

MINUTES OF MEETING
WISCONSIN TECHNICAL COLLEGE SYSTEM (WTCS) BOARD
MAY 18, 2021
TELECONFERENCE

Members Present: Quincey Daniels, Jr., Douglas Holton, Sr., Becky Levzow, Terry McGowan, John W. Miller, Rodney Pasch, Amy Pechacek, Cooper Richason, Carolyn Stanford Taylor, Kelly Tourdot, S. Mark Tyler, Stephen Willett, Mary Williams.

System Office Staff Present: Dan Arneson, Judy Barbian, Hilary Barker, Terese Craig, Monique Currie, Julie Drake, Morna Foy, Stephanie Glynn, Nickelle Haffey, Judy Heinrichs, Mandy Johnson, Mark Johnson, Tou Ya Khang, Colleen Larsen, Betsy Leonard, Colleen McCabe, Katy Pettersen, Anna Richter, Jason Ring, Michelle Rudman, Dan Scanlon, Chrystal Seeley-Schreck, Lenard Simpson, Conor Smyth, Becky Stewart, Brandon Trujillo, Angie White, Jim Zylstra.

District/Others Present: Tracy Pierner, Blackhawk Technical College; Bruce Barker, Chippewa Valley Technical College; Vernon Jung, Angie Lawrence, Layla Merrifield, District Boards Association; Susan May, Fox Valley Technical College; Bryan Albrecht, Megan Bahr, Zina Haywood, Gateway Technical College; Jack Daniels, III, Sylvia Ramirez, Cody White, Madison Area Technical College; Shelly Mondeik, Mid-State Technical College; Vicki Martin, Milwaukee Area Technical College; Eve Hall, Milwaukee Urban League; Bonnie Baerwald, Moraine Park Technical College; Richard Nelson, Nicolet Area Technical College; Christian Neumann, Northcentral Technical College; Mohammed Bey, Northeast Wisconsin Technical College; R. Paul Buhr, Rabur Holsteins; Eric Williams, UW-Madison; Richard Barnhouse, Waukesha County Technical College; Roger Stanford, Western Technical College; Sharon Wendt, Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction; John Will, Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College; Ann Ilagan, Wisconsin Student Government.

Board President Levzow called the meeting to order at 8:02 am. Julie Drake read the open meeting statement and roll call indicated that a quorum was present.

Board President Levzow shared updates on WTCS Board Members:

- Dr. Eve Hall resigned her position as a University of Wisconsin (UW) Regent, having served on the WTCS Board by virtue of that position. Board President Levzow welcomed Dr. Hall's successor, John W. Miller, to the Board. Miller is the founder and principal of Milwaukee-based Arenberg Holdings. He began his career as President and CEO of Miller-St. Nazianz, his family's agricultural machine manufacturing business.
- Superintendent Carolyn Stanford Taylor will retire on July 4. The new State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Jill Underly, will be joining the Board for its July meeting.
- Governor Evers made a number of new appointments to the WTCS Board, pending approval by the Wisconsin Senate. The Board will have an opportunity to meet and welcome them at a future meeting.

Board President Levzow also recognized Ann Ilagan of Wisconsin Student Government (WSG) meeting.

ITEM A: Approval of March 17, 2021, Meeting Minutes

It was moved by Board Member Stanford Taylor, seconded by Board Member Holton, that the March 17, 2021, meeting minutes be approved. Motion carried unanimously.

ITEM B: Report of the Board President

Dr. Hall's Board of Regents report was included in the Board meeting materials for review.

Board President Levzow shared the results of a focused, WTCS-led social media campaign to promote National Ag Day. The campaign, which included a brief video featuring WTCS leaders, faculty and students, garnered significant engagement and attention.

The 2021 WTCS Ambassadors engaged in a leadership development experience April 22-23, including being recognized in a YouTube Premiere the night of April 22. The Ambassadors shared the stories of how they made the choice to attend a technical college. Board Members Pasch and Richason commented that the Ambassador recognition is the premiere event of the year and commended the System for having created a connection between the Ambassadors in a virtual environment.

Board President Levzow attended the District Boards Association virtual Spring meeting and encouraged Board members to view the presentations on the DBA website, and to consider attending these professional development opportunities in the future.

ITEM C: Report of the System President

System President Foy welcomed Regent Miller to the Board and extended her best wishes with departing Board Members Hall and Stanford Taylor. She also provided an update on the System's Commitment to Progress:

- Through the WTCS Student Success Center, WTCS Education Directors Kristin Long and Angie White submitted a successful proposal for an April presentation to the National Alliance for Partnerships in Equity (NAPE) Conference: "Equity in the Classroom and Beyond: A Systemic Approach to Increasing Inclusive Teaching Strategies in Wisconsin's Technical Colleges." In addition, 2020 WTCS Ambassador Denisse Arjon-Rivera, an NWTCS student, served as a panelist during the NAPE Summit.
- Fox Valley Technical College hosted the Wisconsin Equity Summit May 4-5, which drew a national audience.
- WTCS Education Director Dr. Hilary Barker developed, in collaboration with technical college researchers, an action research brief providing an early look at the impact on students of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Gateway Technical College is one of a small number of community colleges nationally to successfully launch the new Google IT Support Professional Certificate. This self-paced, online program has the potential to expand access to high-wage IT careers by preparing individuals with no prior experience for high-demand Information Technology (IT) careers.

President Foy shared that the System Office recently recognized the retirements of Alejandro Nuñez, Education Director for English Language Learning, and Jim Mackey, Education Director for Manufacturing Programs.

ITEM D: Wisconsin Technical College District Boards Association

Wisconsin Technical College District Boards Association (DBA) President and Moraine Park Trustee Vernon Jung and Executive Director Layla Merrifield updated the Board on recent activities.

The Spring DBA meeting was held on April 16 with Dr. Damon Williams presenting on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI). Thank you to Presidents Albrecht and Daniels who served on a DEI panel and to the WTCS DEI workgroup for their planning assistance. Presentations are available on the DBA website. Board Member Pasch commended DBA for the thought-provoking presentation Dr. Williams meeting.

During the Spring meeting, annual officer elections took place and will be in effect in late July. Betty Bruski Mallek, a Mid-State Technical College trustee, will succeed Vernon Jung as Association President and will be with the WTCS Board for its September meeting in Madison.

The Summer meeting will be hosted by Mid-State Technical College July 15-17 in Stevens Point. The in-service presentation will focus on Presidential evaluations and legislative updates. In addition, the annual Legal Issue Seminar will take place October 27-30 and again be hosted by Waukesha County Technical College.

ITEM E: WTCS Presidents' Association

Dr. Shelly Mondeik, President of Mid-State Technical College and of the Association, provided a brief update on recent activities of the Association.

Wisconsin's technical colleges adapted quickly to pandemic operations and excelled over the past year. The colleges responded with innovation, flexibility, commitment and resiliency. Because the colleges prioritized needed technology, they were able to do what was needed successfully. The colleges continue to monitor CDC guidelines and adjust with public health guidance.

Mondeik reported that other areas of focus for the colleges include diversity, equity and inclusion; credit transfer and transfer programs; and serving unique populations, including incarcerated individuals. She also noted that the Presidents' Association is welcoming four new college presidents at Chippewa Valley, Fox Valley, Nicolet Area and Northcentral Technical Colleges.

Beginning in July, President Roger Stanford of Western Technical College will lead the Presidents' Association. Board President Levzow thanked Mondeik for her engagement with the Board during her tenure, as did System President Foy.

ITEM F: Consent Agenda

WTCS Provost and Vice President Dr. Collen McCabe provided context for the Board's concept review of an Advanced Technical Certificate (ATC) brought forward by Chippewa Valley Technical College. In 2004, colleges began offering ATCs, which are designed for working professionals and are approved by the System Office.

In addition, WTCS Policy Advisor Brandon Trujillo provided an overview of the WTCS District Board Appointment Process, offering special thanks to WTCS Executive Staff Assistant Judy Barbian and the college president's assistants.

It was moved by Board Member Williams, seconded by Board Member Richason, that the Board approve the program development, facilities development requests and annual district board appointments as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

ITEM G: Outcomes for 2020 WTCS Graduates

WTCS Associate Vice Presidents Terese Craig and Chrystal Seeley-Schreck provided an overview of the most recent WTCS Graduates Outcomes report, detailing outcomes for 2020 technical college graduates. WTCS surveyed all 24,558 2020 graduates, with 62 percent responding. Of those who responded and were in the labor force, 91 percent indicated they were employed within six months of graduation, including 75 percent who reported employment in a field related to their technical college program and 94 percent working in Wisconsin, with 69 percent in their college district.

The median salary for 2020 graduates, six months after graduation is \$44,249, up from 42,000 in 2019. The median salary for associate degree earners is \$48,000, up from \$45,756 in 2019.

This report will be distributed digitally to middle and high school counselors, other state and local partners and legislative offices.

Board Member Pasch commended all involved in creating this report. A 97 percent placement is incredible and speaks to the value of program advisory committees, through which employers have significant input on programs and curriculum.

Board Member Holton also offered congratulations for the report and what it represents. He also asked about race/ethnicity designations, which are self-reported by graduates.

The Board reconvened at 10:06 after a 15-minute break.

ITEM H: Teaching and Learning – Early Impacts of COVID-19 Pandemic on the Wisconsin Technical College System

WTCS Education Director for Performance Analysis and Continuous Improvement, Dr. Hilary Barker, provided a preliminary overview of COVID-19 effects on Wisconsin's technical colleges, focusing on spring 2020 student data, including:

- course enrollments;
- COVID-19-related course withdrawals, in which students of color were overrepresented;
- dual credit participation;
- Adult Education and English Language Learning programs; and
- educational programs at correctional facilities.

Dr. Barker reported that the analysis of student outcome and participation data suggested a need for improved support strategies that better assure equity in student access and success.

Board Member Richason asked whether the data reflect financial aid status for WTCS students. Dr. Barker indicated that 40 percent of WTCS students self-identify as economically disadvantaged.

President Foy noted that the Board and the colleges remain focused on assuring affordability for students, including reducing textbook costs with use of Open Educational Resources (OER). She also

mentioned efforts related to the federal “Ability to Benefit” focus on disadvantaged students, designed to improve access, and “Guided Pathway” efforts to improve student course and program completion.

Board member Pasch expressed concern with the results, inquiring about colleges’ plans to counter these outcome trends. Board Member Tourdot also expressed discouragement with these results.

Dr. Barker noted that the System Office and colleges were aware of equity gaps that existed in student access and outcomes pre-pandemic and understood the potential for these gaps to worsen during and after the pandemic. This awareness was the catalyst for the Brief. President Foy noted that the purpose of WTCS Action Research Briefs is to synthesize data for real-time improvement in student outcomes based on evidence and not perception. Each Brief includes resource references and specific action steps.

Board Member McGowan noted the Operating Engineers continued in a hands-on environment with strict guidelines throughout the pandemic, enjoying a successful training season with no outbreaks.

Board Member Pechacek thanked Dr. Barker and the team for recognizing the digital divide, noting Department of Workforce Development efforts to close it for job seekers. Board Member Stanford-Taylor noted concerns about K-12 broadband and connectivity needs in both rural and urban areas. She said the Department of Public Instruction continues working with the Public Service Commission to address them.

System President Foy encouraged Board members to continue asking difficult questions, noting that this research approach is unique nationally. Board Member Tyler commented that WTCS measures important outcomes, not just those over which the Board has direct control, believing this contributes to the System’s success.

ITEM I: Legislative Updates

WTCS Executive Vice President Jim Zylstra led a legislative update with DBA Executive Director Layla Merrifield and WTCS Policy Advisors Monique Currie and Brandon Trujillo.

The Joint Finance Committee has met twice and will meet again May 20. WTCS is not expected to be on the agenda.

DBA Executive Director Layla Merrifield provided an update on stand-alone legislation to repeal s. 36.31 of statutes, pertaining to approval of certain UW and WTCS programs, including transfer. A hearing is scheduled for May 20.

Trujillo noted that WTCS is tracking 84 WTCS-related bills this session. Currie gave a federal update, including the status of the American Rescue Plan and the President’s free community college proposal, which is part of the American Families Plan.

Board Member Richason inquired about the potential for passage of a “Tools of the Trade” program based on Ascendium’s successful model. Trujillo reported that there had been little activity on potential legislation this session.

ITEM J: Announcements/Adjourn

The next meeting of the Board will be in the traditional Tuesday-Wednesday format, July 13-14, at Nicolet Area Technical College in Rhinelander. This meeting will be in-person for Board members only and virtual for all other attendees.

It was moved by Board Member McGowan, seconded by Board Member Stanford Taylor, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 11:12 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Drake
Recording Secretary