Montana is the 4th largest state; population density is 48th in the US
- 42 of 56 counties less than 5 people/square mile
- 96% of our public school districts are classified as “small rural”
- “no state has a higher percentage of rural schools or small rural districts” (Showalter, et al., 2017, p. 138)

- 819 schools in MT
- Only 51 have more than 500 students
- More than 50% have fewer than 100 students
- 92 schools have only one teacher
- 65 schools are considered “one room school houses”
- Last year, 83% of teacher vacancies were in rural schools

Supporting the Vitality of Montana’s Rural Schools & Communities through Rural Education Innovation & Research

1. Preparing PK-12 Teachers for Rural Contexts
- Current IES application pending for the National Center for Research Partnerships in Rural Education

Rural Colloquium Series
- Bringing together MSU’s pre-service teachers and MT’s K-12 rural administrators
2. Providing STEM Professional Development for Rural Teachers

3. Supporting Rural Community Workforce Development
   - Nationally, 17% of the rural population lives in poverty (compared with 13% of the urban population) and 25.2% of rural children live in poverty (compared to 21.1% of urban children)
   - “The schoolhouse is a physical symbol of a community’s belief in their future” (Rogers, 2016)

4. Impacting International Rural Education

   International Symposium for Innovation in Rural Education 2018

   Rural Education International Research Alliance (REIRA)
   Building an international research alliance focused on improving the learning and wellbeing of rural students, their teachers, and school communities — members from: Australia, USA, Scotland, Norway, Canada.
   - Connecting international researchers to a range of research support, other researchers and associations dedicated to rural education
   - Building an international evidence base to best inform and enable future policy and practice to meet the needs of all rural students, their families, and communities

Center for Research on Rural Education
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