

Minority Student Participation and Retention Grants

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Minority Student Participation and Retention Grants have not increased since 2002-03, despite significant increases in the WTCS student-of-color population and ongoing lags in performance of minority students compared to white students. Wisconsin minority residents also have significantly higher unemployment and poverty rates than white residents. To meet Wisconsin's workforce needs, the State must maximize the labor market contributions of all its citizens.

BACKGROUND

The Legislature first funded the WTCS Minority Student Participation and Retention Grant program in 1993-94 to support activities and services that increase minority student success, including recruitment, retention and transition services. The funds also support a teacher education internship intended to help address the severe shortage of minority teachers in K-12 schools. Only Madison, Milwaukee and Nicolet are eligible for the teacher education internship portion of the grants.

Annual funding of \$617,000 was available for the first nine years of the program. In 2002-03, funding was reduced 4.5% to \$589,200 as part of the mandated biennial budget cuts. No additional program funding has been available since 2002-03. As part of both its 2005-07 and 2007-09 biennial budget request, the WTCS State Board requested significant funding increases to reflect the growing student-of-color enrollment in the WTCS.

WTCS student-of-color enrollment is increasing, overall and within each individual category, and students-of-color represent an increasing percentage of the total WTCS enrollment. For example, while students of color accounted for 9.4% of WTCS enrollments in 1997-98, that proportion had grown to 14.6% by 2006-07.

In addition to growing enrollment, some key indicators demonstrate WTCS success in serving students-of-color:

- Increases in minority student graduates: minority program graduates almost doubled from 1996-1997 to 2005-06. During this same period, white program graduates increased 38.2%.

- Increases in minority high school graduates who enroll in a technical college: the percent of minority students among all public high school students enrolling at a technical college within one year of their high school graduation increased from 8.4% to 12.0% between 1999-2000 and 2005-06.
- Increases in WTCS students-of-color transferring to the UW System: in fall 2006, 10% of WTCS transfers to UW System were minority students, compared to 9% from all institutions combined.

Despite some successes, WTCS minority students continue to lag behind their white peers in several critical areas:

- The percentage of full-time minority program students who pass at least 80% of their classes is consistently lower than the percentage of full-time white program students as shown below:

Year	White Students	Minority Students
2002-2003	78.7%	63.9%
2003-2004	77.6	62.3
2004-2005	74.9	67.0
2005-2006	78.3	64.5

- Three-year graduation rates for first-time, full-time minority students who enrolled in associate degree programs and technical diploma programs are lower than the graduation rates for first-time, full-time white students. For example, 42.1% of first-time, full-time white students who enrolled in 2004 graduated with an Associate Degree within three years compared to 26.0% of minority students. Among first-time, full-time white students who enrolled in 2003, 46.0% graduated with an Associate Degree within three years compared to 30.1% of minority students. For technical diploma programs, 70.2% of first-time, full-time white students who enrolled in 2006 graduated within one year compared 53.5% of minority students.
- Minority students accounted for 14.1% of all WTCS enrollment in 2005-06 but 43.9% of enrollment in Adult Basic Education (ABE) classes.
- 72.2% of white ABE students who established a goal of enrolling in WTCS post-secondary courses did so the same or following year compared to 59.5% of minority students.

Disparities also exist between Wisconsin's minority and white residents in employment and poverty rates. The Center on Wisconsin Strategy (COWS) reported in its 2008 *The State of Working Wisconsin* report that the African American unemployment rate was 11.4% in 2007, almost three times the 4.5% white unemployment rate. Similar

disparities exist when comparing underemployment rates, which COWS reported as 16.6% for African Americans and 7.5% for whites.

Un- and underemployment rates for Hispanics also are higher than for whites, according to COWS. Hispanic unemployment was 6.9% in 2007 compared to 4.5% for whites while Hispanic underemployment was 12.5% compared to 7.5% for whites.

Differences in un- and underemployment rates help explain differences in 2006 poverty rates by race. According to COWS, 2006 poverty rates were 8.5% for whites, 34.9% for blacks, and 26.8% for Latinos.

Additional grant resources could help WTCS colleges close performance gaps by providing additional college support to help minority students succeed. Increasing WTCS minority student success is a key to increasing Wisconsin's skilled labor supply.

REQUEST

Provide an additional \$1,221,600 GPR (\$610,800 in each year of the biennium) for the WTCS appropriation for Minority Student Participation and Retention Grant program in recognition of increased enrollment and differing local needs based on the specific minority populations being served and with the goal of closing performance gaps.

	Base Year Funding <u>2008-09</u>	Request for <u>2009-10</u>	Request for <u>2010-11</u>	Biennial Increase <u>Over Base</u>
	\$589,200	\$1,200,000	\$1,200,000	N/A
Increase Over Base	N/A	\$610,800	\$610,800	\$1,221,600