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Vicki Davis:

Hello remarkable teachers, I'll let you know at the end of the show you can get my list of my 200 plus favorite Ed tech tools and sign up for my bi-weekly newsletter.

Daisy Dyer Duerr

"In rural America we serve 285 of America's 320 persistently impoverished counties."

Vicki Davis:

The Ten-minute Teacher podcast with Vicki Davis. Every week day you'll learn powerful practical ways to be a more remarkable teacher today.

VICKI: Happy Five Idea Friday. Today we have Daisy Dyer Duerr [@DaisyDyerDuerr](#) with us and we're talking about five ways to redesign and rural education. And I actually live in rural America so this definitely applies to me. So Daisy, what's your first idea?

DAISY: So my first idea and something that I think is really key has to do with broadband access. And I think that that is one of the things that we really have to be diligent about making sure and attacking. And I brought one of the statistics that I think is really something that people don't realize. And it's not necessarily just about schools but it's about the homes that our kids go home to and that our communities live in. But the latest statistics from U.S. News and World Report showed that only 55% of people living in rural areas have access to the speeds that currently quality as broadband while 94% of the urban population do. <http://bigstory.ap.org/article/bd00ababdd344f69a27ab19c4964c6dd/technology-improving-%E2%80%93-why-rural-broadband-access-still>

Now, that is a huge digital divide when you think about that because even if our schools are doing a good job of being able to access that broadband, when our students go home and they don't have access, that's a huge difficulty that we have to find a way to overcome. So that's something that I really think we have to work on.

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VICKI: Yes. High speed internet is the greatest economic development potential for any rural area. And I'll tell you this Verizon – and I'm not advertising for Verizon, but the new unlimited data they had – I had a student coming today squealing saying, "I have data, I have data." She's like, "I can finally actually do what all of my friends do from home." And it is a big deal.

DAISY: Exactly. It is a huge deal and it's the same thing here where I live. And we had AT&T do the same thing here about six months ago and now Verizon has done the same thing. And so it's so exciting for those kids to have that ability now.

VICKI: Okay, what's our second idea?

DAISY: Our second idea is to bring back community vitality. And one of the things that I've heard often is that schools in rural communities are called Engines of exodus. And that means that they're trying to educate students and send them to college which ends up sending them out of the rural community. And we really have to work on ways to make students want to come and be part of a really vivacious community that has business, that has that lively spirit where we've had so many business that have left rural America. We have to work with those communities and work with our schools to train students to work, not necessarily, in just those jobs that they have to have a college degree but maybe they have to have training that's specific to those specific jobs. So I think we really have to work with different business and different factories or whatever it is and try to rebuild those rural communities so they're not so much of a ghost town.

VICKI: I love that. And you know what? I actually have some of – my girls and young men are moving back but I have some that are farming but they're also blogging. Like, one did a blog for Intel.

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If they know how to use the internet and know how to understand high speed and how to take advantage of it, they can move back and start their own business. I love that one. Okay, what's number three?

DAISY: Number three is advocacy. I think that among the groups of education, we have a huge block of urban advocates, a huge suburban group and I feel like our rural advocacy is probably one of the smallest groups that we have. So I feel like we as rural educators and we as empowers of our students, really have to teach our students and our other rural educators to be advocates for what's going on in rural America and to spread the good word of things. Like you were just talking about what your students were doing. We have to really show that not only are they doing amazing things, but they're doing it in rural America. And that something that I think will really show a lot of people that, "Hey, the same things that are going on in your urban cities are going on in our rural towns." And that's something that I think we really have to do more of, be more of an advocate for ourselves.

VICKI: Love it. What's number four?

DAISY: Number four is we need more innovative programs like this one that I absolutely love. I just heard about it a few weeks ago and it's so exciting to me that Farm Bureau had a Rural Entrepreneurial Challenge. <http://www.strongruralamerica.com/challenge/> And basically it was like a shark

for rural entrepreneurs and they gave out \$145,000 and it was just for rural entrepreneurs. And they got to go and test out their ideas and it was a really big deal. And they're going to continue that challenge but its specific tailored to rural areas.

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[And the reason that I came up with the idea was because] I had certain business that were saying, we're getting all these great ideas from metropolitan areas but we're having a really hard time in the Midwest and the South. Where are all of our innovators in those areas? So it's really neat to see an innovative program like that that really focuses on our rural areas. So I look forward to more innovate programs like that.

VICKI: I love that and I'm going to be checking into that for my own students. Okay, what's our fifth?

DAISY: Our fifth idea; I'm really interested in having some type of university adopting a rural education master's program. Something that would really study and really incentivize the good work and having student-teachers do work in rural schools and actually show when you do teach in a rural school because there are different things that you face that teachers aren't ready for. A lot of teachers come straight out of their master's or their regular program and of course, the job that's available might be in rural America and they've never even set foot in that area.

So that's something that would be really exciting to me. One of the things that I think that would be important to emphasis there is in rural America we serve 285 of Americas 320 persistently impoverished counties and that's something that I think doesn't get enough publicity. So I think that that's something that would be really important to put into that degree, dealing with that type of stuff. So that would be really exciting, I think.

VICKI: So teachers, as you've listened to this, you know, if you're in an urban area how are you connecting to rural areas because that's where so much of our food is grown. You know, my own story, when I moved home to Camilla, Georgia, I had some lovely friends in Atlanta who I did love very much.

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But one of them who was well-meaning said, "You do you know that if you move out of Atlanta you'll never be anybody because you can't be anybody and live in a small town." And I beg to differ, there are lots of important people who live in small towns and big towns and we do need to value rural America. I love these ideas from Daisy, I hope you'll check out the show notes and all the links. And think about rural America and rural wherever you are because rural places are very special places.

Thanks for listening and get out there and be remarkable.

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