

# RURAL EDUCATION SUMMIT ➤

FEBRUARY 23

**DAY ONE**

12:00 to  
1:30pm

## **PLENARY LUNCH & WELCOME WITH JIM MAHONEY**

SPONSORED BY MIDSTATES RECREATION

Jim Mahoney is an experienced educational leader, entrepreneur, and highly sought-after speaker with more than 40 years of experience at the district, county, and national levels. He is known for his work in leadership, culture, and organizational change, and for connecting with audiences in ways that inspire collaboration, purpose, and growth.

1:30pm

## **BREAK & NETWORKING**

1:45 to  
3:00pm

## **WORKSHOP HOW TO BE A LEADER IN YOUR RURAL COMMUNITY**

Schools are often the heart of rural communities, but leading beyond the classroom requires vision and resilience. In this session, hear from rural leaders across Ohio as they share how they've navigated challenges, built partnerships, and positioned their organizations for lasting growth and success.

3:00pm

## **BREAK & NETWORKING**

3:15 to  
4:30pm

## **WORKSHOP STRATEGIES FOR MARKETING YOUR SCHOOL DISTRICT**

Experts from Fahlgren Mortine will lead this practical storytelling session featuring four superintendents sharing real-world examples of successful strategies used within their districts. The discussion will highlight diverse approaches to engaging communities and decision-makers, followed by guidance on core principles for working with local elected officials, leveraging social media to connect with stakeholder groups, and using video as an effective storytelling tool.

4:30pm

## **BREAK & CHECK-IN TO HOTEL**

5:00 to  
6:00pm

## **HAPPY HOUR**

SPONSORED BY VEREGY

6:00 to  
7:30pm

## **PLENARY DINNER & KEYNOTE WITH OHIO SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC EDUCATION PAUL CRAFT**

Mr. Craft has served his local school community for more than three decades and plans to continue serving Ohio's students as Superintendent of Public Instruction, with a focus on strong classroom educators. He has worked as a teacher, coach, administrator, and superintendent, holds advanced degrees in education and strategic studies, and completed a 31-year career in the U.S. military, retiring as a Colonel. He lives in Delaware County with his wife and family.

7:30 to  
10:00pm

## **LATE NIGHT RECEPTION**

SPONSORED BY ENERGY OPTIMIZERS USA

8:00 to  
8:45am

### **PLENARY** UPHOLDING THE HEART OF RURAL LIFE— CARRYING SMALL-TOWN VALUES INTO THE FUTURE

SPONSORED BY **BRICKER GRAYDON**

Across rural Ohio, small-town values have long guided how communities learn, work, and care for one another. From deep-rooted faith traditions and a culture of service to everyday acts of neighborliness, these values shape a powerful sense of belonging. This plenary invites participants to reflect on what makes rural communities resilient—and how those guiding principles can be intentionally nurtured for the next generation.

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8:45am

### **BREAK & NETWORKING**

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9:00 to  
10:15am

### **WORKSHOP** ENGAGING WITH STATE LEGISLATORS

Understanding how to effectively communicate with state lawmakers is critical for advancing the needs of rural schools. This session will provide practical strategies for building relationships, advocating for policy priorities, and making your district's voice heard at the state level. Attendees will leave with actionable tools to engage legislators and influence education policy.

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10:15am

### **BREAK & NETWORKING**

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10:30 to  
11:45am

### **WORKSHOP** SCHOOL FUNDING: COMMUNICATING YOUR DISTRICT'S NEEDS

Rural districts often rely on local support to fund essential programs and services. This session will explore effective strategies for educating your community about property taxes, demonstrating the impact of funding decisions, and building trust and understanding between schools and residents. Attendees will gain practical tools to clearly communicate their district's needs and foster community engagement.

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11:45am

### **BREAK & NETWORKING**

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12:00 to  
1:00pm

### **PLENARY** LUNCH & CLOSING

SPONSORED BY **PEPPLE & WAGGONER**