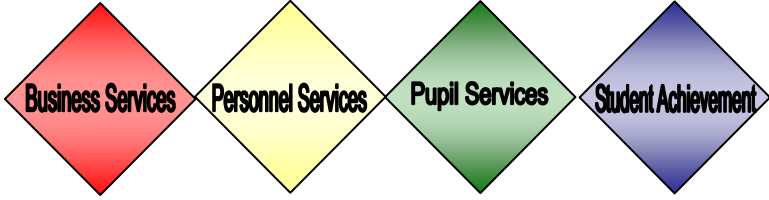




School District of New London



MONTHLY UPDATE

By: Kathy Gwidt

Director of Teaching and Learning

Date: May, 2010

ESEA Monitoring Visit:

The School District of New London was one of three districts in the CESA 6 region selected for a full review of all Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) consolidated programs. The onsite audit took place on April 13. Telephone audits were provided before and after this date.

The Department of Public Instruction (DPI) has an obligation to monitor compliance of federal programs which include:

- Title I, Part A: Improving Basic Programs
- Title I, Part D: Education of Students in Residential Institutions
- Title II, Part A: Teacher and Principal Training
- Title II, Part D: Enhancing Education through Technology
- Title III, Part A: Language Instruction for Limited English Proficient Students
- Title IV, Part A: Safe and Drug-Free Schools

The monitoring process included an extensive review of the following basic requirements:

- Needs Assessment
- Private School Consultation
- Parent and Community Participation and Involvement
- Integration with Federal Programs and Initiatives
- Integration with State and Local Initiatives
- Professional Development Plan
- Public Reporting

We appreciated the feedback the team of reviewers provided which included positives in all programs that were examined. This team noted our preparedness as exemplary. The DPI will provide a written report in the upcoming month, and has encouraged us to provide a presentation outlining our organizational process for ESEA at next year's *New Wisconsin Promise* conference in Madison.

Art Awards:

Each year art teachers submit samples of student work and six pieces are selected for professional framing and display in the district office. Award recipients will be recognized on Monday, May 24.

4K Grant: We recently submitted a *Four-Year-Old Kindergarten (4K) Start-Up Grant* to the Department of Public Instruction. Districts that will begin four-year-old kindergarten in 2010-2011 were eligible to apply for Cycle 3 4K start-up grants, but potential awards will not be available until the second year of implementation due to reductions in the state budget. Priority will be given to districts that implement 4K using community approaches. We will remain hopeful our grant is funded.

Grading and Reporting:

Our Policy Committee has expanded to include focus group participants who continue efforts to improve grading and reporting practice and policy. It was collectively recognized that the primary purpose of grades and report cards in the School District of New London is to:

Communicate information to parents about students' achievement and performance in school.

It was determined that our district's grade scale is inconsistent and punitive compared to those used in neighboring districts and universities. There was consensus that current grade scales have the potential to inhibit risk taking and ultimately learning, so a revision has been proposed and will be communicated through policy that will be presented in upcoming weeks.

This team will work to continue improvements in grading and reporting as we answer the question: *How confident are we that the grades students get in our schools are consistent, accurate, meaningful, and supportive of learning?*

Practice and policy will be further developed and refined around responses that embrace best practice regarding this topic.