

**SCHOOL DISTRICT OF NEW LONDON**  
**Monitoring Report to the Board of Education**

<b>Program Title:</b> Support Rigorous and Relevant Learning Environments	<b>Schools Affected:</b> All Schools <b># Of Students Affected:</b> All Students	<b>Timeframe:</b> 2010-11
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**Mission Target(s):**  
School District of New London educators will be equipped with a variety of instructional strategies required to address the broad range of student achievement levels and learning styles. Curriculum, instruction, and assessment in all subjects and at all levels will be rigorous and culturally responsive to the backgrounds, interests, languages, abilities, and learning styles of all students. Instruction will be differentiated to meet the strengths as well as needs to ensure success for all students. Students will be provided opportunities to integrate academic knowledge and twenty-first century skills, allowing them to succeed in personal, community and workplace environments.

**Program Goal(s):**  
Use current research to improve teaching and learning experiences for all students through a well-articulated curriculum, instructional strategies that will help the learner remember content and apply information and skills to relevant and challenging experiences that are not bound by time or location but are personalized to meet the evolving 21<sup>st</sup> century learner demands.

- a. Develop and begin to implement an electronic grading and reporting system which is easily accessed and connects instruction, assessment and evaluation to clear learning targets.
- b. Research, design and implement Career Academies.
- c. Fully implement the pre-engineering and biomedical sciences components of Project Lead the Way.
- d. Effectively synthesize modalities of learning including project-based, technology-enhanced, and/or community or regionally embedded learning.

**Goal Rationale:**  
A rigorous and relevant education is a product of effective learning, which takes place when standards, curriculum, instruction, and assessment interrelate and reinforce each other. Increasing rigor and relevance is a realistic goal and will yield immediate results in students' enthusiasm to learn. When students are engaged in the learning process, real achievement takes place and their chances to excel at what they do increases (Daggett, 2005). Ensuring rigorous and relevant curriculum, instruction, and assessment includes high academic expectations, curriculum that connects to students' lives, cultures, and communities, career and technical education, partnerships with higher education, interdisciplinary courses, project-based and community-based learning.

**Personnel Allocated to Goal Achievement:**  
The Administrative Team, Mission Leadership Team, and Building Leadership Team members are charged with the creation and monitoring of district and school plans that ensure rigorous and relevant learning environments, but the commitment of all staff is needed to ensure goal achievement.

**Budget Allocation to Goal Achievement:**  
Beyond budgets for staffing, professional development and technology, funds from our Kern Family Foundation and Perkins grants are used to support the implementation of Project Lead the Way – Engineering.

**Highlights/Accomplishments:**

- \*Implementation of Electronic Grading and Reporting will take place in the 2011-12 school year for a pilot group of elementary and intermediate teachers
- \*Alignment of local learning targets to newly adopted Common Core Standards is nearing completion in the areas of reading and math
- \*Implementation of the Freshman Academy will take place in the 2011-12 school year
- \*Organization of Career Academy structure has been articulated for sophomores, juniors, and seniors
- \*Expansion of Project Lead the Way – Engineering, and work toward certification continues
- \*Debut of Project Lead the Way – Biomedical Sciences will include 3 sections of 62 students in 2011-12
- \*Pilot of community embedded learning has proven successful with Neumetal partnership
- \*Integration practices are being piloted with social studies teachers
- \*Evaluation model includes feedback opportunities for our work to ensure instructional framework and high-yield strategies
- \*Pilot of virtual course offerings

**Concerns:**

- \*Are we addressing needs related to this goal in a timely way that will reduce or eliminate the negative impact of Open Enrollment?
- \*Have we clearly communicated the strengths and challenges of this initiative with all stakeholders?
- \*Do we have the support of all staff members?
- \*Does the current political and budgetary climate provide an obstacle for this effort?
- \*Have we structured staff development in a way that ensures rigorous and relevant learning opportunities?

**Suggested Next Steps:**

- Work with Mission Leadership Team to ensure effective communication
- Assist and monitor training and implementation of electronic grading and reporting
- Continue planning for the implementation of the 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Academy in the 2011-12 school year
- Create a governing board, mission, and program of studies for each of the Career Academies
- Determine need for the restructuring of advisement
- Identify cross-curricular standards for curriculums which provide a common mission for all teachers
- Explore the benefit of adopting the Explore, Plan, and ACT assessments instead of Scantron at the 8-12 grade levels
- Research charter schools and grant opportunities to identify options for Virtual Online course offerings
- Organize Advisory Committees for Project Lead the Way – Engineering and Biomedical Sciences
- Communicate timelines, ensure resources are in place for successful expansion, and market Project Lead the Way
- Continue training on: use of assessments/data, integration of thematic instruction, project and problem-based learning

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