School District of New Berlin

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SDNB Kicks of Career and Technical Education Month with Visit from State Superintendent Dr. Tony Evers

New Berlin, Wis. – The School District of New Berlin kicked off Career and Technical Education (CTE) Month with a visit from Wisconsin State Superintendent Dr. Tony Evers on Feb. 7. The student showcase and facilities tour, held at West Middle/High School, celebrated the many career-focused opportunities students are able to access to help inform their academic and career plans in high school and following graduation.

The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction and Dr. Evers selected the SDNB for a visit because of its state-level leadership, strong regional partnerships, quality programming, and a relentless focus on Academic and Career Planning and the development of high-demand, high-interest career pathways.

The district's CTE celebration was led by more than 40 secondary students who shared personal stories of how exposure to a continuum of experiences throughout their K12 education has helped them explore their interests to inform their plans following graduation. Students manned tables, escorted tours, and shared the value of what they are learning in a pitch-style format.

For example, one team spoke to Dr. Evers about a competitive intelligence project where students are curating content for a portal to help industry professionals anticipate the impact of disruptive technologies on their business model. Other students spoke about the skills they are learning in computer science principles and programming coursework as well as the district's entrepreneurial skills accelerator in relation to a host of possible career options.

Attendees also heard from students who spoke about how they have been positively affected by their experiences through such opportunities as the certified nursing assistant program; TechKNOW, a student-centered technology support program; Waukesha County Technical College's Dual Enrollment Academy, robotics and more. Dr. Evers also spoke with special needs students that run their own business in the district.

"Career and technical education is a key component of supporting the district's 'Vision of the Graduate'," SDNB Superintendent Joe Garza said. "Nowadays, all students are career and technical education students."

In an effort to increase the relevance of coursework in high-demand career pathways, post-secondary education and business partners recently participated in 11 career cluster-based focused groups. These groups focused on how best to provide increased exposure to high-demand careers and how students could earn an industry credential or demonstrate knowledge sufficient to qualify for an entry-level career-based learning opportunity while they continue their education.

As a result of those discussions, the district is adding the following courses in the 2018-19 school year with an overwhelming response from students: Applied Analytics: Advanced Data Science; Construction III; and How Machines Work with Industry 4.0, among others.

"We appreciate the shared commitment by our district partners to participate in conversations and offer support for programming that reinforces purposeful talent development of our emerging workforce," Garza added. "With their help, we can continue to provide all students with rigorous and relevant experiences that will serve them well in their future."