



**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
RURAL DEVELOPMENT**

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USDA OFFICIALS HOLD CHECK PRESENTATION IN WALLACE

--Midwest Electric Cooperative Corporation Receives \$400,000, Wallace Public Schools To Benefit

Wallace, Neb. – March 7 – Mike Neruda, Deputy Under Secretary for Rural Development accompanied Jim Barr, USDA Rural Development State Director in Nebraska, to Wallace Public Schools where they presented a symbolic funding check totaling \$400,000 to The Midwest Electric Cooperative Corporation. The funds will assist the Wallace Public Schools in financing the expansion of its school facility for inclusion of a technology center.

"Technology is a mainstream of information to schools, businesses, and rural residents" stated Neruda. "The opportunities that will be offered through the technology center at Wallace will significantly benefit its residents in areas of economic and personal development."

The Midwest Electric Cooperative Corporation of Grant, Neb. received the funds through USDA's Rural Economic Development Loan program. Wallace Public Schools will contribute \$300,000 towards this project of over \$2.2 million with the remainder being derived from bonds.

The proposed improvements to the school will modernize the facility and offer additional space to better accommodate classroom activities and school functions such as those associated with the creation of the technology center/computer lab. The technology center will be used in conjunction with the distance learning center to offer classes and training to students, businesses, and residents of the district in order to provide or enhance marketable skills. These classes and skills will be expanded through the school's membership in the Southwest Nebraska Distance Learning Consortium. Additionally, the economic activity associated with this project will have positive effects on the economy of Lincoln County and the surrounding area. An increased awareness of the latest technology based products available to enhance business activity and/or business development and a forum for students, business owners and residents to share ideas and strategies for the enhancement and diversification of their local economy are two effects that may be seen.

USDA Rural Development serves as the lead federal entity for rural development needs and administers financial and technical assistance through three agencies: Rural Housing Service, Rural Business-Cooperative Service and Rural Utilities Service. Further information on USDA Rural Development can be obtained by contacting any USDA Service Center or by visiting USDA's website at www.rurdev.usda.gov.

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