



For immediate Release

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University of Wisconsin System President Ray Cross Commends SDNB for College and Career Readiness Initiatives

NEW BERLIN, WI - October 19, 2015. UW System President Ray Cross visited the School District of New Berlin on Friday, October 16. The focus of his visit was to learn how educators can continue to work together to strengthen alignment between the public K-12 system and colleges and universities in the state of Wisconsin.

President Cross was joined by a variety of UW System representatives that have been working with the School District to do just that. Senator Mary Lazich and Representative Mike Kuglitsch were also in attendance.

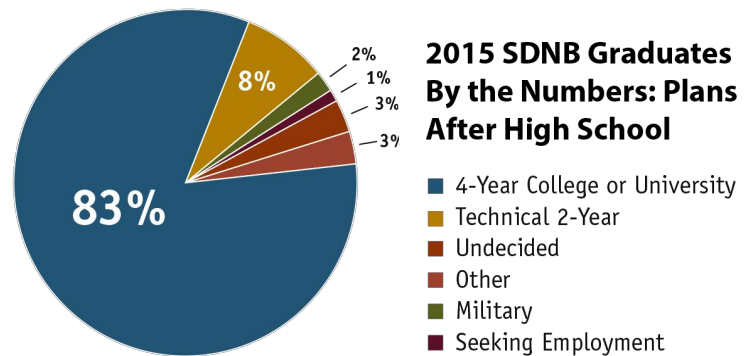
Superintendent Joe Garza kicked off the event with a short address. "The school district continues to perform well based on the traditional measures of college and career readiness (graduation rate, AP offerings and standardized assessments), however, we want to exceed those expectations to ensure that every student is able to effectively navigate the world of higher education and work after graduation," said Garza.

The school district is currently considered a leader in Academic and Career Planning. District representatives provided an update on their efforts to increase student engagement in learning experiences that may better inform their choices in high school and to ensure they graduate as informed consumers of post-secondary education and training.

"Implementing Academic and Career Planning throughout the state without addressing perceived barriers will adversely impact its overall success," said Laura Schmidt, Strategic Advisor to the Superintendent. "Strategic planning, culture, school funding and accountability, and a strong post-secondary alignment strategy are all key implementation levers. We need regional and state champions to build capacity for this work."

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The majority of School District of New Berlin graduates aspire to complete a 4-year degree. District administrators and educators believe that this is a good thing, provided students are also prepared to get the most out of their investment in alignment with their personal, academic, social and career goals.



“The School District of New Berlin believes all students can benefit from a foundation in career and technical education in addition to a rigorous academic environment. Our collective work involves developing the unique talents of future problem solvers, innovators, job creators, and job seekers,” continued Schmidt.

In the past, Career and Technical Education was thought to only benefit students that did not aspire to attend a 4 year college/university. But Career and Technical Education helps students better understand themselves and the highly technical world around them. It allows them to apply what they are learning in their other courses in a new way. Most importantly, it informs their investment in post-secondary education so that they can find the ‘right fit’ and complete a post-secondary education credential in an economical manner.

The visit included a tour of many of the new program areas in the School District of New Berlin to support students interested in Engineering, Manufacturing, IT/Computer Science, and Nursing. Students in every area reinforced the value of project-based learning and/or the opportunity to secure entry-level position in their area of interest to apply what they are learning, confirm their skills and interests, and to make money while they continue their post-secondary education. For example, New Berlin Eisenhower Senior Nicole Dorshorst indicated that she plans to work as a Certified Nursing Assistant while she pursues a degree in Physical Therapy. Others CNA students commented that they plan to pursue a degree in Nursing at WCTC and/or a 4-year university but are hoping their work experience will help them select a specific specialty to inform their course selections.

President Cross commended the District on their work to embed real-life learning experiences in K12 education. “We absolutely must continue to develop effective strategies for talent development, attraction and retention so that students know what Wisconsin has to offer them in their future. We need to move from collaborating with K12 to pursuing a vision for true alignment. The state’s Dual Enrollment Programs need to be easier to access and administer. The UW System must move these issues forward because it is the right thing to do for students and the State overall. It’s on us,” said Cross.

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UW System President Ray Cross and Senator Mary Lazich attend a presentation and tour at the School District of New Berlin on Friday, October 16, 2015.

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