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DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
JASON E. GLASS, DIRECTOR

May 10, 2011

Superintendent John Phillips
Sibley-Ocheyedan Community School District
120 11th Avenue NE
Sibley, Iowa 51249

*★ Site Visit
May, 2011*

Dear Superintendent Phillips:

Attached is the report of findings for the Comprehensive School Improvement Site Visit conducted at Sibley-Ocheyedan Community School District (CSD) on April 12-13, 2011. The report is based upon a variety of interviews conducted with district staff and stakeholder groups during the indicated dates, and review of documents submitted to the Department and on-site.

The site visit was designed to assess the district's progress with its Comprehensive School Improvement Plan (CSIP), provide a general assessment of educational practices within the district, make recommendations for improvement, and determine compliance with state accreditation standards and applicable federal program requirements.

Based on the findings from the comprehensive site visit, Sibley-Ocheyedan CSD maintains State of Iowa accreditation; however, non-compliance issues were identified. These issues are included in the Chapter 12 Non-compliance Matrix and the Outside of Chapter 12 Non-compliance Matrix contained in the site visit report. The district must resolve the identified issues through completion of corrective actions according to agreed upon timelines. Department follow-up will be conducted to verify resolution of the identified non-compliance issues.

The report reflects consensus of the following team members:

Department of Education Representatives:

Elizabeth Calhoun, School Improvement Consultant
Peggy Van Kirk, Special Education Cadre

Northwest Area Education Agency Representatives:

Marlin Jeffers, Learning Supports Consultant
Mike Morran, Instructional Coach
Don Tisthammer, Regional Facilitator/Supervisor

Local Education Agency Representatives:

Darin Jones, Elementary Principal/Curriculum Director, Montezuma CSD
Travis Popken, Teacher, Harris-Lake Park CSD
Jody Vanderloo, School Administration Manager, Sioux City CSD

It is our hope this report will provide guidance to enhance student achievement in the district and support continuing conversations among staff and community members about the local education system, how and what students are learning, and how *more* students can learn at higher levels.

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Helping Communities Meet the Learning Needs of All Their Children and Adults

As part of Sibley-Ocheyedan CSD's continuous improvement process, the district must review its current CSIP and provide revisions as needed. Revisions should be based on the district's needs assessments (including the attached report), student achievement data, stakeholder input, and established priorities. Recertification of the CSIP must be completed by September 15, 2011. Directions for revision and submission of the CSIP can be found at: <https://www.edinfo.state.ia.us/securelogin.asp>

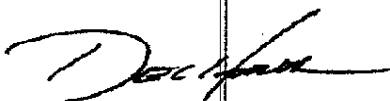
The Department would appreciate the district's feedback regarding its site visit experience. This feedback will inform the Department's efforts to continuously improve the comprehensive site visit process. A short online survey has been developed and is available at the following site: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/W58H5LZ>. The survey will take approximately ten minutes to complete. Responses are confidential and shared in aggregate form with members of the Department's School Improvement Team.

The visiting team again extends its gratitude to you and the Sibley-Ocheyedan CSD staff and patrons in preparing for and showing courtesy during the visit. Thank you for your time and cooperation.

Sincerely,



Elizabeth Calhoun, Consultant
School Improvement Consultant
Bureau of Accreditation and Improvement Services
Iowa Department of Education



Del Hoover, Deputy Administrator
Bureau of Accreditation and Improvement Services
Iowa Department of Education

cc: Site Visit Team Members
School Board President
Iowa Department of Education Official File
AEA Office

Comprehensive Site Visit Iowa Department of Education



Sibley-Ocheyedan Community School District

**Team Findings
April 12-13, 2011**

Iowa Department of Education
Grimes State Office Building
400 E. 14th St
Des Moines, Iowa 50319-0146

Vision, Mission, and Goals

In an improving district/school, the vision, mission, and goals are clearly communicated in the school and community. Stakeholders understand and share a commitment to the district/school expectations, goals, priorities, assessment procedures, and accountability. The vision guides allocations of time and resources. Evidence includes, but is not limited to, the following:

Clearly articulated mission is established collaboratively with stakeholder groups representing the diversity of the community.

Vision, mission, and goals are communicated throughout the system and community.

The vision and mission of the district/school guide teaching and learning.

Every five years, the comprehensive needs assessment process, with input from stakeholders, is used to review and revise the beliefs, mission, and/or vision; major educational needs; and student learning goals.

Academic and academic-related data are analyzed and used to determine prioritized goals.

Goals guide assessment of student achievement, district/school effectiveness, and the allocation of time and resources.

The vision, mission, and goals support values of respecting and valuing diversity.

Noted Strengths:

1. The mission of the Sibley-Ocheyedan (S-O) Community School District (CSD) is to provide the best possible education within a stimulating environment while building a foundation for lifelong learning through a variety of academic, interpersonal, and co-curricular activities involving the entire community. The current board goals include: student achievement, technology, and character education. Principals report every meeting on the progress towards the goals. The board goals are visible throughout the buildings.
2. School board members interviewed reported the president of the school board begins each meeting by reviewing the "5 School Board Basics"
 - 1) Put students first.
 - 2) Follow the law and your own policy.
 - 3) Respect the chain of command.
 - 4) Base decisions on shared, objective information.
 - 5) Operate in the public eye.

This helps to keep the board focused on their roles and responsibilities of being a board member.

Recommendations for Improvement:

3. As the district prepares to conduct its five year community-wide needs assessment, the visiting team recommends the process includes all stakeholders (i.e., parents, teachers, students, staff, and community members in Sibley and Ocheyedan who do not have children in the school system) in the process. The results would help to provide a broader sense of the districts' needs.

Leadership

In an improving district/school, leaders communicate a shared sense of purpose and understanding of the district/school's values. Leaders have a visible presence, provide resources and ensure two-way communication between the educational system and stakeholders. Leaders provide encouragement, recognition, and support for improving student learning and staff performance. Leadership is committed, persistent, proactive, and distributed throughout the system. Evidence includes, but is not limited to, the following:

Policies and procedures are established to effectively support district/school operations.

The school board and district/school administrators implement an evaluation system that provides for the professional growth of all personnel.

Policies and practices are implemented to reduce and eliminate discrimination and harassment and to reflect, respect, and celebrate diversity.

The role and responsibility of administrative leaders is supported, respected, and understood.

A clearly defined system and expectations are established for the collection, analysis, and use of data regarding student achievement and progress with the Comprehensive School Improvement Plan (CSIP).

The capacity of staff, students, and parents to contribute and lead is built and supported.

Opportunities for participation are provided for input, feedback, and ownership for student and system success among staff, students, parents, and community.

Equity in access to learning opportunities and compliance with local, state, and federal legislation is ensured.

Leaders at all levels understand and manage the change process.

Noted Strengths:

4. Interviews with teachers, students, parents, and administrators indicated students have opportunities for building leadership and citizenship skills. Some of these opportunities included:
 - Student leadership teams at each level (i.e., elementary, middle, and high school)
 - May term
 - Extracurricular activities
 - Student on school board
 - Students on School Improvement Advisory Committee (SIAC)
 - Students on interview team for new superintendent
 - National Honor Society
 - Community service
 - Partners in Active Learning Support (PALS) (older students tutor younger students)
 - Buddy system for transition grades (K-1, 1-2, 2-3, etc)
5. Interviews indicated multiple opportunities for teacher leadership in the district. Examples included:
 - District leadership team
 - Building leadership teams
 - Grade level teams
 - Committees
 - Teacher presentations on professional development opportunities
 - Iowa core team

6. Many district groups and community partners reported a strong communication link between school, home, and the community through the following:
- The Osceola Press/Melvin News*
 - Osceola County Gazette*
 - Website
 - Parent-teacher conferences
 - Email
 - Phone calls
 - Principal's Desk article in newspapers
 - Administrators present at community organizations (Rotary, Kiwanis)
 - Ministerial group
 - JMC (student data management system)
 - Newsletter
 - Blogs
 - Wikis
7. School board members demonstrate leadership by their willingness to attend and participate in leadership training such as the Iowa Association of School Boards conference, attending Academy Board Learning Experiences (ABLE) meetings, participating in book studies, including teachers and students in board meetings for updates on what is happening in the district, using data to inform decisions, participating on other committees, meeting with nearby school boards for sharing opportunities, and encouraging and supporting professional development for all staff.
8. The visiting team commends the district for its vision to have a student representative on the S-O school board. This demonstrates an opportunity for students to have a voice in the district. The student reports back to the student leadership team for the high school concerning school board discussion.
9. In consideration of students' academic performance, the visiting team identified a number of factors that contribute to their achievement level. Some of these are listed below.
- Open communication between school and home.
 - Commitment to "ALL" students' performance conveyed by teachers and administrators.
 - Support for the school shown by parents and community members through volunteer activities and community contributions to the school.
 - Encouragement of all students to participate in some type of extracurricular activity is reflected by the high percentage (87%) of students who participate.
10. Teachers, parents, school board members, and students reported administrators are approachable, visible, and supportive for most issues. Administrators meet regularly with faculty and participate in professional development activities. Teachers stated administrators and the school board are supportive of attending professional development opportunities.
11. The high number of students who participate in extracurricular activities is a strength for S-O. The visiting team recommends continuing to offer and invite students that are not in at least one extracurricular activity to participate.
12. Teachers indicated the use of Northwest Area Education Agency (NWAEA) Instructional Coach has been an asset to the district by providing teacher resources and supplemental materials to enhance the curriculum. All teachers are encouraged to utilize this resource.

Recommendations for Improvement:

13. The SIAC interview indicated they have open and honest discussions and value all perspectives on the committee. The committee includes parents, community members, teachers and students. They indicated they make recommendations to the board based on the data provided and feel that the board is supportive of these to provide a positive environment for student learning. Examples of recommendations made to the school board by the SIAC committee included: small class size, wellness program, technology, and character education. The district is encouraged to ensure the SIAC understands its responsibilities (see noncompliance at the end of this report). To meet the requirements of Iowa Code section 280.12(2) as amended by 2007 Iowa Acts, Senate File 427, section 2, the board shall appoint and charge a school improvement advisory committee (SIAC) to make recommendations to the board. Based on the committee members' analysis of the needs assessment data, they shall make recommendations to the board about the following components:

Major educational needs;

Student learning goals;

Long-range goals that include, but are not limited to, the state indicators that address reading, mathematics, and science achievement; and

Harassment or bullying prevention goals, programs, training, and other initiatives.

Additionally, the district is advised to maintain documentation of efforts to seek membership representation with regard to race, national origin, and disability. Local boards are also advised to pay close attention to gender balancing of the SIAC. Iowa Code 69.16A, as amended in 2009, places a strict gender balance requirement, effective January 1, 2012, for "all appointive boards, commissions, committees, and councils of a political subdivision of the state that are established by the Code, if not otherwise provided by law." This requirement, which applies to the SIAC and the Career and Technical Education (CTE) Advisory Committees, defines gender balance as half male and half female for even-numbered committees or half plus one for odd-numbered committees.

Collaborative Relationships

In an improving district/school, stakeholders understand and support the mission and goals of the district/school and have meaningful roles in the decision-making process. Collaboration results from a culture of participation, responsibility, and ownership among stakeholders from diverse community groups. Educators in the system develop and nurture a professional culture and collaborative relationships marked by mutual respect and trust inside and outside of the organization. The system works together with balance between district direction and school autonomy. Evidence includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Instructional staff is provided opportunities for interaction to focus on professional issues.
- Instructional staff constructively analyzes and critiques practices and procedures including content, instruction, and assessment.
- Instructional staff follows established procedures to resolve professional conflicts, solve problems, share information about students, and communicate student information to parents.
- Processes and procedures that invite and respect stakeholder input, support, and interaction are implemented by the district/school.
- Parents are involved as partners in the educational process.
- Positive alliances among school staff, students, parents, and diverse community groups are created and nurtured.

Noted Strengths:

14. Interviews with administration, teachers, and students indicated sharing opportunities with other districts occur. This included the sharing of a maintenance and transportation directors shared with Hartley-Melvin-Sanborn CSD.
15. All interview groups reported S-O CSD seeks to coordinate services and programs with other community organizations. It was evident that efforts to maximize programs for students are enhanced by the ongoing coordination and collaboration between the school and community. Some examples of these cooperative efforts are listed below:
 - Attendance at school events
 - Support of school activities (time, talents and gifts)
 - Volunteering
 - Business Partnerships
 - City of Sibley and the School Fitness Center
 - Hospital Fitness Center
 - City Recreation Department use of gymnasiums
 - Sibley Golf and Country Club
 - Veteran's Association
 - Passion Play
 - Project Lead the Way
 - Diamond Vogel (Orange City) and Sudenga (George) -- (teacher internships)
 - Guest Speakers
 - Northwest Iowa Community College (NCC)
 - Student teachers from Northwestern College, Dordt College, Buena Vista University, and University of Northern Iowa
 - Osceola County Sheriff's Department
 - Attaining Truth Love and Self-Control (ATLAS)

16. All interview groups indicated the relationship between the district local newspapers, *The Ocheyedan Press/Melvin News* and *Osceola County Gazette*, is a strength. Personnel attend every board meeting, articles (written by teachers and the high school principal)/pictures appear regularly regarding activities at the elementary, middle, and high school.
17. In 2003, the Osceola Community Hospital, S-O CSD, Area Education Agency, Upper Des Moines Opportunities, and other community partners proposed and built a fully integrated daycare facility called Bright Beginnings of Osceola County. This daycare is connected to the S-O elementary school. The goal of this project was to provide a fully integrated setting for young children of the community. There are many partnerships that have been created and are still ongoing today to support the four-year-old preschool programs. The Osceola Community Hospital is responsible for all areas of the building. They hire staff, make schedule, and provide financial support. The Department of Public Health provides/certifies all vaccinations and health services. They also train staff members in CPR, basic first aid, and blood-borne pathogens. The S-O CSD teachers work collaboratively with preschool teachers from the daycare to plan units, integrate students, and team-teach. The school district allows the preschool to use the lunchroom, library, and gym. Head Start has expanded quality preschool programming and made it possible for low-income children to attend preschool. These children are integrated with others from the Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) and pre-K programs. The Lakes empowerment group continues to give support to the preschool children of Bright Beginnings. They provide scholarships for children who are unable to financially afford the costs of the preschool. The Bright Beginnings Preschool has recently teamed with the Osceola Wellness Center to provide exercise classes to the preschool students. This program is called Project Play and is instructed by University of Northern Iowa Polar Scholars. These classes work on developing the motor skills of the children. Another new partnership is with the Second Beginnings consignment business. Volunteers run the store and proceeds go to the preschool and daycare program. Last year S-O CSD received the Statewide Voluntary Four-Year-Old Preschool Grant. S-O CSD entered an agreement with the Osceola Community Hospital to rent a classroom in the Bright Beginnings Daycare. S-O CSD hired one full-time teacher and two full-time teacher associates to lead the program. In its first year, the program reached maximum capacity and served forty-one students. It is currently already full for the 2011-2012 school year.

Recommendations for Improvement:

18. Opportunities for staff to collaborate related to special education program services and specific student instructional needs are inconsistent across schools. Teachers and instructional support staff reported they understand the importance of regular communication and make an effort to find the needed time to connect with each other but indicated they have limited, formal opportunities to collaborate as a group to improve services. Time set aside for collaboration is episodic and does not occur on a regular basis. There do not appear to be district-supported processes and procedures in place to ensure collaboration at all buildings related to addressing student needs and services. Consider convening a group of general education teachers, special education teachers, instructional support staff, and administrators to identify needs, available resources, and a plan to support opportunities for formal collaboration.

Learning Environment

In an improving district/school, the school environment is conducive to teaching and learning. The environment is safe, orderly, purposeful, and free from threat of physical, social, and emotional harm. Teachers are familiar with students' cultures and know how to work effectively in a multi-cultural setting. Students are guided to think critically about learning and have opportunities to apply learning to real world situations. Classrooms are integrated with diverse learners (i.e., gender, race, special needs, at-risk, gifted). Evidence includes, but is not limited to, the following:

Rules and procedures for behavior and consequences are clearly communicated and consistently administered.

School facilities are physically accessible and school routines enhance student learning.

Materials, resources, technology, programs, and activities reflecting diversity are available to all students.

The district/school provides a clean, inviting, welcoming environment.

A clearly understood crisis management plan is established, communicated, and implemented when necessary.

Teaching and learning are protected from external disturbances and internal distractions.

The district/school reflects the contributions and perspectives of diverse groups and preserves the cultural dignity of staff, students, and parents.

Noted Strengths:

19. A variety of district programs, services, and staff are in place to promote academic achievement and graduation. Teachers, administrators, and learning supports staff reported a focus on working together to problem solve and identify needed support for students, such as:
 - Guidance counselors at elementary, middle, and high school
 - Guidance curriculum
 - Alternative high school program including flexible scheduling and on-line credit recovery
 - Access to grade and attendance information through JMC
 - Summer school programming
 - Peer tutoring (PALS)
 - Community Service
 - Full-time nurse
 - General Headquarters (after school program)
 - Lego league (middle school)
 - Junior janitor (elementary)

20. S-O offers a warm, caring, positive environment for learning. Students, parents, and teachers expressed pride and respect for their school, teachers, and administration. Interviewees shared the belief that the caring and supportive staff was among the school's greatest strengths. All stakeholders appreciated the accessibility of teachers, administrators, and support personnel. Employees are dedicated to the well-being of students and to insuring that all students learn. Staff interviewed expressed pride and loyalty to students, the community, and the school. All interview groups indicate that the districts' strength is the dedicated teachers that go beyond the school day for their students.

21. The district should be commended for efforts to improve the Talent and Gifted Program. TAG teachers were given time to plan with the help of the NWAEA TAG Coordinator to develop a K-12 Talented and Gifted Program for the school district which included the identification process, enrichment, acceleration of content and an assessment of the program. Continue your efforts of this state requirement [12.5 (12)].
22. The Sibley Ocheyedan Foundation is a strength to the district by providing scholarships to students, providing educational materials to teachers and provides small grants to teachers for the classroom.
23. The Future Farmers of America program is a strength to the district. The district has the highest student membership in northwest Iowa and 5th in the state with 82 members. One district patron donated the use of 33 acres of land for the 2009-2010 school year to support the FFA program. The students are actively involved in community projects which include Hawkeye Point landmark in Osceola County.
24. The 4th grade class prepared an outstanding video which provided an overview of the S-O district to the visiting team. This positively portrayed the district and community and was an impressive project that demonstrated integrated technology.
25. All interview groups indicated that the school facilities are a strength of the district. They are well maintained and provide a safe, clean, orderly, and positive learning environment for all students. Staff, former and current students, and community members have volunteered to paint classrooms, hallways, media center, and middle school gymnasium. The addition of color adds an aesthetic value to the student learning environment.
26. The S-O CSD was awarded the Lowe's Toolbox for Education Grant in 2008. This \$10,000 grant was written to develop an outdoor natural discovery area for students to explore, investigate, build, and experience science in its natural setting. The project grew in size and many local agencies have donated time, money, and materials to help with this cause. Some of them included; Jeppessen Excavating, Sportsmen's Club, Pheasants Forever, FFA, and Osceola Conservation. This project is scheduled to take three years in development. The first year was spent putting in a rain garden with natural plants found on the prairie. The second year cedar fencing, fossil sidewalk, and native grasses were added. This year students will plant buffalo grass, add exploratory boxes and natural musical instruments, and finish the rain garden area with rock. The Discovery Gardens will be a learning tool for the students of the elementary building.

Recommendations for Improvement:

27. Co-teaching is implemented differently at each building level. There does not appear to be a systemic, K-12 co-teaching model utilized district-wide. The *Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act* (IDEA) and the *No Child Left Behind Act* (NCLB) require that students with disabilities have access to the general curriculum to the maximum extent possible. NCLB also requires that students with disabilities make adequate yearly progress and have access to teachers who are highly qualified regarding core content areas. Co-teaching is one way in which a school may satisfy these requirements while providing a more inclusive education, less program fragmentation, and reduced student stigma. The term "co-teaching" is often used without shared or consistent meaning among staff. Co-teaching is a delivery system in which two or more educators share instructional responsibility for a group of students in a single workspace or classroom for a specific content area. Although each individual's level of participation may vary, co-teaching should allow for mutual ownership, pooled resources, and joint educator accountability (reference: *Implementing Collaborative Teaching: Administrators' Retreat, a Conversation Sponsored by the Iowa Department of Education, July 18, 2006* conducted by Marilyn Friend, Ph.D.). The district is encouraged to explore ways to create and maintain an inclusive school designed to meet the needs of all learners through

use of co-teaching and consultation. The district should contact Deb Krager dkrager@nwaea.org at the NWAEA for support in this area.

28. Research indicates that students achieve at higher levels in integrated instructional settings. Interviews with district administrators indicated that in some instances ability grouping guides placement of students. This could have an impact on expectations for student performance, which in turn affects achievement. The idea of discreet "solutions" (e.g. alternative placement, removal from general education settings for instruction, or separate courses for at-risk or special education students) is not as effective as finding ways to serve all students in general education settings with rigorous content. The visiting team suggests district administration and staff members review these practices and engage in dialogue concerning the implications for student placement.
29. Some special education teachers shared concerns that students may be served in the least restrictive environment (LRE) at the cost of meeting individual student needs. In planning for delivery of instruction to students with IEPs, consider:
- How is the decision to deliver instruction in the general education or special education classroom determined?
 - How do special education teachers blend the general curriculum with functional skills to meet IEP goals?
 - How are special education teachers supported in providing access to the general curriculum?
 - How are general education teachers supported in differentiating curriculum to meet student needs?
 - How are students supported in the general education environment in meeting IEP goals?
 - How much time is dedicated to direct instruction in specific skills to support IEP goals as opposed to assistance with homework?
 - What support do special education and general education teachers need in implementing the co-teaching model?

Contact Don Tisthammer dtisthammer@nwaea.org and/or Steve Mullenberg smullenberg@nwaea.org at NWAEA for assistance and support in this area.

30. The elementary and middle school teachers indicated they would like to schedule flexible groups for student learning. This has been problematic due to scheduling and sharing of teachers throughout the district. The team recommends the district attempt to implement a literature and/or mathematics block so teachers can implement flexible grouping to meet the needs of all students. Formative assessments should be utilized to monitor and determine appropriate placements.
31. Teacher interviews indicated the specific Special Education accommodations for students on IEPs are provided to all general education teachers who work with students on IEPs. This is admirable but the team recommends that each regular education teacher take the time to read individual IEPs and be aware of progress these students are making in the general education program. The visiting team recommends the special education and general education teacher collaborate to fully implement the accommodations on the IEP.
32. Parents and teachers expressed a concern about safety in the high school and at the elementary building after school is dismissed. They reported that students walking in the high school parking lot are unsafe due to the number of cars in the area at the time. Elementary students must deal with the number of parents picking up students after school. Consider a focus group to develop a safety plan for this concern.

Curriculum and Instruction

In an improving school, curriculum challenges each student to excel, reflects a commitment to equity, and demonstrates an appreciation of diversity. There is an emphasis on principles of high quality instruction, clear expectations for what is taught, and high expectations for student achievement. Educators have a common understanding of quality teaching and learning. Instruction is designed to accommodate a wide range of learners within the classroom. Teachers have knowledge and skills needed to effectively implement characteristics of effective instruction. The staff accepts responsibility for the students' learning of the essential curriculum (e.g., Iowa Core Curriculum). Instructional time is allocated to support student learning. Evidence includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Educators implement effective instructional practices for each and every student.
- School and classroom tasks and activities are inherently engaging, relevant, and lead to applying knowledge to authentic tasks.
- Content, instruction, assessments, and policy are aligned.
- A shared vision of effective instruction is held by all instructional staff.
- Curriculum and instruction reflect contributions from diverse racial, ethnic, and personal backgrounds.
- Students are provided opportunity and time to learn.
- Teachers are provided with an instructional framework that employs research-based strategies for use with diverse learner characteristics.
- Instructional decisions utilize a process of collecting, analyzing, and summarizing data.

Noted Strengths:

33. Teachers indicated that students are provided resources, remediation, and acceleration throughout the district through the programs of Talent/Gifted, Media, ESL, Title I, and Technology.

34. Throughout all interview groups, it was reported technology is a strength in the district. This is evident through the following:

- 1:1 Initiative
- Mobile/computer labs throughout the district
- teachers are provided computers
- Projectors in the classroom
- Smart boards
- Use of Skype
- Google School (implementing next year)
- Flip Cameras
- Educational Software
- Online classes
- Teacher Portals for communication for students and parents (checking grades and assignments)
- Responders (clickers)
- I-Touches
- Ipods
- Technology director
- Elmo/Document Cameras

May Term?

35. Parents and students expressed support of the "May Term." Parents thought the job shadowing and work experiences were beneficial for students. They believe "May Term" is a good way for students to be exposed to a variety of careers that they might not have considered without this opportunity. Students like the hands-on courses, job shadowing and college classes available to them through this process.

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Recommendations for Improvement:

36. The visiting team recommends the district develop a long range plan for technology that should include a budget to sustain and upgrade technology, professional development of school staff, and assessments for student proficiencies. Contact Jon Wibbels [jwibbels@nwaea.org] for assistance and support.

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37. Both parents and students appreciate the opportunities the district provides for access to technology. However, students emphasized the need for the teacher to engage students in learning through other methods such as group discussion and direct instruction. Parents stated they would appreciate phone calls from teachers for more immediate concerns that they can address readily. Students report there is inconsistency among teachers regarding how technology is integrated into the classroom.

Professional Development

In an improving district/school, staff is qualified for assignments and engages in ongoing learning opportunities to improve effectiveness. Student achievement and other sources of data are used to set goals for professional development. The district provides professional learning opportunities that include theory, demonstration, practice, and coaching. Evidence includes, but is not limited to, the following:

Professional development focus is determined through the analysis of student achievement and performance data.

Professional development is focused and based on research-based strategies.

Professional development sessions build on one another, are distributed throughout the school year, and are sustained over time.

Time is provided for teachers to collaborate and apply new content and pedagogical knowledge.

An established system provides support to monitor and evaluate implementation of professional development and its impact on student learning.

Formative student data and teacher implementation data are used to adjust professional development and guide instructional decisions.

All school staff members, instructional and non-instructional, are provided professional development to support job roles and functions.

Professional development activities contribute to the capacity of all school staff to develop cultural competence and to reflect and respect diversity in classroom and work environments.

Noted Strengths:

38. A strength the teachers' groups interviewed expressed was the ability for teachers to attend professional development opportunities outside the district to improve their skills for the classroom. The district supports this by providing the time and funding for teachers to attend professional development opportunities and to visit other school districts. When teachers return to the district, they usually present new strategies/information to staff to enhance the knowledge level. Examples of this included: National, State and Regional professional development, as well as, visiting in-state and out of state school districts to observe programs and initiatives.
39. Teachers indicated administrators do frequent walkthroughs and provide feedback in a timely manner to increase teacher effectiveness and student engagement in the classroom. Walkthroughs are also used to reinforce implementation of new building initiatives (i.e., co-teaching).
40. The district has made a commitment to training the certified staff in APL training (classroom management strategies). Teachers interviewed also reported the staff can take refresher training when needed. APL strategies are posted in classrooms. This allows for a common language across the district regarding teacher effectiveness as well as addressing student needs.

Recommendations for Improvement:

41. Although teachers review student achievement data, the content and findings of the review is not clearly understood. There is limited evidence to determine the effectiveness of existing professional development initiatives related to increased student achievement. In order to determine the effectiveness of resource allocations, the outcomes should be defined in terms of the data used to select initiatives. In consideration of past professional development initiatives and the future adoption of the Iowa Core, it is recommended the teachers and administrators develop a shared definition and understanding of effective instruction as outlined by the Iowa Core. Specifically, the planning process should include a formal district plan including the following:
 - Establish agreement on instructional strategies to be implemented;
 - Time to process, plan, collaborate learned information;
 - Establish a process for including practice, feedback, and coaching; and
 - Measure the implementation of instructional strategies.This process could be used to guide the implementation of initiatives through data gathered from walk-throughs. Consider contacting Pam Barry (pbarry@nwaea.org) at NWAEA for assistance and support in long-term professional development planning for all staff members.
42. Special education teachers and paraeducators reported a need for increased professional development to address student and staff needs. Both teachers and paraeducators expressed an interest in further training in specific behavior management strategies for students with anger issues; training in the use of new technology; and information in disability areas such as autism, Asperger and Downs Syndromes. Contact Jan Turbes (jturbes@nwaea.org) for further information and training.
43. Paraeducators stated a desire to be included in some of the district wide workshops and activities that would increase their knowledge and skills, help with developing a common language, and increase the feeling of community among all staff members.
44. Paraeducators indicated they would like professional development. A recommendation of the interview team would be to implement a professional development plan for para-educators or include them in the teachers training. Future trainings such as: MANDT, TEACCH, Behavior and Classroom Management, and Restraint and Seclusion (103) should be considered. Contact Marin Jeffers (mjeffers@nwaea.org) at NWAEA for information for behavior and classroom management strategies. Contact Molly Twohig (mtwohig@nwaea.org) for restraint and seclusion training.
45. Through interviews the visiting team recommends the district seek out more training and opportunities for their staff and students on cultural competence. This training should include ethnicity, gender and sexual orientation and all of the protected classes. Contact Flora Lee, (flee@nwaea.k12.ia.us) Learning Supports Consultant at NWAEA for more information.

Monitoring and Accountability

In an improving district/school, the district/school establishes a comprehensive system that monitors and documents performance of student progress, curriculum, instruction, programs, and initiatives. Results from assessments drive the goal setting and decision-making processes. Leadership supports a system that regularly analyzes student performance and program effectiveness. Instructional decision-making utilizes a process of collecting, analyzing, and summarizing data. Evidence includes, but is not limited to, the following:

A system for district-wide student assessments, including multiple measures that are valid and reliable, is implemented.

Decision-making for the continuous improvement of instruction and student learning using student achievement and teacher implementation data is employed.

The district's/school's cycle of program evaluation as noted in its CSIP is implemented.

Summative evaluation processes are used to determine whether professional development has resulted in improved student learning.

Noted Strengths:

46. Although individual student areas of noncompliance were identified during the district's Special Education program procedural compliance review completed last fall, evidence has been submitted as of April 6, 2011, that these corrections have been made. The DE has also received a copy of the AEA letter stating that the district level corrective action plan (CAP) has been fully implemented within the required timelines and all requirements have been met.
47. The district reported the use of strategies that ensure poor and minority students are not taught at a higher rate than other students by inexperienced, unqualified, or out-of-field teachers. Examples included: all teachers are highly qualified, beginning teachers have mentors, middle school teachers teach all students, elementary students are distributed evenly, and principal checks classroom assignments.
48. The percentage of district students scoring in the proficient range of achievement on the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS) and Iowa Tests of Educational Development (ITED) is above the NWAEA and State of Iowa averages in reading, mathematics, and science in most reported grade levels. (See tables below).

Percentage of Students Proficient in Reading (ITBS) (ITED)

Grade	Sibley-Ocheyedan	NWAEA	State
3	81.13%	76.19%	75.53%
4	78.95%	76.46%	77.62%
5	85.24%	77.43%	77.57%
7	76.47%	73.30%	71.53%
8	81.82%	73.12%	72.61%
11	88.57%	80.03%	77.50%

Source: 2009-2010 Annual Progress Report (APR)

Percentage of Students Proficient in Mathematics (ITBS) (ITED)

Grade	Sibley-Ocheyedan	NWAEA	State
7	80.39%	75.43%	76.40%
8	90.91%	73.49%	75.28%
11	88.58%	78.23%	76.78%

Source: 2009-2010 Annual Progress Report (APR)

Percentage of Students Proficient in Science (ITBS)

Grade	Sibley-Ocheyedan	NWAEA	State
3	92.45%	81.48%	80.29%
4	83.93%	83.73%	83.80%
5	91.66%	84.65%	83.00%
7	86.28%	83.27%	80.83%
8	86.79%	81.22%	80.50%

Source: 2009-2010 Annual Progress Report (APR)

49. The district utilizes multiple data sources to monitor student achievement, culture, and climate and identify student achievement needs. In addition to ITBS and ITED, data sources included:

- Curriculum Based Tests
- Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS)
- Iplan
- ACT
- PSAT
- Iowa-English Language Development Assessment (I-ELDA)
- Graduation rate
- Dropout rate
- Percentage of graduates completing core curriculum

Recommendations for Improvement:

50. The percentage of district students scoring in the proficient range of achievement on the ITBS is lower than the NWAEA and State of Iowa average in reading, mathematics, and science in the following reported grade level. (See tables below).

Percentage of Students Proficient in Reading (ITBS)

Grade	Sibley-Ocheyedan	NWAEA	State
6	61.29%	67.08%	69.40%

Source: 2009-2010 Annual Progress Report (APR)

Percentage of Students Proficient in Mathematics (ITBS)

Grade	Sibley-Ocheyedan	NWAEA	State
3	73.59%	75.57%	76.20%
4	70.17%	76.86%	79.17%
5	77.42%	77.18%	79.66%
6	52.38%	74.21%	76.19%

Source: 2009-2010 Annual Progress Report (APR)

Percentage of Students Proficient in Science (ITBS) (ITED)

Grade	Sibley-Ocheyedan	NWAEA	State
6	71.42%	82.86%	80.77%
11	82.86%	83.06%	80.48%

Source: 2009-2010 Annual Progress Report (APR)

Note!

It would be beneficial to complete an in-depth analysis of non-proficient performers to identify whether common characteristics exist (e.g., similar skill deficit or similar demographics), identify potential barriers to learning, and provide an additional source of data for school improvement planning. Reviewing students' performance on all district-wide assessment instruments (i.e., triangulating data) to determine validity and reliability of results (as well as the validity and reliability of district-developed assessments) is also recommended (e.g., Are there students who are not proficient on the Iowa Tests, but are on other assessments?) In addition, the district is encouraged to:

Continue analysis of data and communication of results to improve instruction.

Complete a crosswalk between non-proficient performers at grade 11 and the students' course enrollment patterns for grades 9 and 10.

Increase the use of cohort data (including subgroup cohorts) to identify trends and patterns over time, inform instructional decisions, and determine effectiveness of interventions.

Include broad involvement of teachers, SIAC members, administrators, school board, and instructional support staff in discussion of assessment data to increase understanding and ownership of the process.

Complete a comprehensive review of the district's K-12 curriculum in conjunction with the curriculum mapping process.

Provide instruction on test-taking strategies for all levels.

Consider a study of instructional strategies used in PK-12 classrooms and their impact upon student achievement.

Consider a study of formative and summative assessments

Consider the creation of a PK-12 implementation plan of instructional strategies

51. While in some instances the district does not have enough students in certain subgroups to report annual student progress data (i.e., students with Individualized Education Plans), it is permissible for the district to study the data internally with their teachers. The district is encouraged to study subgroup data (i.e., ethnicity, IEP students), including achievement data for the district's Gifted and Talented students and At-Risk students, to learn more about student performance and identify professional development needs. The district is encouraged to study patterns and trends in data. Consider contacting Jim Christensen (jchristensen@nwaea.org) at NWAEA to coordinate assistance with data analysis.

52. Limited evidence was found during interviews and through documentation review of formal, systematic program evaluation demonstrating the impact of programs and initiatives on student learning and student success. Administrators and instructional staff are encouraged to establish procedures and practices to develop and use program evaluation, particularly in professional development, curriculum, and other school programs (e.g., Gifted and Talented, CTE, At-Risk, Special Education, School Counseling) or initiatives (e.g., APL). For each program or initiative, consider setting clear program goals that answer the question, "What do we want as a result of the program, initiative, or support service?" Identify clear, aligned measurable goals. Establish a process and procedure to follow in monitoring progress (formative) and evaluating program impact (summative). Based on results, determine which program elements to sustain, which program elements need modification to become more effective, and which program elements to abandon or replace. Contact Jim Christensen (jchristensen@nwaea.org) at NWAEA to coordinate assistance.

53. Although the BEDS report indicates the Collaborative Consultative Model is used at the district level, teacher interviews and data review did not verify this information. Examples from the interviews included the following:

Special education teachers assign grades for a subject in which they have no content endorsement.

Documentation, such as collaboration logs, is not available to indicate that special education and general education teachers regularly consult with general education teachers.

NOTE!

Coursework schedules reflect primary instruction in core content areas is delivered in areas in which special education teachers are not endorsed as a teacher.

Formal, regularly scheduled planning time is not available for collaboration between special education and general education co-teachers

Special and general education teachers have not been provided ongoing, formal professional development opportunities in the implementation of the Collaborative Consultative Model.

This is an area for targeted technical assistance from Don Tisthammer dtisthammer@nwaea.org at NWAEA who will contact the district in the near future to plan assistance.

- 54. Paraeducators indicated the roles of paraeducators and supervising teachers are not always clearly defined and distinct. For example, paraeducators are asked to gather materials for lessons, plan modifications and adaptations for students in general education settings, and provide instruction. Planned, formal collaboration time between paraeducators and teachers is not available. Paraeducators provide valuable contributions to instructional support of students; however, their role must be one of support rather than one of equal or near equal responsibility with licensed staff. The district is encouraged to explore ways to more clearly define and distinguish the roles of paraeducators in classrooms. Multiple resources are available at the Iowa Department of Education Web site:

http://www.iowa.gov/educate/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=773&Itemid=1297

Sibley-Ocheyedan Community School District's Compliance Status for Applicable Federal Programs:

Title IIA (Teacher and Principal Training and Recruiting Fund)

The district has no citations of Title IIA non-compliance identified during this visit.

Title IID (Enhancing Education through Technology, E2T2)

The district has no citations of Title IID non-compliance identified during this visit.

Title III (English Language Learners)

The district has no citations of Title III non-compliance identified during this visit.

Title IVA (Safe and Drug Free Schools)

The district has no citations of Title IVA (SDFSC) non-compliance identified during this visit.

Title XC (Education of Homeless Children and Youth)

The district has no citations of Title XC non-compliance identified during this visit.

Areas of Non-Compliance: Chapter 12

The district shall submit a plan of correction for each non-compliance item listed below to the Site Visit Team Leader within 45 business days of the receipt of this report. Evidence of corrective action for non-compliance(s) may be submitted with the plan or at a later date in accordance with the noted timeline. The district may choose to use the following matrix as a format for the development of an action plan or develop its own.

Chapter 12 Non-compliance Issues	Additional Details	Plan of Correction	Timeline for Completion
<p>LP11.3. No evidence exists that the board has adopted policies to address legal and ethical use of information resources, including plagiarism and intellectual property rights. 281-IAC 12.3(12)</p>			
<p>VED5. The district does not have an articulation agreement for each of its four vocational (CTE) service areas either directly with a post-secondary program or through a sharing agreement with another district. 281-IAC 12.5(5)(i)</p>			
<p>VED6. An advisory committee that assists in vocational (CTE) education planning and evaluation does not exist. 281-IAC 12.5(5)(i)</p>			
<p>EQ5. No evidence exists to indicate the school or school district provides equal opportunity to participate in programs by gender, sexual</p>			

Chapter 12 Non-compliance Issues	Additional Details	Plan of Correction	Timeline for Completion
orientation, gender identity, marital status, socioeconomic status, disability, race, national origin, color, religion, and creed. 281—JAC 12.1(1)			
JHP 1. The junior high program, grades 7-8, does not include each curricular area. 281—JAC 12.5(4) (health in grades 7-8)			
JHP 1. The junior high program, grades 7-8, does not include each curricular area. 281—JAC 12.5(4) (family and consumer science grade 8)			

Areas of Non-Compliance: Outside of Chapter 12

Outside of Chapter 12 Non-compliance Issues	Additional Details	Plan of Correction	Timeline for Completion
<p>EOD2. The district does not have a non-discrimination notification statement: annual notification in newspaper or newsletter that goes to all community folks Section 504 34 CFR 104.8, Title IX 34 CFR 106.9, OCR Guidelines IV.O and V.C.</p>			
<p>EOD3. The district does not have a nondiscrimination notification in major written publications: Parent, student, employee handbooks, Registration handbook, Coaches handbooks, Brochures about the district, Web site, and School newsletters Section 504 34 CFR 104.8 Title IX 34 CFR 106.9, OCR Guidelines IV.O and V.C.</p>			
<p>EOD4. The district does not have a plan that addresses equal employment opportunity and affirmative action in employment. Iowa Code 198.11, 281—IAC Chapter 95</p>			



STATE OF IOWA

TERRY BRANSTAD, GOVERNOR
KIM REYNOLDS, LT. GOVERNOR

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
JASON E. GLASS, DIRECTOR

June 13, 2011

Superintendent
Sibley-Ocheyedan Community School District
120 11th Avenue NE
Sibley, Iowa 51249

** Response to
Non-Compliance
Issues in Site
Visit - May, 2011*

Dear Superintendent:

Thank you for responding to the non-compliance issues identified during your comprehensive site visit during the 2010-2011 school year.

The Department has approved your plan of correction for the following 281-IAC Chapter 12 General Accreditation Standards:

1. **LP11.3** No evidence exists that the board has adopted policies to address legal and ethical use of information resources, including plagiarism and intellectual property rights. 281-IAC 12.3(12) (c)
2. **VED5.** The district does not have an articulation agreement for each of its four vocational (CTE) service areas either directly with a post-secondary program or through a sharing agreement with another district. 281-IAC 12.5(5) (i) **(To verify correction; please send a copy of the articulation agreements for each CTE program by June 2011).**
3. **VED6.** An advisory committee that assists in vocational (CTE) education planning and evaluation does not exist. 281-IAC 12.5(5)(i) **(To verify correction; please send a copy of the list of advisory committee members and their representation as it relates to the CTE service areas including gender and race/ethnicity and minutes of the committee that reflect assistance with CTE planning and evaluation of program areas by August 2011).**
4. **EQ5.** No evidence exists to indicate the school or school district provides equal opportunity to participate in programs by gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, socioeconomic status, disability, race, national origin, color, religion, and creed. 281-IAC 12.1(1) **(To verify correction, please send copies of handbooks for the 2011-2012 school year with the required above protected classes by August 2011).**
5. **JHP1.** The junior high program, grades 7-8, does not include each curricular area. 281-IAC 12.5(4) **(To verify correction; please send a copy of the curriculum for health for grades 7-8, the 2011-2012 schedule for the class, and the name and folder number of the teacher for the course by June 2011).**

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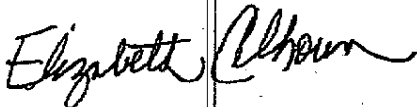
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6. **JHP1.** The junior high program, grades 7-8, does not include each curricular area. 281—IAC 12.5(4) **(To verify correction; please send a copy of the curriculum for grade 8 family and consumer science, the 2011-2012 schedule for the class, and the name and folder number of the teacher for the course by June 2011).**

The corrections for the following non-compliance items outside of the Chapter 12 General Accreditation Standards were also approved:

1. **EQD2.** The district does not have a non-discrimination notification statement: annual notification in newspaper or newsletter that goes to all community folks Section 504 34 CFR 104.8, Title IX 34 CFR 106.9, OCR Guidelines IV.O and V.C. **(To verify correction; please send a copy of the nondiscrimination statement for the newspaper or newsletter that goes to the entire school/district community by August 2011).**
2. **EQD3.** The district does not have a nondiscrimination notification in major written publications: Parent, student, employee handbooks, Registration handbook, Coaches handbooks, Brochures about the district, Web site, and School newsletters Section 504 34 CFR 104.8 Title IX 34 CFR 106.9, OCR Guidelines IV.O and V.C. **(To verify correction; please send a copy of handbooks with nondiscrimination statement by June 2011).**
3. **EQD4.** The district does not have a plan that addresses equal employment opportunity and affirmative action in employment. Iowa Code 19B.11, 281—IAC Chapter 95 **(To verify correction; please send a copy of the plan that addresses equal employment opportunity and affirmative action in employment by October 2011).**

Sincerely,



Elizabeth Calhoun
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