agenda, according to a Resilient SI leader. This leader hopes that cabinet discussions can shift from what is “often a very reactive system” of collaboration to proactively pursue a town-wide agenda for trauma-informed child services.

Another potential benefit of forming a Children’s Cabinet involves expanding Resilient SI’s district partnerships and available resources. While some urban districts struggle to negotiate an education landscape that may sometimes seem to have “too many cooks in the kitchen,” rural districts, like Unity Point and the others that Resilient SI serves, are often not just the central hubs of child support services but in many cases the only local providers. By enlisting a broader range of stakeholders through a Children’s Cabinet, Resilient SI could further bolster its systems of support for students.

As Resilient SI begins its next phase of launching Children’s Cabinets, it is examining various models of geographic scope. Typically in EdRedesign’s urban BAM communities, Children’s Cabinets provide a designated forum for regular collaboration among the government agencies and external organizations that serve children and youth. Many urban Children’s Cabinets are championed by mayors and their staff who are able “to use the executive office’s bully pulpit... [and] through their leadership, mayors can signal a community’s priorities and foster a system of accountability within local child-serving systems.”<sup>23</sup> However, a mayoral-driven approach is often untenable in rural areas where many schools exist across or

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even outside municipal boundaries. As such, Resilient SI is considering alternate structures for its Children’s Cabinets. Resilient SI leadership is particularly hopeful about the potential of highly localized cabinets operating in towns with populations as small as 4,000 people or even within a remote school district with a geographically dispersed population. According to one leader, regional initiatives that stretch across many towns and districts often have to make choices about where to prioritize their limited time and resources. In contrast, highly localized cabinets could harness their strength to serve as an advocate for their particular community and thus be able to engage more effectively in regional efforts. To make this vision a reality, Resilient SI is taking a thoughtful approach to cabinet development, exploring potential members by carefully scanning communities for individuals with formal and informal authority and respect.

## Key Takeaways from Resilient Southern Illinois

Contrary to the perception that collaborative action is especially difficult in rural areas, Resilient SI’s efforts demonstrate both the opportunities and the challenges for improving child wellbeing through collective efforts in rural contexts. In particular, we gleaned the following key takeaways from Resilient SI’s initial work:

- 1. Local leadership can tap into existing networks of trust and communal responsibility in rural areas to accelerate cross-sector work and bolster program sustainability.** In contrast to urban areas, leaders in rural communities often already know each other and interact in various settings. These pre-existing relationships, coupled with a strong sense of communal responsibility and shared experience, can help advance collaborative efforts. In Resilient SI’s case, these assets helped cultivate buy-in and support for the vision of trauma-responsive schools for all children.
- 2. Teachers’ unions can play a vital role in rural cross-sector efforts to improve child wellbeing.** The Illinois Education Association (IEA) has catalyzed and sustained Resilient SI’s work in multiple ways. During the initiative’s launch, IEA acted as a convener, bringing together school districts and building credibility. The union has also offered crucial backbone support—from in-kind staffing to necessary infrastructure.
- 3. Although distance and transportation are common barriers in rural areas, cross-sector efforts can leverage technology and other strategies to provide programming across a wide geographic region.** Resilient SI employed technology, multiple training sites, and a point person to liaise with the most remote districts. While broadband connectivity is a challenge for remote areas, Resilient SI is optimistic about technology’s growing potential as a tool for communication and collaboration. Having already used technology prior to the pandemic helped the initiative prepare

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for a smooth transition from in-person to virtual trainings during this tumultuous time.

- 4. Collaborations with regional, statewide, and national organizations can bring additional expertise and resources to bear on issues of local concern in rural communities.** Resilient SI has benefitted from relationships with the statewide Partnership for Resilience (P4R), which has provided backbone support, and with EdRedesign’s *By All Means* national network, which has facilitated peer learning opportunities. Unlike in many urban settings in which backbones focus on a single geographic area, P4R has played an important role in connecting Resilient SI with state and national collaborators located outside of southern Illinois.
- 5. Strategically engaging a wide array of community stakeholders can position rural cross-sector efforts to move the needle toward improved outcomes.** As Resilient SI works to fully realize its vision of building systems of wraparound support and opportunity for children, Children’s Cabinets offer one structure for jointly advancing a shared agenda as well as connecting school districts to a broader range of potential partners and resources. Increased access to providers is especially important for rural districts such as Unity Point where schools often serve as the main hub of student support.
- 6. Funding remains a formidable challenge that can threaten the viability and sustainability of cross-sector work in rural settings.** While Resilient SI has garnered in-kind and philanthropic support, securing ongoing, diverse funding streams—across philanthropy, business, and government—is critical for ensuring that the initiative has dedicated backbone support to maintain its work over time.

Resilient SI’s experience illuminates the many assets that exist within rural communities and the potential of cross-sector collaboration to strengthen child wellbeing. Despite significant challenges related to distance, transportation, and limited access to partners and resources, Resilient SI has made encouraging progress in building comprehensive systems of support and opportunity for children living in southern Illinois. Factors such as committed local leadership and a network of close relationships, partnering with a teachers’ union, a culture of communal responsibility, and regional, state, and national partnerships have all contributed to Resilient SI’s early success. As Resilient SI continues to mature, the initiative is exploring long-term strategies to sustain its cross-sector work, such as expanding its funding pool and effectively engaging partners.

Looking ahead, Resilient SI’s experience can inform the efforts of national organizations as well as state and federal government who are working to support rural communities. National organizations can uplift local leaders by building their capacity to mobilize partners and center community members within their initiatives. State and federal government can drive and sustain locally-led cross-sector efforts in rural communities by creating robust policy incentives. Together, these investments can bolster existing assets in rural areas and create strong systems of support and opportunity for all children.

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# Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> We use “collaborative action” rather than “collective impact” throughout to include a broad range of cross-sector approaches.

<sup>2</sup> Partnership for Resilience, <http://partnership4resilience.org>.

<sup>3</sup> See <https://www.nprillinois.org/post/illinois-issues-rural-exodus#stream/0>; Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs, “Investing in Rural Illinois: Promoting Economic, Workforce, Healthcare, and Educational Development,” Annual Report to the Governor and General Assembly, Macomb, IL: Western Illinois University, 2017, <http://www.iira.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/GRAC-Annual-Report-2017.pdf>; see [https://thesouthern.com/news/local/protecting-the-innocent-southern-illinois-combats-high-rates-of-child/collection\\_db4b98e3-7c8b-531c-956f-8f3ce303012d.html](https://thesouthern.com/news/local/protecting-the-innocent-southern-illinois-combats-high-rates-of-child/collection_db4b98e3-7c8b-531c-956f-8f3ce303012d.html).

<sup>4</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, “QuickFacts Illinois,” 2018, <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/map/IL/INT100218>.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Daniel Showalter et al, “Why Rural Matters 2015-2016: Understanding the Changing Landscape,” 2017, [http://www.aypf.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/WRM\\_wholedocument\\_final-2.pdf](http://www.aypf.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/WRM_wholedocument_final-2.pdf).

<sup>7</sup> C. Holly A. Andrilla et al., “Geographic Variation in the Supply of Selected Behavioral Health Providers,” *American Journal of Preventative Medicine* 54, no. 6 (2018): S199–S207. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.amepre.2018.01.004>.

<sup>8</sup> U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service, “Geography of Poverty,” 2017, <https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/rural-economy-population/rural-poverty-well-being#geography>.

<sup>9</sup> Cynthia A. Fontanella et al., “Widening Rural-Urban Disparities in Youth Suicides, United States, 1996-2010,” *JAMA Pediatrics* 169, no. 5 (2015): 466–473. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1001/jamapediatrics.2014.3561>.

<sup>10</sup> Alane O'Connor and Gregory Wellenius, “Rural-urban disparities in the prevalence of diabetes and coronary heart disease,” *The Royal Society for Public Health* 126, no. 10 (2012): 813-820.

<sup>11</sup> U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service, “Geography of Poverty,” 2017, <https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/rural-economy-population/rural-poverty-well-being#geography>.

<sup>12</sup> Andrea J. Sedlak et al., “Fourth National Incidence Study of Child Abuse and Neglect (NIS–4): Report to Congress,” 2010, <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/report/fourth-national-incidence-study-child-abuse-and-neglect-nis-4-report-congress>.

<sup>13</sup> John L. Pender, “Foundation Grants to Rural Areas from 2005 to 2010: Trends and Patterns,” 2015, [https://www.ers.usda.gov/webdocs/publications/43991/53166\\_eib141.pdf?v=42181](https://www.ers.usda.gov/webdocs/publications/43991/53166_eib141.pdf?v=42181).

<sup>14</sup> Rural Philanthropic Analysis Project, “The Rural Philanthropic Analysis Project 2017-2019,” Campbell University, 2019, <https://blogs.campbell.edu/the-rural-philanthropic-analysis-project-2017-2019/>.

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<sup>15</sup> Jhone Ebert et al., “Homeroom with Education Leaders: Supporting Rural Students of Color,” webinar, The Hunt Institute, November 10, 2020,

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p90QxBoEgWo>.

<sup>16</sup> Mara Tieken, *Why Rural Schools Matter* (The University of North Carolina Press. 2014), 6-7.

<sup>17</sup> U.S. Department of Agriculture, “Rural America At a Glance – 2018 Edition,” 2018, <https://www.ers.usda.gov/webdocs/publications/90556/eib-200.pdf?v=393.8>.

<sup>18</sup> Information based on a presentation by Partners for Education staff to EdRedesign’s Rural Working group in November of 2019. More information about Partners for Education can be found on their website: <https://www.berea.edu/pfe/>.

<sup>19</sup> Illinois Education Association, “Resilient Southern Illinois Launches Program to Help Students in More Than a Dozen Southern Illinois School Districts,” 2018,

<https://ieanea.org/2018/09/25/resilient-southern-illinois-launches-program-to-help-students-in-more-than-a-dozen-southern-illinois-school-districts/>.

<sup>20</sup> Jeffrey R. Henig et al., “Collective Impact and the New Generation of Cross-Sector Collaborations for Education,” Teachers College, Columbia University, 2016,

<https://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/Documents/Collective-Impact-and-the-New-Generation-of-Cross-Sector-Collaboration-for-Education.pdf>.

<sup>21</sup> Sue Rasher, “Partnership for Resilience Project: Resilient Southern Illinois Staff Beliefs Evaluation Report,” Technical Report #1056, OER Associates LLC, Evaluation Research Consultants, April 2020.

<sup>22</sup> Lori James-Gross, personal communication, September 8, 2020.

<sup>23</sup> Elizabeth Gaines, Olivia Allen, and Amelia Vaughn, “Children’s Cabinet Toolkit: A Roadmap for getting Started in Your Community,” 2019,

[https://edredesign.org/files/childrens\\_cabinet\\_toolkit\\_a\\_roadmap\\_for\\_getting\\_started.pdf](https://edredesign.org/files/childrens_cabinet_toolkit_a_roadmap_for_getting_started.pdf).