Comprehensive Site Visit
Iowa Department of Education

Northwood-Kensett Community School District

Team Findings
November 9 – 10, 2010

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 administrative team reported the district mission statement is posted in all classrooms and common areas in both buildings. It is included on all board agendas and district publications and read before each board meeting starts. In addition, Personal attributes character education (Pace), the district's character building plan, is posted in all classrooms and hallways to increase student awareness.

Recommendations for Improvement:

2. Teachers, administrators, and board members referred to the district mission statement; however, the district does not currently have a vision statement. The district's mission statement conveys what the district wants for its students: *Creating healthy, educated, ethical, and productive citizens.* A vision statement describes what a district must become to achieve its fundamental purpose; it paints the picture of the desired state. Consider developing a district vision statement. Invite input from staff, students, parents and community in creating a vision statement that will provide challenge, direction and commitment to the district's mission. For example, a vision statement might indicate "students will be equipped with 21st century skills." Is there a common understanding among staff about what constitutes 21st century skills? What data might be collected to determine the extent to which teachers are providing these opportunities in their classrooms? Including a focus on the district's vision for the 1:1 laptop initiative would help to secure its success. A framework for identifying behaviors or performance, as well as associated data, would be helpful in determining progress toward achieving the district vision. For assistance, contact Virgene Hopkey, AEA 267 consultant.

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:

3. General and special education teachers, students, parents, and learning supports staff reported district administrators are supportive and highly respected. Staff members are encouraged by administrators to assume leadership positions. Students reported they have many opportunities for leadership including service learning through advisory group, clubs, student government, and 4-H.

4. Board members reported appreciation for teachers and administrators. They stated teachers "bend over backwards" to help students. They expressed pride in the administrative staff and appreciate the superintendent's management of the district's financial resources and focus on planning for the future of the district.

Recommendations for Improvement:

5. The district is encouraged to investigate the current role and responsibilities of the district's Special Education Director and consider expanding them to include the following K-12, systemic activities:
   - Planning, programming, Implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of co-teaching activities
   - Program evaluation
   - Data analysis
   - Compliance monitoring

- On-going, systemic professional development for special education teachers and paraeducators
- Formal K-12 special education meetings on a monthly basis, to include the AEA team representation
- Increased communication and formal collaboration between special education and general education teachers engaging in co-teaching, as well as with paraeducators
- Professional development to include multiple instructional strategies for differentiating instruction
- Monitoring special education budget and expenditures
- Monitoring the responsibilities of paraeducators to ensure the time is spent in special education settings

6. The board has appointed the superintendent as the district's Equity Coordinator. Consider designating a building principal to fill this role. This would ensure the superintendent would be able to review an equity complaint in the event a decision is appealed. The equity coordinator in the district is responsible for more than handling grievances in the district, but is responsible for monitoring all aspects of equity in programming and climate. The district could contact AEA 267 for assistance in understanding the role of the equity coordinator and seeking ways to explain the role to teachers, students, and other stakeholders. Some activities of the equity coordinator include, but are not limited to:
   - Annually monitoring student enrollment and achievement trends by subgroup and facilitating discussions regarding the data and district response to the data
   - Monitoring the district's website and other publications to ensure they include correct information about the district's non-discrimination and harassment policies
   - Communicating annually with parents, students, and staff about their rights and responsibilities related to non-discrimination issues
   - Facilitating the district's grievance procedures
   - Communicating the contact information and role of the equity coordinator annually with parents, students, and staff

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:

7. Strong community support for Career and Technical Education (CTE) is evidenced by the committed members of the advisory council and also by a local business that donates the lumber for the high school industrial technology construction class.   The Northwood-Kensett CTE Advisory Council has active membership that provides important input to assist the district in planning and evaluating vocational education programs. Working relationships with local industry helps inform CTE teachers of current needs and guides the incorporation of new skill sets and requirements into the curriculum. This relationship between industry and CTE teachers provides a strong understanding for job skills that are relevant to local businesses. The advisory council has made recommendations for inclusion of Career and Technical Student Organizations (CTSO) and a CTE job fair within school for students and employers to show what classes are available for career development. This has resulted in the addition of the DECA organization in the business program. The CTE job fair is still being discussed.

8. The District Advisory Committee (DAC) understands its role and responsibilities as evidenced by individual advisory members. The committee reviews district data and makes recommendations to the school board. They also serve as an informal communications link to the community by explaining the data. As a result of the committee's data analysis, recommendations were made by DAC to expand math options to include higher level math and to focus on school climate by targeting bullying. The results of the Iowa Youth Survey (IYS) showing bullying to be a concern at Northwood-Kensett led the DAC to recommend a professional speaker for a whole school assembly addressing bullying prevention. Several groups reported the assembly was powerful. Follow-up activities regarding bullying are planned.

9. Collaborative teachers discussed ways that special and general education staff work together to coordinate instruction which is beneficial for all students. Teachers identified benefits to students enrolled in classrooms where co-teaching occurs including the following:

- The stigma of being in a "special class" is removed when students are served in the general education setting.
- Students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) are taught responsibility and respect and are empowered to achieve and succeed.
- General education students benefit from the opportunity to help their peers.
- Special education teachers and students are viewed as part of the total school population with this model.
- General education and special education teachers support each other, as well as the students.
- General education teachers feel they can give more individual attention to all students when there are two teachers in a classroom.

10. Northwood-Kensett Community School District uses multiple methods to communicate with students, parents, and community members. Examples included the following:
- School district calendar of school sponsored events including achievement and climate data
- Newsletters sent four times a year
- Administration involvement in community organizations including sharing information informally with those organizations
- Superintendent reports to the school board each month about financial status
- Parent teacher conferences and student-led conferences
- Online student management system available to students and parents
- News items and data posted on the school website
- Articles in the local newspaper
- One-call system to remind and notify families of important events and school cancellations
- Personalized emails and phone calls
- Face-to-face meetings

11. Multiple interview groups reported Northwood-Kensett Community School District has a long-term collaborative relationship with the surrounding community. Interview groups reported community collaboration is an integral part of "what we do, a way of life." In addition, the school district contributes back to the community by sharing facilities with community groups. Examples of collaborating organizations included:
- 4-H
- Worth County Extension
- Department of Natural Resources (DNR)
- Worth County Asset Team (WCAT)
- Ramsey Nature Center
- Alternative High School at Grafton
- Head Start
- Public Health
- Alumni Association

Other collaborative activities included:
- Dr. Seuss Day
- Community members in the classroom (Retired Senior Volunteer Program)
- Talented and Gifted (TAG) Program enrichment opportunities
- Community Service Day

12. Northwood-Kensett Community Schools collects input from its community through a number of methods:
    - Five- year needs assessment survey
    - Student Advisory Committee for grades 9 - 12
    - District Advisory Committee
    - Topic specific surveys
    - CTE Advisory Council
    - Student Council

<u>Recommendations for Improvement:</u>

13. Collaborative teachers and district administrators reported a strong commitment to Iowa's collaborative teaching model, particularly co-teaching. Professional development was provided by AEA 267 some years ago to some of the existing collaborative teams. The remainder of the collaborating teams, however, have not received formal training regarding the best approaches for implementation of this model.

    Due to the district's strong commitment to the collaborative teaching model, it would be beneficial for general and special education teachers and paraeducators to receive formal training related to the definition, characteristics, and implementation of the collaborative teaching model. This training could ensure that co-teaching is being utilized with fidelity at the K-12 level. Providing on-going training, monitoring, feedback, and evaluation to teams implementing the model could result in greater gains in student achievement for all students in these settings. Contact Edie Penno at AEA 267 for assistance.

14. Both students and teachers reported general and special education students benefit when teachers share expertise in a structured and organized manner. Teachers reported there is a need for designated time to be made available for general and special education collaborating teachers to meet and plan co-teaching instructional activities. This time could be used by the content and special education teachers to discuss IEP goal attainment, specially designed instruction, accommodations for instruction and assessment, progress monitoring, strategy instruction, pre-teaching, re-teaching, and/or remediation.

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.

<u>Noted Strengths:</u>

15. Board members and administrators reported the district is committed to ensuring staff and students have access to a variety of technology and that it is infused into teaching and learning. Both schools have wireless internet. High school students reported the school is open early so students may access the wireless connection. Hardware available includes portable computer labs at the elementary and secondary buildings, iPod portable lab, cameras, and ELMOs and projectors in all classrooms.   Students reported they use technology to research information, access grades on JMC, and create projects.

16. All interview groups stated the Northwood-Kensett learning environment is safe and caring. Behavior expectations are posted in every classroom and students stated they know what is right and wrong. They were aware of the process to report bullying/harassment and Advisory serves as a platform for teaching students how to address any bullying that may occur. Security cameras and automatic locks on outside doors have been installed. As a result of these security upgrades, students have reported a decrease in thefts. Students reported they believe concerns brought to the attention of teachers and administrators are taken care of quickly. Learning support staff reported several factors they believe contribute to the safe and positive environment including: ninety percent of high school students are involved in at least one extra-curricular activity, staff help keep students on track with goal monitoring, staff serve as positive role models, and information from surveys (Iowa Youth Survey, Building Tomorrow Survey) help provide data for grant proposals. In addition, Teen Screen, administered to consenting freshman each year, brings valuable information to families. As soon as a student is identified as a possible risk, families are contacted immediately. Staff stated bullying is not tolerated and they practice ongoing monitoring of students. CTE teachers believe students are comfortable being themselves. They cited instances where students posted bible verses and gay pride signs on lockers.

17. High school students and parents reported they believe teachers and administrators have high expectations. Students stated Northwood-Kensett has a rigorous high school math curriculum and former students report to them that they are well prepared for college math. Teachers are available to provide them with extra help at any time. Students perceive Advisory time to be worthwhile. They are assigned to the same group all four years of high school. Students reported appreciation for the variety of things teachers do to support their learning including being available to provide help whenever students need it, communicating with them via email, and updating grades every Tuesday on the JMC student management system.

18. Parents indicated that communication among teachers, administrators, and parents is open and on-going. They feel their input is valued and that issues will be resolved quickly. Parents reported a variety of methods are available to provide input including email, district website, parent teacher conferences, phone calls, JMC student management system, open houses, surveys, and community needs assessment.

Recommendations for Improvement:

19. All interview groups indicated the atmosphere throughout the district is one of care and concern for each other; however, formal mechanisms do not appear to be in place to address cultural competency. Administrators indicated cultural competence is addressed through activities such as Culture Day at 7th grade and Country Day at 4th grade; field trips; student trips to such places as Spain, Minnesota, and Washington, D.C.; and the curriculum. The district may wish to consider the following suggestions to continue to support the cultural competence of staff and students:
    - Cultural competency means awareness and understanding of multiple types of diversity beyond ethnicity. The school might consider exploring a broader view of diversity to include differences in socio-economic status, college-bound and non-college bound students, where people live, families new to the district, gender, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation and identity, language, religion, abilities, ways of learning, talents, opinions and beliefs, and points of view.
    - Create a common local definition of cultural competence. Examine the diversity within the school and community and its implications/effect for the district and practices. District Advisory Committee could take the lead on collecting this data.
    - Develop a planned schedule and purpose for including global/cultural activities, speakers, and resources in all content areas and grade levels. Resources from surrounding communities, organizations, and institutions could be accessed.
    - Consider embedding cultural competency concepts and activities through existing initiatives and classes/courses. Advisory group time might be an opportunity to explore cultural competency issues or involve students in special activities.

Curriculum and Instruction

In an improving district/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 and clear expectations for what is taught. 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 for units that employs research-based strategies for use with diverse learner characteristics.
- Instructional decision-making utilizes a process of collecting, analyzing, and summarizing data.

Noted Strengths:

20. Interview groups reported the guidance curriculum is delivered to students through classroom instruction from teachers and the counselor. Students in grades K - 6 are served by the counselor on a six-day classroom rotation. The counselor teaches a nine-week course for seventh and eighth grade students. IHaveaPlanIowa (career planning process) begins with eighth graders. The guidance department provides the lesson plans for the high school advisor advisee program. Students reported the counselor helps them with post secondary plans and they can go to him at anytime. The guidance curriculum includes the Life Skills Portfolio which requires seniors to develop a portfolio in order to graduate. The portfolio includes information related to the following: two job shadowing experiences, college fair attendance, college campus visit, financial planning and credit cards, cardio-pulmonary resuscitation (CPR) training, and resume development.

21. Parents reported K-12 students with special needs are provided accommodations and resources for success in the classroom including the following:
    - Accelerated Reading program
    - TAG program
    - Amplification system at the elementary
    - Preferential seating
    - Test and assignment modifications
    - Special education co-teaching model
    - Post-secondary enrollment options (PSEO) and concurrent enrollment classes
    - Accelerated courses

22. Parents and collaborative teachers reported staff use a number of strategies to ease student transitions between settings including the following:
    - Coordination of pre-school and kindergarten curriculum
    - Pre-school in the elementary building including involvement with building activities and events
    - Optional third day of pre-school for kindergarten readiness
    - Preparation for junior high by changing classes and using planners at 5th and 6th grades
    - Open House for parents and students for 6th grade orientation
    - 9th grade orientation

23. The math and industrial technology teachers participated in the Math in CTE initiative and have been using the methods to enhance math in the CTE content area. In addition, elementary and junior high math teachers have worked together to align the mathematics curriculum.

Recommendations for Improvement:

24. Student assistance teams at the elementary and high schools monitor student progress and offer suggestions to teachers. Learning supports staff reported the Intervention Center serves reluctant and disengaged learners, either by being assigned to the center or through self-referral. Some students are assigned to the center to fulfill in-school suspension; others are participating in on-line credit recovery.   While these supports are in place, it is not clear how the district is identifying and meeting the needs of students at-risk in a systemic and coherent manner. The superintendent reported the need to increase the district's graduation rate stating, "There isn't any excuse for not having 100 percent graduation." A careful examination of how the district identifies students at risk and provides and monitors services may be helpful in addressing the graduation rate. Consider convening a group of K-12 staff and administrators to revisit the district's plan for addressing the needs of students at-risk including the development of a well-defined matrix and process to monitor students and service provided, K-12. The Instructional Decision Making (IDM) model may be a resource to help address this issue. Consider contacting Joe Kremer (jkremer@aea267.k12.ia.us), AEA 267 Consultant, or Cynthia Knight, Consultant at the Iowa Department of Education (cynthia.knight@iowa.gov, 515-281-5287) for assistance.

25. Multiple interview groups reported an interest in expanding curricular opportunities for students. As the District Advisory Committee and school board review district priorities, consider the following:
    - foreign language offerings to include German
    - additional course offerings providing college credit opportunities to students such as concurrent enrollment and PSEO
    - increased online classes
    - continued acceleration of curriculum in the lower grades as needed
    - opportunities for individual or small group music lesson time

26. Since the teacher librarian is only in the district one day a week, it is not possible for the instruction of library media/information literacy skills to be delivered by the library teacher, especially in such a way that the skills are integrated into the classroom curriculum. Therefore, the program should be monitored regularly to ensure those skills are being covered throughout the curriculum by certified staff.

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:

27. School board members reported planning for their own professional development.   They attend Academy of Board Learning Experiences (ABLE) training, as well as the annual Iowa Association of School Boards (IASB) conference. In addition, they receive weekly emails from IASB and informative mailings. Once each year they invite their State Representative and Senator to a board meeting to discuss pertinent issues. Students, teachers, and administrators make presentations regarding learning, achievement, and district professional development.

28. A structure is in place to plan for professional development and to collect feedback regarding these sessions. Northwood-Kensett has developed an Iowa Core Leadership Team which consists of three teachers and three administrators. These individuals are also a part of the Design Team which includes the chairpersons of each curricular area, the curriculum director, and a parent. The Design Team developed the Iowa Core Implementation Plan and uses data identified during the spring data day to make decisions related to district professional development. In addition, interview groups reported feedback is collected frequently regarding professional development and is used to plan future professional development. The CTE teachers reported district professional development was helpful. The professional development focusing on vocabulary strategies, poverty awareness, and technology training provided methods that are still being used by the staff.

29. The Perkins Area 2 consortium offers many opportunities for CTE professional development. CTE program network meetings are held twice a year and provide training specific for that area. Through the consortium there was a review of Perkins reports and data for the consortium and individual schools and programs which indicated a need for a non-traditional workshop. Financial support to attend professional conferences and workshops is available. North Iowa Area

Community College (NIACC) offers programs such as Be Your Own Boss and Wired Differently to educate teachers and students about opportunities available.

30. Learning supports staff reported if they express an interest in participating in professional development outside of the district, they are supported by administrators in attending. Worth County Development Authority funds are often used to fund these professional development opportunities.

Recommendations for Improvement:

31. Paraeducators indicated training opportunities for them are limited, as they do not currently participate in district professional development. They reported they use personal time or unpaid leave to attend workshops, staff development courses, and research information about their students and work towards certification at Levels I and II. Paraeducators expressed interest in participating in professional development related to behavior management, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), roles and responsibilities as a paraeducator, and issues related to specific student needs. As the Design Team plans for professional development, consider what resources are available to support the job-related needs of paraeducators, as well as the needs of the students they serve, including, but not limited to, participation in building and district level initiatives.

32. All interview groups reported the district's commitment to providing district professional development opportunities including vocabulary, poverty training, and the 1:1 laptop initiative; however, there is not currently a plan for focused, long-term, sustained professional development. The focal point for professional development is at the district level. Professional development plans are not in place for each district attendance center as required (see non-compliance matrix). To aid in the continued development of a quality program and ensure the needs to teachers and students at all levels are met, the district's Design Team is encouraged to consider the following questions:
    ● What process is in place to create the district professional development plan and plans for each attendance center? How does your yearly plan support the Iowa Core implementation plan? How is the plan shared with district staff?
    ● Develop a theory of action that supports the yearly plan. What support from outside of the district is needed to assist in carrying out the professional development plan? What baseline data are you going to collect? What resources are in place or need to be provided to support your plan? How do you evaluate the effectiveness?
    ● How will implementation of professional development strategies be monitored and documented? What formative and summative measures will be used to make ongoing adjustments to professional development efforts? What data will be collected that most directly provides evidence of the fidelity and extent of implementation? In what ways and how often will the data be collected, reviewed, and shared?
    ● What opportunities are provided for consistent and regularly scheduled collaborative work time at the building/grade level to support the implementation of new learning for all teachers? How does the collaboration plan support teacher planning, practice, and reflection on implementation of learned strategies?

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:

33. The district utilizes multiple data sources to monitor student achievement and identify achievement and academic-related needs. In addition to Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS) and Iowa Tests of Educational Development (ITED), data points included Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS), Basic Reading Inventory (BRI), Measures of Academic Progress (MAP), Star Assessment, Building Tomorrow: A Culture and Climate Partnership Survey, and Iowa Youth Survey.

34. A higher percentage of Northwood-Kensett (CSD) students performed at the proficient level during the 2009-2010 school year on a number of Iowa Tests (ITBS/ITED) when compared to the same group of students across students across the State of Iowa and the State trajectory.

2009-2010 ITBS/ITED	Northwood-Kensett CSD % Proficient	State % Proficient	State Trajectory for 2009-2010
3rd **Grade Reading**	**79.41**	**75.53**	**74.1**
4th **Grade Reading**	**76.92**	**77.62**	**76.0**
5th Grade Reading	73.53	77.57	76.4
6th **Grade Reading**	**76.19**	**69.4**	**69.7**
7th Grade Reading	68.76	71.53	71.5
8th **Grade Reading**	**81.82**	**72.61**	**73.3**
11th Grade Reading	77.5	77.5	79.3
3rd Grade Mathematics	70.59	76.2	73.9
4th **Grade Mathematics**	**87.18**	**79.17**	**74.7**
5th **Grade Mathematics**	**85.3**	**79.66**	**76.6**
6th **Grade Mathematics**	**78.57**	**76.19**	**72.8**
7th **Grade Mathematics**	**78.13**	**76.4**	**72.0**
8th **Grade Mathematics**	**93.18**	**75.28**	**72.0**
11th **Grade Mathematics**	**85.0**	**76.78**	**79.3**

Highlighted items show where the district percent proficient is above the state percent proficient. Bold items show where the district is above the state trajectory.

35. Basic Educational Data Survey (BEDS) data and site interviews indicate that appropriate Highly Qualified Teacher (HQT) components are being implemented with integrity in the district. Special education teachers are using the consultative model to provide instructional and support services to special education students. Students are benefiting from the combined expertise of general and special education teachers.

36. 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.

Recommendations for Improvement:

37. Correction of all individual student noncompliance issues identified during the Special Education Self-Assessment process has not been completed. Correction of all individual student noncompliance issues identified in the Special Education Procedural Compliance report must be completed as soon as possible but no later than January 21, 2011. AEA verification of corrections must be submitted to the DE. (See non-compliance matrix)

38. An AEA approved Special Education corrective action plan (CAP) exists but has not been fully implemented. AEA verification of full implementation of the district's CAP must be submitted to the DE within one year from the date of notification January 21, 2010.

39. The district is in the beginning phase of a 1:1 laptop initiative. Multiple interview groups expressed excitement about the possibilities the initiative will bring for students, teaching, and learning. Learning supports staff are hopeful student access to laptop computers and use of the computers for teaching will help to engage reluctant and unmotivated students. Administrators and teachers expressed excitement about the initiative. Board members reported the laptop initiative has been one of the most important things they have approved. During this initial phase of the initiative teachers and students will receive their laptops, as well as training related to security and operation of hardware and software. As the district moves to the next phase of the initiative, integration of the technology into teaching and learning, consider the following:
    ● What are the teacher and student goals/expectations related to the 1:1 laptop initiative? What baseline data related to these goals/expectations should be collected?
    ● How will goals be communicated so they are clear and understood by all stakeholders? How will we know we have accomplished our goals?
    ● Who (committee and/or individual) is responsible for implementation and evaluation of the initiative?
    ● How will we monitor implementation of goals/expectations? How will we know teachers and students are implementing expected strategies with fidelity?
    ● What data best informs instructional practices and learning expectations related to the initiative? What data might indicate the degree to which teacher and student behaviors are occurring to support meeting goals/expectations? How will data be disaggregated?
    ● What opportunities will we provide for meaningful feedback related to expected strategies? How will the district know if it has achieved the intended result(s)?

- What do we need to do to ensure the sustainability of the initiative?

Consider convening a group of community stakeholders, staff, and students to develop a 1:1 laptop initiative plan and share the plan with the community.

40. Teachers and administrators reported the district uses a variety of assessments to **monitor student achievement**. A data day is held in the spring to analyze ITBS, ITED, and MAP data. K-12 staff work in reading, mathematics, science, and climate groups to carefully analyze each data point. It was unclear, however, how each assessment is used to inform instructional change. Holding discussions with staff to address the following questions might be helpful in taking data analysis to the next level:
    - What do data tell us about the students in each school, grade level, classroom or subgroup?
    - What system is in place for analyzing and adjusting instruction based on collected data?
    - How has the information gained helped to influence instructional practices?
    - Are our students in special programs (Title I, Gifted and Talented, Special Education, etc.) making a year's growth in a year's time?
    - Are all of our learners making enough growth to eventually reach proficiency?
    - Are students in No Child Left Behind (NCLB) subgroups proficient? If not, is the gap closing?
    - How do we know teachers have access to the professional development needed to increase student achievement in areas identified by our data?
    - What does this data tell about students?
    - How can formative data more clearly inform both student growth and instructional practices?
    - In addition to monitoring student achievement data, what systems are in place to review academic-related data sources including attendance, tardies, office referrals, visits to the nurse's office?

41. It is unclear to site visit team members how data are used to **evaluate the effectiveness of the district's various programs** (e.g., professional development, Special Education, Gifted and Talented, At-Risk, Guidance, etc.) demonstrating the impact of programs and initiatives on student learning and student success. In order to provide stakeholders with a clear understanding of district priorities, it may be helpful to clarify program goals and communicate progress towards goals. Data collection and analysis would augment the understanding of programs. Continued efforts to formalize the program evaluation process would provide the district with data to evaluate its effectiveness. Some questions to ask could include the following.
    - Who (committee and/or individual) is responsible for the implementation and evaluation of the program/initiative?
    - Are program goals clearly understood and communicated?
    - What are the indicators that can be used to determine if the services provided are meeting program goals?
    - How does the program or change impact student achievement over time?
    - What groups/individuals are able to articulate the effectiveness of programs or changes using student achievement data?
    - How will data be disaggregated?
    - How will the district know if it has achieved the intended result(s)?
    - How will the district ensure the sustainability of each program/initiative?
    - Consider developing a systemic process for continuous review of student needs to ensure programs and services are timely and appropriate.

42. CTE programs developed technical skill assessments that were approved by the CTE Advisory Council. These assessments were developed from the identified critical competencies. Continued work on revising these assessments to accurately measure technical skill attainment is needed. Consider contacting the Perkins area CTE Consultant, Kelli Diemer, at the Department of Education for assistance in the development of the technical skills assessments (kelli.diemer@iowa.gov).

43. The end-of-year Perkins Performance Report includes information such as Academic Attainment (i.e., math and reading), Graduation Rates, Nontraditional Participation and Completion, Technical Skill Attainment, Program Completion, and Placement. This data has not been shared with the school or CTE teachers or CTE Advisory Council. Also, each CTE teacher completed a self evaluation on their programs and shared with other like teachers. CTE program self evaluations should be shared with the CTE Advisory Council. Consortium and school data is sent out each year to the individual who writes the Perkins secondary grant. Contact your Perkins area CTE Consultant or consortium's Perkins grant writer to obtain this data.

44. Documentation provided by the district indicated current year attendance center and course enrollment data have been reviewed. The district is encouraged to further formalize the process used to review these data. Information gleaned over time could be helpful in identifying enrollment patterns of non-proficient students, identifying any suspension/expulsion trends, monitoring progress on reducing gender segregated courses, monitoring IEP identification, and providing a means to determine the relative contribution of course completion on assessment scores (e.g., the impact on students of completing certain courses, ACT scores). Follow-up data provided by the regents institutions concerning post-secondary dropout and completion rates may also be helpful to review. Sharing results of the review of these data with teaching staff and the Design Team may aid in instructional and systemic decision-making.

45. Conferences are held on the first official day of school. The purpose of conferences is to discuss educational progress. Documents provided indicate at the elementary level students, parents, and teachers use the pre-school conference day to discuss goals for the upcoming year; however, at the secondary level the conference structure is currently less structured. In order for the pre-school conference day to "count" as a day of school, the structure must be revised to ensure conferences K-12 focus on a discussion of educational progress (see non-compliance matrix). Conferences could focus on a discussion of student MAP and ITBS/ITED goals and provide an opportunity for teachers to clarify assessment data with parents.

Northwood-Kensett 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	Documentation Needed	Plan of Correction	Timeline for Completion
1. EQD1. The district does not have a policy on non-discrimination in employment on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, disability, age, religion, creed, sexual orientation, and gender identity (EQD1). Title IX 34CFR 106.9 Section 5	Policy 303.1 does not include the following protected class: creed The following policies include all required protected classes: 303.4, 401.2, 405.2, 411.2	Revised, approved board policy	Board Policy 303.1 was revised to include the protected class: creed.	November 2010
2. CL5. The number of instructional days provided by the school district is less than 180, and the school district has no approved "innovative calendar" waiver. 281—IAC 12.1(7)	August 16 conferences do not focus on student progress; therefore it cannot be counted as a school day	Documentation indicating all conferences held on the "first" day of school focus on student progress	Individual student progress will be the focus of the before-school conferences at the secondary building. Parent-student-teacher discussions will focus on trends and goal-setting using MAP data, ITED/ITBS data, and other achievement data.	January 2011
3. GT1. The district has not established gifted and talented program goals. 281—IAC 12.5(12)	Goals are student focused, not program-level	Program-focused goals	Program-focused goals have been established	January 2011

4.	SECAP1. Correction of all individual student noncompliance issues identified during the Special Education Self-Assessment process has not been completed. 281—IAC 12.5 (9)		AEA letter or I-Star documentation	Letter received from AEA showing successful completion	January 2011
5.	SECAP2. An AEA approved Special Education corrective action plan (CAP) exists but has not been fully implemented. 281—IAC 12.5 (9)		AEA letter or I-Star documentation	Letter received from AEA showing successful implementation	January 2011
6.	ACPD1. Professional development plans are not in place for each district attendance center. 281—IAC 12.7(1)(b)		Professional development plan for each attendance center	Professional Development Plan was revised to include each district attendance center	January 2011

Areas of Non-Compliance: Outside of Chapter 12

Outside of Chapter 12 Non-compliance Issues	Additional Details	Plan of Correction	Timeline for Completion
None noted			