



UNIVERSITY OF
CANBERRA

CENTRE FOR SUSTAINABLE
COMMUNITIES



School education for rural-regional sustainability

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Monday May 13 | Lunch: 12:00pm, Seminar: 12:30-1:30pm | 6C10, University of Canberra
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Dr Philip Roberts is an Associate Professor (Curriculum Inquiry & Rural Education) at the Centre for Sustainable Communities.



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This presentation explores the concept of education for rural-regional sustainability (Green 2015). Through the example of a small, remote NSW school, we examine the relationships between education and rural-regional futures. The presentation considers the engagement with rural knowledges, the structure of schooling, curriculum relevance and post-school pathways for remote students.

Ivanhoe Central School is a model of change that puts the needs of the community and its future at the centre of educational reform. Located on Ngiyampaa country the school has 29 students k-12 and is 210 KM on sealed road to nearest town of over 1000 people with a regular supermarket supply. The community is a classic remote low SES context with a school ICSEA of 747. It is what is called a “food Desert” as access to fresh produce is limited to a bi-weekly commercial service that adds to the cost. In response Ivanhoe Central School has developed the “Outback Garden” that facilitates access to fresh produce for the community. Not content with one major reform the school has begun trailing a middle school (years 5-8) to enhance engagement and curriculum connection. This approach begins to address questions of curriculum relevance and the ongoing structural issue of curriculum breadth and school staffing in remote locations.