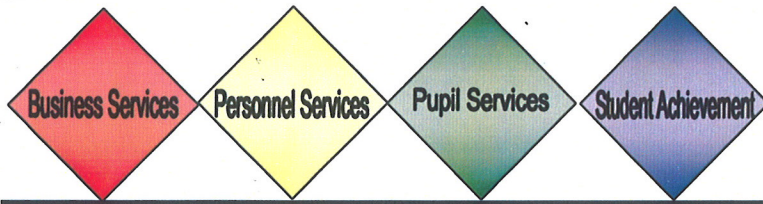


School District of New London



MONTHLY UPDATE

By: Bill Fitzpatrick
District Administrator
Date: October 5, 2010

W3 Meeting in Madison

Last weekend board member Connie Neely, NLEA union president Kim Jordan, and I traveled to Madison to partake in the first of three Saturday meetings meant to foster better collaboration between school boards (WASB) the teachers union (WEAC) and superintendents (WASDA), thus the term W3.

Although these groups do not always agree on all subjects, this effort brings together members of WASDA, WASB, and WEAC to commit to develop, model and sustain a culture of respect and collaboration that promotes synergy for a shared value of insuring a world-class public education system for all students.

We started the meeting by going around to the different districts in attendance and sharing how we've collaborated and what we need to learn to be more collaborative. We told about the need to build staff capacity, and how out of that came early release days to have the time to further our skills. We also brought up the idea of the New London Academy as another vehicle to use our own staff to teach one another. We felt this was a good example of collaboration.

Next we were challenged to come up with some ways our administration, the school board, and the teachers could collaborate. We generated the following ideas:

- Involve the NLEA in the interview process for the new hire for Director of Business and Human Relations.
- The school board needs to fill a vacancy on the board. Connie and Bill will talk to the board members to see if they are willing to include the NLEA in the interview or screening process.
- The NLEA will be notified through Kim on the topic the school board will be discussing at the 2nd board meeting of each month. Teachers will be encouraged to attend and possibly add to the discussion.
- In the fall, the NLEA will be allowed to use a portion of the inservice time to hold a meeting. It is difficult to have the time to get all members together. We can use this time to address topics of common interest (for example: school funding, healthcare, how we as teachers can hold ourselves accountable to be an exemplary staff). This will help promote the idea that the school board and the administration acknowledges the role of the union as important to sustaining quality educators.
- We want to develop a formalized communication structure. We would prefer using something already in place. One possibility was MLT. We

want to have a framework sketched out before Nov. 20 so we can share this at the next W3 meeting to get feedback from the group.

We felt the time was well spent, and felt energized to work together in the future. More information about the W3 Group can be found at <http://thew3.org>.

Director Position Posted

The position of Director of Business and HR Services has been posted. This position will fill the vacancy created by the retirement of Mr. Yerkey in December. The applicants will be screened using the criteria established for the position. Initial interviews with potential candidates will occur in early November using several teams of stakeholders including administrators, teachers, and board members. The acceptable candidates will then be put through a vetting process and an internal as well as external reference check. Final candidates will be interviewed by the full Board of Education. It is hoped that a job offer can be made in early December with a scheduled start date of January 3.

Soccer Meeting

Now that the athletic complex field has experienced a full growing season, questions about the dual use of the field for boys soccer and football have again emerged. A listening session of the coaches, athletic director and coordinator, and representatives of the maintenance staff, Board of Ed and parents will be scheduled. The tentative date and time is Wednesday, October 13 at 1:00 p.m. The purpose of the meeting is to hear the concerns of all parties and to explore options to address the concerns that are expressed. We will post the meeting in case more than three Board members want to attend.

City of New London Partnership for Kids

Last week I was invited by the City Economic Development Committee to discuss progress made in the EnVision New London Plan. The committee praised the District for its efforts to meet the targets of the plan especially the career portfolio and advisement program.

The City and District are also going to partner to have student teams develop and propose billboard marketing for the city. Parameters for the proposal process are being developed. Teams of no fewer than 3 nor more than 5 students will be provided with the opportunity to design two billboards near the Highway 45 and 54 interchange. The top five teams will present their ideas to the City Council. If selected, the designs will be put on city-owned billboards, and the team will secure a \$500 prize. We will be working with staff at the High School to roll this out at

the beginning of the second semester with proposals due in early May (see attachment).

Support Staff Grievance

We have been notified by AFSCME that the grievance issues that were heard by the Board of Education at the September meeting are being taken to the next step which is arbitration. We will keep the Board informed as we move forward in the arbitration process.

Memo

To: Economic Development Committee & New London School District
From: Kent Hager
Date: September 2, 2010
Re: City Billboard

The City of New London billboard out on Highway 45 North, just east of Crystal Falls, has a long and colorful history. I will skip most of that history and try and get to the point. In September of 2001, the City Council approved a contract with Schneider Signs of Waupaca to re-cover the existing billboard. The billboard is 14' X 48' in size and the new lettering was for the Northeast Industrial Park on the north face and WolfRiverCounty on the south face. Please see the attached prints of what is currently on the boards. Also attached is a picture of the north face of the billboard taken this last August. The City paid for the total cost of the project at \$4,032 or \$2,016 per side. With a 10-year life, each side costs \$34 a month.

Over the course of the past two years, I have initiated several discussions about the need to update the billboard. Forward New London has talked about options as has the Chamber of Commerce and the Tourism Commission. In July of 2008, I met with the Tourism Commission and as I recall, a project was under way to develop a "brand" for the City of New London. It was their consensus that we would wait until this new brand was developed before we updated the billboard. No brand has been developed and the sign is still in need of updating.

At the August, Economic Development Committee meeting, it was suggested that we partner with the School District to create a contest with the students to design a new City billboard. It is hoped by the Committee that we can get a new design agreed to and approach the Tourism Commission for assistance in funding the effort.

David Schneider of Schneider Signs estimates that a new vinyl sign would be about \$2,200 per side and would last 3-4 years. This cost would be for any design and color. They most often utilize vinyl as typically, billboards rotate their message. In our case, where the message would be more permanent, he would suggest actual painting of the billboard. Given that we would most likely want the sign to last 10 years, he would recommend taking the current backboards down, getting new ones, painting them, and putting the new sign back up. In this case the cost is approximately \$4,000 per side. It does not make sense to paint the current backboards with a new message and expecting the sign to last very long as the likely

condition of the current back boards is not good. He will not know that for sure until he gets a close look at them, but given that they are 15 years old, it is highly likely that they need to be replaced.

Steve Thompson provided me with an estimate to light both sides of the billboard. An estimated budget to do this is a one time installation cost of \$4,827 to New London Utilities, and \$3,800 to Master Electric for a total of \$8,627. Annual operating cost for the lights should be less than \$100 monthly.

If the City wants to get real ambitious, DOT regulations would allow another billboard no closer than 500 feet from the current billboard. The City owns a long strip of land along the Highway 45 right of way going both north and south from Spurr Road to Highway 54. We could fit in at least one other billboard to the south of the current one. The DOT permits our billboard on an annual basis, but believe it or not, it is at no cost to us as a City.

I have arranged for School Superintendent Bill Fitzpatrick to visit with the Committee at your September meeting about how best to proceed with a student contest.

econdevl/2010/billboard/memotoedcomm