

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Cooperative Educational Service Agency 10

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\$1M USDA Distance Learning Grant for Rural Schools

CESA 10's Distance Learning Service Awarded \$1M to Improve and Expand Educational Opportunities in 39 Rural Wisconsin School Districts

(Chippewa Falls, WI) -- The School District of Greenwood in collaboration with CESA 10's Distance Learning Service is excited to announce that they have been awarded a United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Distance Learning (DLT) grant for their 2020 Distance Learning Project - Achieving Wisconsin Equity (AWE). The grant award of \$1,000,000 will combine with \$150,150 in school districts' cash match to invest more than \$1.15M in distance learning endpoints and infrastructure for the School District of Greenwood along with 38 additional school districts in rural Wisconsin.

The grant award will serve to fund two primary purposes. First, school district video conferencing equipment will be updated and refreshed, expanding educational opportunities and improving endpoint reliability and security. Second, CESA 10's video conferencing backbone and infrastructure will be replaced with the most current technologies, improving reliability, security, and service to their member districts.

CESA 10's Distance Learning Project - Achieving Wisconsin Equity (AWE) will address three needs in our exceptionally rural Wisconsin school districts: a lack of educational opportunities for students, a lack of trained teachers, and a prevalence of substance use and mental health disorders and the subsequent lack of access to education and treatment. AWE will leverage existing, well established partnerships between CESA 10, school districts, institutions of higher education, and mental health care providers, while also expanding connections to local county health departments and law enforcement. The outcomes of AWE will impact more than 10,000 high school students and 2,100 PK-12 teachers in the region.

For more than 20 years, CESA 10's Distance Learning Service has supported the connections and collaborations of their rural Wisconsin consortium member school districts to educate students. In the 2019-20 school year, the service supported more than 2,800 student enrollments in distance learning courses.

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AWE Distance Learning Project Districts:

- School District of Abbotsford
- School District of Alma Center-Humbird-Merrillan
- School District of Arcadia
- School District of Athens
- School District of Auburndale
- Augusta Area School District
- Blair-Taylor School District
- School District of Bloomer
- School District of Bruce
- Cochrane-Fountain City School District
- School District of Colby
- School District of Colfax
- Durand-Arkansaw School District
- School District of Edgar
- School District of Eleva-Strum
- Elk Mound Area School District
- School District of Fall Creek
- School District of Flambeau
- Gale-Ettrick-Trempealeau School District
- School District of Gilmanston
- Granton Area School District
- School District of Greenwood
- Independence School District
- School District of Ladysmith
- School District of Lake Holcombe
- School District of Loyal
- School District of Marathon
- Melrose-Mindoro School District
- School District of Mondovi
- School District of Neillsville
- School District of New Auburn
- Osseo-Fairchild School District
- School District of Owen-Withee
- School District of Spencer
- Spooner Area School District
- School District of Stratford
- School District of Thorp
- Tomorrow River School District
- Whitehall School District