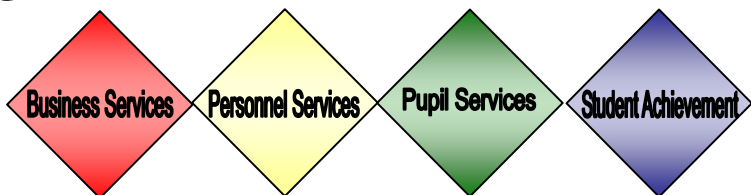




School District of New London



MONTHLY UPDATE

By: Kathy Gwidt

Director of Teaching and Learning

Date: November, 2010

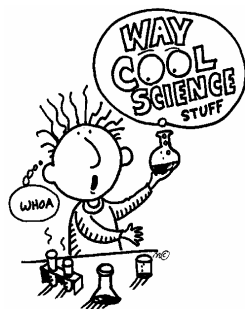
High School Science:

In the past couple years we have realigned our K-8 science curriculums in an effort to continually improve academic opportunities for School District of New London students. Our recent focus has been on the review of data and research of a 9-12 science sequence.

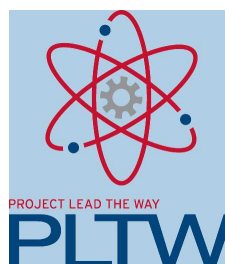
What we have found is that a wide variety of high school science course sequences may be used to meet the needs of individual students, schools and districts. Traditionally, no one sequence has been recommended because the sciences have been treated as separate disciplines. Wisconsin does not have a required sequence because the K-8 standards should prepare students to take any of the standard level high school courses.

Our review has brought us to the point of recommending freshmen take biology and continue with chemistry their sophomore year. Prior to this recommendation, Science 9/Physical Science has been scheduled for freshmen and sophomores proceeded with biology. We will now encourage juniors and seniors to further explore science electives such as Earth Science, Environmental Science, Biomedical Science, Anatomy and Physiology, AP Chemistry, Physics or AP Physics.

In addition to the above electives, we are working to create a semester course that provides an integrated chemistry/physics lab experience.



We will continue to work to aid students in understanding the importance of taking a science class each year to ensure they are well prepared for postsecondary and career opportunities.



Credit Equivalency:

The Department of Public Instruction (DPI) is conducting an alignment project with Project Lead the Way (PLTW) courses and the Common Core Standards. I look forward to participating in this project as the group works to make a recommendation for the potential of a math and/or science equivalency credit for PLTW.

Common Core Standards:

Our federal government has made available a draft of Common Core Standards in the area of language arts and mathematics, and Wisconsin has recently adopted these standards. These documents communicate consistent expectations to ensure all students have the opportunity to meet the same high standards irregardless of the school or district they attend. The standards outline the preparation students need to be ready for college and careers.

This year, districts are encouraged to reflect and review these documents. Local efforts to develop clear learning targets allows our district a jump-start in understanding the importance of consistent curriculum documents and appropriate expectations.

In the near future, we realize our state assessment will change. We know this new assessment will be a computer adaptive test that includes multiple choice questions and performance tasks and that students will have multiple opportunities to take the test. All components of this new assessment system will be aligned with the Common Core State Standards.