

MINUTES OF MEETING
WISCONSIN TECHNICAL COLLEGE SYSTEM (WTCS) BOARD
JULY 16-17, 2024
NORTHWOOD TECHNICAL COLLEGE

Tuesday, July 16, 2024

Members Present: Lindsay Blumer, Quincey Daniels, Jr., Janixa Franco Gonzalez, Douglas Holton, Sr., Dan Klecker, Alex Lasry, Amy Pechacek, Sara Rogers, Leslie Svacina, S. Mark Tyler, Sharon Wendt for Jill Underly, Karen Walsh.

Members Absent: Daniel Sperberg

System Office Staff Present: Jamie Bernthal, Rachel Colla, Danielle Cook, Julie Drake, Morna Foy, Mandy Johnson, Christina Lorge, Colleen McCabe, Jeremy Nichols, Katy Pettersen, Dan Scanlon, Chrystal Seeley-Schreck, Lenard Simpson, Latisha Spence-Brookens, Megan Stritchko, Brandon Trujillo, Ann Westrich, James Zylstra.

District/Others Present: Chuck Bolstad, Layla Merrifield, District Boards Association; Sunem Beaton-Garcia, Chippewa Valley Technical College; Shelly Mondeik, Mid-State Technical College; Anthony Cruz, Milwaukee Area Technical College; Bonnie Baerwald, Moraine Park Technical College; Kate Ferrel, Nicolet Area Technical College; Jeannie Worden, Northcentral Technical College; Lori Laberee, Deanna Lapacinski, Susan Lockwood, Kim Pearson, John Will, Northwood Technical College; Rich Barnhouse, Waukesha County Technical College; Roger Stanford, Western Technical College; Kai Brito, Wisconsin Student Government.

Board President Tyler called the meeting to order at 4:30 pm. Julie Drake read the open meeting statement and roll call indicated that a quorum was present.

Board President Tyler welcomed Kai Brito, Madison College student and president of Wisconsin Student Government.

System President Foy welcomed and recognized Dr. Anthony Cruz, new president at Milwaukee Area Technical College.

Board President Tyler thanked President John Will and his team for hosting the WTCS Board. Dr. Will acknowledged System President Foy with this being her final Board meeting.

ITEM A: Approval of May 21, 2024, Meeting Minutes

It was moved by Board Member Klecker, seconded by Board Member Holton, that the May 21, 2024, meeting minutes be approved. Motion carried unanimously.

ITEM B: Report of the Board President

The Universities of Wisconsin Board of Regents report for June was shared with Board Members on July 19, 2024.

Board President Tyler thanked the presidential search committee members: Board Members Holton, Daniels, Rogers, Svacina; District Boards Association President Chuck Bolstad; and representing WTCS Presidents, Dr. Jeannie Worden from Northcentral Technical College. Two candidates will be interviewed by the full Board on August 7 in Madison: Robert (Bob) Griggs, former president of Southeast Technical College in Sioux Falls, South Dakota and District Boards Association Executive Director Layla Merrifield.

ITEM C: Wisconsin Technical College District Boards Association

Wisconsin Technical College District Boards Association (DBA) President and Southwest Wisconsin Technical College Trustee Chuck Bolstad and DBA Executive Director Layla Merrifield updated the Board on recent activities.

Mr. Bolstad introduced and recognized long-serving DBA Trustee from Northwood Tech Lori Laberee.

The DBA continues to be financially responsible, with two face-to-face meetings instead of four, augmenting the work the WTCS Board does and promoting good technical college education.

A virtual Board of Trustees meeting will take place the week of July 22 to plan for their annual planning meeting and education and advocacy topics.

The next in-person DBA meeting will be held at Fox Valley Technical College November 21-22, focusing on universal design in education and neurodiversity. They will also focus on preparing for the Madison legislative meetings on January 16, 2025, where the trustees will meet with legislators to share budget priorities. The January meeting in Madison will also include a governance institute by Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT) with in-house training, an example of another cost savings by not having trustees travel to remote locations to attend ACCT summits.

ITEM D: WTCS Presidents' Association

Dr. Rich Barnhouse, president of Waukesha County Technical College and chair of the Association, updated the Board on recent activities.

Every June the Presidents' Association holds its annual meeting and discusses plans for the upcoming year, including what they want to discuss with legislators. They focus on the System's priorities and showing strength with common themes. While all 16 colleges have their own priorities, this is a time to share a unified message to benefit the System. The June meeting also included celebrating graduates of the Wisconsin Leadership Development Institute (WLDI). The WTCS Board should feel extremely confident in the future leadership across the System. Every person that goes through WLDI loves their experience and highly values the relationships formed with colleagues across the System for the rest of their career at WTCS.

The Presidents' Association received a very proactive and engaging presentation by the System DEI Committee comprising System colleagues across the state about the future of the System.

The June meeting also included elections of the Presidents' Association for 2025-2026. Rich Barnhouse from Waukesha County Technical College will serve as chair; Jeannie Worden, from Northcentral Technical College will serve as vice chair; Kate Ferrel, from Nicolet Area Technical College will serve as secretary; Roger Stanford from Western Technical College serving as the permanent treasurer; and Paul Carlsen serving as past chair.

On behalf of the Presidents' Association Dr. Barnhouse recognized and thanked System President Foy for setting up the System for the future and taking the System to new heights.

Dr. Barnhouse also thanked Presidents Baerwald and Wood for representing and articulating the voice of the Presidents' Association on the WTCS Board Budget Workgroup.

Board President Tyler thanked the Presidents' Association for their collaborative advocacy which has been an extremely valuable strength of the association. He also appreciated Dr. Barnhouse's description of WLDI, which distinguishes WTCS for career development for those who will run the System in the

future. The network built through WLDI retains great leaders and gives them reasons to stay within the System.

ITEM E: Teaching & Learning – Human Services

WTCS Education Director Dr. Katie Roberts was joined by Northwood Technical College's Vice President of Academic Affairs Dr. Aliesha Crowe and Gerontology Program Director Jennifer Ellis who provided an overview of Human Services, with a spotlight on Gerontology.

Board Member Klecker expressed gratitude for the informative presentation and inquired about the reason behind the 19% growth for substance abuse counselors. Dr. Roberts suggested that the increase in positions, coupled with the diverse needs of the population, is driving this growth. WTCS Education Director for Substance Use Disorder Counseling (SUDC) Latisha Spence-Brookens added that there has been a rise in drug use across the state, while the number of certified and specialized professionals to treat these individuals has decreased. As a result, there is currently a significant waiting list, promoting students to pursue human services degrees to obtain the necessary credentials.

Board Member Rogers asked why Superior is the only campus that offers Dementia Friends. They have offered this to all health programs, but the demand can be difficult. Dementia Friends is an international curriculum the state must adopt and there is a need for hands-on facilitators.

Board Member Svacina inquired about areas with great needs and the future of integrating different Gerontology approaches into our programs. She wondered if there is a trend we should be aware of, given the diversity in career fields. Ms. Ellis explained that nursing only covers death and dying in one chapter, without addressing standards and requirements. Gerontology has not expressed a need, and ageism is not a topic discussed. We cannot rely solely on conferences to cover this topic. We must commit to our communities, though the mechanism for this is unclear. Wisconsin has a higher aging population compared to other regions. Wisconsin has the potential to lead in accommodating this demographic.

Board Member Blumer asked if students are able to practice substance abuse counseling skills for their occupation. Ms. Spence-Brookens said students are required to do an internship under the supervision of someone that holds the Substance Abuse Counselor credential, and they receive feedback to collaborate with their instructor. The internship is a comprehensive experience.

System President Foy mentioned that the greatest advantage of Wisconsin's technical colleges is the chance for students to experience what their future clients go through. In the Gerontology program, students must simulate being a patient with dementia or a stroke. Grants provided exceptional simulation equipment, allowing students to learn the vital importance of empathy. This hands-on experience is something a textbook simply cannot teach.

ITEM F: Election of Officers

Board President Tyler asked WTCS Executive Vice President James Zylstra to oversee the election of officers.

Mr. Zylstra called for nominations.

Board Member Wendt nominated S. Mark Tyler for President, Douglas A. Holton, Sr. for Vice President and Quincey Daniels, Jr., for Secretary and moved that a unanimous ballot be cast to elect these individuals as officers of the Board for 2024-25. Board Member Svacina seconded the motion.

Executive Vice President James Zylstra called for nominations two additional times and hearing no other nominations, asked for a vote.

Motion carried unanimously.

Board President Tyler thanked the Board for their support and nominations and is looking forward to leading the WTCS Board for a second term.

It was moved by Board Member Svacina, seconded by Board Member Holton, to recess the meeting until Wednesday, July 17, 2024. The Board adjourned at 5:53 pm. Motion carried unanimously.

Wednesday, July 17, 2024

Members Present: Lindsay Blumer, Quincey Daniels, Jr., Janixa Franco Gonzalez, Douglas Holton, Sr., Dan Klecker, Alex Lasry, Amy Pechacek, Sara Rogers, Daniel Sperberg, Leslie Svacina, S. Mark Tyler, Sharon Wendt for Jill Underly, Karen Walsh.

System Office Staff Present: Sarah Arneson, Hilary Barker, Jamie Bernthal, Rachel Colla, Danielle Cook, Julie Drake, Heather Dunne, Morna Foy, Mandy Johnson, Tou Ya Khang, Colleen Larsen, Christina Lorge, Ward Lyon, Colleen McCabe, Carolann Nelson, Jeremy Nichols, Katy Pettersen, Anna Richter, Katie Roberts, Dan Scanlon, Chrystal Seeley-Schreck, Lenard Simpson, Latisha Spence-Brookens, Megan Stritchko, Brandon Trujillo, Ann Westrich, James Zylstra.

District/Others Present: Tracy Pierner, Blackhawk Technical College; Sunem Beaton-Garcia, Chippewa Valley Technical College; Chuck Bolstad, Layla Merrifield, District Boards Association; Chris Matheny, Fox Valley Technical College; Joshua Jeffers, Jeffers Group; Jack Daniels, III, Sylvia Ramirez, Madison Area Technical College; Shelly Mondeik, Mid-State Technical College; Anthony Cruz, Phillip King, Beth Schultz, David Sherrill, Sherry Terrell-Webb, Milwaukee Area Technical College; Bonnie Baerwald, Moraine Park Technical College; Kate Ferrel, Nicolet Area Technical College; Robert Elliott, Jeannie Worden, Northcentral Technical College; Lori Laberee, Deanna Lapacinski, Kim Pearson, John Will, Northwood Technical College; Rich Barnhouse, Waukesha County Technical College; Roger Stanford, Western Technical College; Kai Brito, Wisconsin Student Government; Candace Pantoga, guest of System President Foy.

Board President Tyler called the meeting to order at 9:31 am. Julie Drake read the open meeting statement and roll call indicated that a quorum was present.

Board President Tyler congratulated Steve Massey and Westfields Hospital and Clinic who was recognized with the Futuremaker Partner Award for their ongoing partnership with Northwood Tech and their significant contributions to workforce development and community engagement initiatives.

ITEM G: Consent Agenda

It was moved by Board Member Wendt, seconded by Board Member Klecker that the Board approve the program and facilities development requests and interim district board appointments with the exception of the Waukesha County Technical College program development requests and interim District Board Appointment. Motion carried unanimously.

It was moved by Board Member Wendt, seconded by Board Member Holton that the Board approve the program development requests and interim District Board Appointment for Waukesha County Technical College. Motion carried 12-1. Board Member Franco Gonzalez abstained.

ITEM H: Blackhawk Technical College – Project Review – Remodeling to Improve Facilities for Dental Programs at the Main Campus in Janesville

WTCS Facilities Director Dan Scanlon provided an overview of the project. The District proposes to remodel existing facilities at the Main Campus to upgrade and expand facilities for Dental Programs due to high employer and student demand. Expansion of the number of training stations at the existing dental program location is the most efficient.

It was moved by Board Member Rogers, seconded by Board Member Daniels, that the Board grants approval to the Blackhawk Technical College District to remodel existing facilities at the Main Campus in Janesville at a cost of \$1,750,000. Motion carried unanimously.

ITEM I: Blackhawk Technical College – Project Review – Remodeling to Improve Lab Facilities at the Main Campus in Janesville

WTCS Facilities Director Dan Scanlon provided an overview of the project. The District proposes remodeling existing lab facilities at the Main Campus with the current labs having reached the end of their useful lives. The new labs will improve accessibility, safety and the infrastructure needed for modern training scenarios.

It was moved by Board Member Svacina, seconded by Board Member Wendt, that the Board grants approval to the Blackhawk Technical College District to remodel existing facilities at the Main Campus in Janesville at a cost of \$1,850,000. Motion carried unanimously.

ITEM J: Milwaukee Area Technical College – Project Concept Review – Lease of Athletic Facilities at the Downtown Milwaukee Campus

WTCS Facilities Director Dan Scanlon introduced Milwaukee Area Technical College Director of Facilities and Operations David Sherrill and Executive Vice President Dr. Phillip King who briefed the Board on leasing an athletic facility in Downtown Milwaukee. The District is exploring a partnership with the Milwaukee Bucks to hold summer sports camps and offer co-branding events with the possibility of shared revenue. Sports engagement has been shown to increase student retention and it is anticipated that this partnership will expand recruitment. It is also anticipated that revenue from sports camps will be approximately \$100,000 annually. They are also partnering with developer Jeffers Group with 210 units of housing with the main floor made available for space the college could use.

Board Member Lasry recused himself from this item since he is an investor of the Wisconsin Herd.

Board Members asked for further information on the following items for further review and approval:

- Board Member Blumer asked how they will incorporate safety and if there will be space for coach buses.
- Board Member Holton stated that the costs of this project annually were shared and asked if it could be factored out for ten years. Holton also asked how they decided on that location. He said that everything will be more expensive in the Deer District and asked if they looked at other options.
- Board Member Daniels asked for the timeline of additional sports that could be developed.
- Board Member Klecker asked how many spectators can be accommodated.
- Board Member Svacina asked if they knew the anticipated impact on increased access for students to educational opportunities and the impact on the community.

- Board Member Holton asked if this would be the most expensive lease the board has seen. System President Foy replied yes, in recent years for the time and annual amount. We have not seen many leases in quite some time from MATC. They have focused on improvements in their current space.
- Board President Tyler asked about the identification of the space, emphasizing that due to its prominent and costly location, the signage should be highly visible.
- Board Member Blumer asked for further clarification in the Jeffers Group contract for plans to fund this project and where their funds are coming from, which might affect how they operate in that space.

Board President Tyler noted that the Board has previously declined more expensive lease proposals because the colleges involved were not committed to significant funding. This request is different from those that have been turned down in the past. It represents a unique opportunity, especially given its proximity to the Deer District.

Board Member Pechacek pointed out that although this is a high-cost project, MATC's proximity to the Fiserv Forum, where costs are higher, should be considered by the Board.

It was moved by Board Member Klecker, seconded by Board Member Blumer, that the Board finds that the concept for Milwaukee Area Technical College's proposed lease of athletic facilities is reasonable. The final scope and design of the project are subject to review and approval by the Board as required by s.3804(10) Stats. Motion carried 12-1. Board Member Lasry abstained.

ITEM K: 2021-2025 Strategic Directions Update

WTCS Director of Strategic Advancement Katy Pettersen provided the Board with an update on efforts to advance the 2021-2025 WTCS Strategic Directions and shared an overview of the process the Board will use to develop the Strategic Directions for 2026-2030. Board President Tyler will ask for members to serve on the Strategic Directions Workgroup at the September 2024 meeting.

ITEM L: 2025-27 Student Financial Aid Request to Higher Education Aids Board

WTCS Policy Advisor Brandon Trujillo provided the Board with an overview of the 2025-27 biennial budget request for need-based financial aid, which must be submitted to the Higher Education Aids Board (HEAB). Wisconsin Grants, the state's largest need-based financial aid program, provides students with the necessary assistance to pursue a higher education credential with the objective of entering or improving their career in the workforce. During the 2023-24 fiscal year, WTCS experienced the first waiting list in over ten years and is projecting a larger waitlist for the 2024-25 fiscal year due to an increase in student need.

The recommended request is for \$10.8 million in each year of the biennium to meet the projected waitlist of students and to meet the increase in award amounts based on the rising financial need of WTCS students.

It was moved by Board Member Wendt, seconded by Board Member Holton to approve the submission of the WTCS request for financial aid to the Higher Education Aids Board. Motion carried unanimously.

ITEM M: State and Federal Perkins and AEFLA Grant Guidelines

WTCS Grants Manager Tou Ya Khang provided an overview of the guidelines for the distribution of funds made available through the state of Wisconsin and federal Perkins grant guidelines for fiscal year 2025-26 and the Adult Education Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) programs for fiscal years 2026-29.

Updates for AEFLA Grant Guidelines include an updated formula for calculating Maintenance of Effort (MOE) and changed from five grant categories to three.

Board Member Klecker asked if grants are always written by a college campus for that campus or are they written to be used for multiple or all colleges in the System. Mr. Khang replied that state grants can be written for all or more than one college, but one college needs to be the main recipient of the grant and work with the other colleges for that activity. As an example, there was a nursing grant a few years ago in which most of the colleges participated. System President Foy remarked that there are several state leadership grants that all colleges can participate in. At the Federal level there is a grants consortium with a lead college managing the grants.

It was moved by Board Member Walsh, seconded by Board Member Holton to adopt the funding categories for the State of Wisconsin and Perkins V Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century and Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) grant programs for fiscal year 2026-29. Motion carried unanimously.

ITEM N: Legislative Update

WTCS Executive Vice President Jim Zylstra, joined by WTCS Policy Advisors Megan Stritchko and Brandon Trujillo and District Boards Association Executive Director Layla Merrifield provided an overview of legislative items affecting the System.

Mr. Zylstra thanked the Budget Workgroup for their work on the five budget papers. The workgroup comprised Board Members Blumer, Klecker and Tyler; College Presidents Baerwald and Wood; Faculty Mike Balistrieri from Fox Valley Technical College; Kai Brito, Wisconsin Student Government; DBA Executive Director Layla Merrifield and Trustee Erin Greenawald; WTCS System President Foy, Provost Dr. McCabe and Director of Strategic Advancement Katy Pettersen. In addition to the HEAB request shared with the Board, there will be four additional requests presented to the Board for approval in September. The budget request must be submitted to the Governor's Office on September 15.

WTCS Policy Advisor Trujillo updated the Board on Act 117 that passed last session.

WTCS Policy Advisor Stritchko shared federal updates.

Ms. Merrifield thanked her long-time advocacy partner System President Foy. She observed her leading the System as a strategic thinker, safeguarding its interests. She said that it has been an honor and pleasure working with her and wished her the best in her retirement.

The Board reconvened at 10:59 after a short break.

ITEM O: Report of the System President

Board President Tyler commended System President Foy for her 12 years of leadership, transforming the perception of technical colleges from a second choice to a source of pride in secondary education. Her efforts have exceeded the Board's expectations, as evidenced by the videos from her recent tour of excellence, highlighting the power of collaboration. We are built for this moment – it is real!

System President Foy said she has started the last 70 Board meetings reporting, or more appropriately bragging, about the amazing things going on at WTCS and today, her last, is no different:

- The Regional Biohealth Tech Hub is a \$49 million grant led by Madison College, in partnership with Milwaukee Area Technical College, the Universities of Wisconsin, Employ Milwaukee, the Workforce Development Board of South Central Wisconsin and industry partners. The ABC Pathways project aims to raise awareness and create opportunities for biohealth careers in underrepresented communities by developing stackable and tailored credentials and promoting work-based learning, such as apprenticeships. Although centered in the Milwaukee-Madison corridor, the project is expected to have positive economic impacts throughout Wisconsin.
- The Wisconsin Technical College System had strong representation on the Governor’s Taskforce on Artificial Intelligence (AI), with many Board Members and staff participating in productive discussions. The final report will be released the week of July 22 and will recommend new investments for WTCS in curriculum and resource development, including the integration of AI tools to address current and future workforce needs. Waukesha County Technical College President Dr. Barnhouse was recently appointed as a member of the Legislative Study Committee on AI and will represent the System’s AI work in these important conversations.
- The Aspen Prize has announced their semi-finalists, which includes Northeast Wisconsin Technical College and Southwest Wisconsin Technical College. Congratulations to their teams for this incredible honor. The recipient will be announced in spring 2025.
- System President Foy recognized Northwood Tech for constantly innovating in the delivery of programs and services, including mobile labs, co-locating learning spaces and unique programs. [A video](#) of Dr. Foy’s visit to Northwood Tech was shown.
- System President Foy requested that the Board consider maintaining the System’s focus on success for all students and its collaborative culture as they set the strategic directions for the next five years. WTCS was created to provide opportunities for everyone and to serve every corner of the state.
- System President Foy ended by thanking her family, college and System colleagues, students and the Board. She knows she did not get this opportunity by chance, but she cannot help feeling extremely lucky to have had it. It has been an honor and a blast.

ITEM P: Announcements/Adjourn

The Board will meet in closed session on August 7 for the final round System Presidential interviews in Madison.

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board will be held September 10-11, 2024, at Northcentral Technical College in Wausau.

It was moved by Board Member Svacina, seconded by Board Member Holton, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 11:38 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Julie Drake