

NEW BERLIN
SCHOOL DISTRICT

Partners in Education

District celebrates
business, community
partners with event

By **Lauren Anderson**
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NEW BERLIN — Community leaders, business representatives and educators convened at New Berlin West High School Wednesday morning to highlight the importance of collaboration in preparing students for future careers.

It was the New Berlin School District's fourth annual Partners In Education Breakfast, a time for the district to update its community partners on its college and career readiness efforts and recognize those who have helped further those efforts.

The district has made a concerted push in recent years to offer students more exposure to and preparation for careers through partnerships with businesses.

Superintendent Joe Garza said that, while the NBSD has consistently performed well on traditional measures of success — including ACT and AP scores — officials realized several years ago that the district needed to focus on setting its graduates up for success after high school. Statistics



Lauren Anderson/Freeman Staff

New Berlin School District Superintendent Joe Garza and School Board members applaud Mary Baer, former vice president of community engagement for the Waukesha County Business Alliance, who was recognized at the district's Partners in Education Breakfast on Wednesday.

regarding how many students go on to pursue a college degree without completing it woke the NBSD up three years ago, Garza said.

Since then, the district has launched multiple initiatives to address that problem.

One such effort is the district's requirement that students in grades 7-12 create an academic and career plan. While all Wisconsin students in grades 6-12 this year must have such a plan, New Berlin was a pilot school as the district rolled out the initiative.

Serving as a road map for students, the plan includes a portfolio of information such as courses, co-curricular activities, career and work-based learning experiences, community service, standardized test results, career pathways of interest, learning styles, personality traits and more.

Other efforts include opportunities for students to be exposed to future

jobs, including career days at all grade levels and industry tours for high school students. The latter are also required to take courses related to financial literacy and employability.

The district has also focused on helping students take coursework aligning with their post-secondary plans and build credentials for college admissions and future employment in areas like nursing, IT/computer science and manufacturing.

In the spring, the district launched its UW College in High School Associate's Degree program, which allows students to work toward and even complete an associate degree prior to graduation. Students can also complete as many as 24 Wisconsin Technical College System credits in their senior year through the WCTC Regional dual enrollment program.

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