

**MINUTES OF MEETING
WISCONSIN TECHNICAL COLLEGE SYSTEM (WTCS) BOARD
SEPTEMBER 9-10, 2025
CHIPPEWA VALLEY TECHNICAL COLLEGE**

Tuesday, September 9, 2025

Members Present: Lindsay Blumer, Quincey Daniels, Jr., Dan Klecker, Pamela McGillivray for Amy Pechacek, Timothy Nixon, Sara Rogers, Dan Sperberg, Leslie Svacina, Jill Underly.

Members Absent: Douglas Holton, Sr., S. Mark Tyler.

System Office Staff Present: Danielle Cook, Julie Drake, Stephanie Glynn, Tou Ya Khang, Christina Lorge, Ward Lyon, Colleen McCabe, Layla Merrifield, Jeremy Nichols, Katy Pettersen, Chrystal Seeley-Schreck, Lenard Simpson, Latisha Spence-Brookens, Megan Stritchko, Brandon Trujillo, Ann Westrich.

District/Others Present: Sunem Beaton-Garcia, Caleb Cornelius, Pam Entorf, Joni Geroux, Lauren Sullivan, Chippewa Valley Technical College; Heidi Gottfried, Morgan Phillips, Gateway Technical College; Chou Yang, Lakeshore Technical College; Jennifer Berne, Tenielle Johnson, Madison Area Technical College; Shelly Mondeik, Mid-State Technical College; Anthony Cruz, Milwaukee Area Technical College; Bonnie Baerwald, Moraine Park Technical College; Jeremy VanCamp, Nicolet Area Technical College; Jeannie Worden, Northcentral Technical College; Kristen Raney, Northeast Wisconsin Technical College; John Will, Northwood Technical College; Jessica Pintz, Roger Stanford, Western Technical College; Sharon Wendt, Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction; Kendra Klein, Wisconsin Student Government; Diane Handrick, John Wyatt, Wisconsin Technical College District Boards Association.

Board President Rogers 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.

Chippewa Valley Technical College (CVTC) President Sunem Beaton-Garcia welcomed the Board, previewed the meeting and introduced their mascot, Ollie the River Otter.

ITEM A: Approval of July 8-9, 2025, Meeting Minutes

It was moved by Board Member Klecker, seconded by Board Member Nixon, that the July 8-9, 2025 meeting minutes be approved with one correction: the first day of the meeting was Tuesday, July 8, not July 9. Motion carried unanimously.

ITEM B: 2026-2027 Board Meeting Schedule

It was moved by Board Member Underly, seconded by Board Member Svacina, that the Wisconsin Technical College System Board adopts the 2026-2027 meeting schedule as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

ITEM C: Report of the Board President

The July and August reports from the Universities of Wisconsin Board of Regents were distributed to Board Members on September 5, 2025.

Board President Rogers is appointed to the Governor's Council on Workforce Investment (CWI), alongside Board members Blumer, Pechacek and Underly, and System President Merrifield. President Rogers noted that while strong relationships exist with employers and local communities, many employers remain unaware of opportunities to upskill their workforce through local technical colleges.

An orientation session for newly appointed Universities of Wisconsin Regents was held on July 25. A key feature of the session was the presentation of the Board's 2023-2028 Strategic Plan, which emphasizes proactive engagement with employers to identify talent needs and incorporates employee feedback to inform workforce development strategies. This approach draws inspiration from successful practices within the technical college system.

Board President Rogers expressed appreciation to Board members who contributed input on the 2026-2030 Strategic Directions. She highlighted that the vision statement was shaped by the Board's own strategic priorities, which will be discussed later in the agenda. WTCS Director of Strategic Advancement Katy Pettersen underscored the importance of communicating the vision effectively, suggesting the use of concise "elevator speeches."

Board President Rogers reflected on the leadership of her predecessors, particularly one with a strong business background, and shared her own perspective shaped by extensive experience in workforce development. Her focus remains on understanding the student experience and aligning educational outcomes with the needs of local businesses.

Board Member Daniels arrived at 4:45 pm.

ITEM D: Report of the System President

System President Merrifield thanked CVTC President Beaton-Garcia and her team.

System President Merrifield shared System updates:

- System President Merrifield attended the annual conference of the National Council of State Directors of Community Colleges in July where she learned from peers and shared some of the successful endeavors of the WTCS.
- System President Merrifield attended the ribbon cutting for the new Wanek Center for Innovation at Western Technical College in August. This advanced manufacturing facility was made possible by a generous donation from the Ron Wanek family. Congratulations to President Stanford and the Western team on completing this project.
- System President Merrifield participated in a conversation with Matt Kirchner for an upcoming episode of the [TechEd Podcast](#). The discussion focused on the future of education, opportunities for technical colleges and the evolving economic landscape. It will air on September 16, 2025.
- Please note that there are fewer System staff present at this meeting. Due to the potential loss of federal funding for Adult Education and other programs in the coming year, the System has begun implementing cost-saving measures. One such measure includes reducing staff travel to Board meetings. While we remain committed to fully engaging in discussions around the Board's priorities, more of our team's presentations will be delivered virtually. The team remains deeply dedicated to the work and focused on supporting the Board's priorities.
- System President Merrifield will kick off the Business Occupations System Symposium (BOSS) Conference September 25-26 where faculty and deans from the Business & Marketing programs will convene at this two-day conference to connect, discuss strategies for future success in business programs and share promising practices to enhance curriculum and programs. An AI specialist from UW-Stout will talk about how industry partners in the areas of business, marketing and finance utilize AI.
- The 2025 Apprenticeship meeting will be held at Mid-State's AMETA Center in Stevens Point on September 10-11. This is a joint meeting with WTCS and DWD's Bureau of Apprenticeship

Standards and gives stakeholders from both groups the opportunity to learn from each other and discuss future priorities.

- The System's Student Success Center is focusing on skills-first education, holistic student support, integration of AI and support for student parents. This is a collaboration including the System, the Universities of Wisconsin and Wisconsin Association of Independent Colleges and Universities (WAICU). Dr. Lorge attended a recent student basic needs event, where it was highlighted that we have moved beyond data collection into supporting students' needs. The group is now working on a task force centered on the student voice.
- September 14-20, 2025 is Adult Education week, where we will be celebrating and promoting our work. It's important that we continue to talk about the success students have with help from our colleges. We will promote it through WTCS-in-Brief newsletter and, thanks to the statewide marketing group connection, through social media posts highlighting our colleges. An important section of Adult Education programming includes working with students who are, or have been, involved in the justice system. Congratulations to Milwaukee Area Technical College for offering those services to the students for [Second Chance Pell](#).

ITEM E: Legislative Update

WTCS Executive Vice President Paul Hammer, joined by WTCS Policy Advisor Brandon Trujillo and District Boards Association Executive Director Diane Handrick, provided an overview of state legislative items affecting the System.

WTCS Policy Advisor Megan Stritchko shared federal updates affecting the System.

ITEM F: Teaching & Learning – Advancing Oral Health in Wisconsin: Strengthening Education, Collaboration and Strategic Initiatives

WTCS Health Sciences Director Dani Cook provided an overview of statewide dental programs, leadership efforts, collaborative strategies and the impact of state grant funding on community oral health. Chippewa Valley Technical College Adjunct Instructor Credit-Dental Hygienist Pamela Entorf spotlighted its Expanded Function Dental Auxiliary (EFDA) program, highlighting System-wide training opportunities and interdisciplinary collaboration aimed at enhancing community outcomes.

It was moved by Board Member Underly, seconded by Board Member Klecker, to recess the meeting until Wednesday, September 10, 2025. The Board adjourned at 6:11 pm. Motion carried unanimously.

Wednesday, September 10, 2025

Members Present: Lindsay Blumer, Quincey Daniels, Jr., Dan Klecker, Pamela McGillivray for Amy Pechacek, Timothy Nixon, Sara Rogers, Daniel Sperberg, Leslie Svacina, Jill Underly.

Members Absent: Douglas Holton, Sr., S. Mark Tyler.

System Office Staff Present: Sarah Arneson, Hilary Barker, Chevon Bowen, Julie Drake, Stephanie Glynn, Paul Hammer, Mandy Johnson, Tou Ya Khang, Colleen Larsen, Christina Lorge, Ward Lyon, Joel Mathis, Colleen McCabe, Layla Merrifield, Carolann Nelson, Jeremy Nichols, Cristina Parente, Katy Pettersen, Anna Richter, Dan Scanlon, Chrystal Seeley-Schreck, Brent Simmons, Lenard Simpson, John Smigleski, Latisha Spence-Brookens, Megan Stritchko, Brandon Trujillo, Ann Westrich.

District/Others Present: Tracy Pierner, Blackhawk Technical College; Sunem Beaton-Garcia, Tam Burgau, Caleb Cornelius, Joni Geroux, Karen Kohler, Lauren Sullivan, Adam Wehling, Chippewa Valley Technical College; Chris Matheny, Fox Valley Technical College; Morgan Phillips, Gateway Technical College; Paul

Carlsen, Chou Yang, Lakeshore Technical College; Jennifer Berne, Sylvia Ramirez, Madison Area Technical College; Anthony Cruz, Milwaukee Area Technical College; Bonnie Baerwald, Mike Chevalier, Roy Marquez, Bethany Rusch, Moraine Park Technical College; Jeremy Van Camp, Nicolet Area Technical College; Nikki Kopp, Northcentral Technical College; Kristen Raney, Northeast Wisconsin Technical College; John Will, Northwood Technical College; Xueli Wang, University of Wisconsin-Madison Barbara and Glenn Thompson Endowed Professor in Educational Leadership; Rich Barnhouse, Waukesha County Technical College; Jessica Pintz, Roger Stanford, Western Technical College; Sharon Wendt, Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction; Kendra Klein, Wisconsin Student Government; Diane Handrick, John Wyatt, Wisconsin Technical College District Boards Association.

Board President Rogers called the meeting to order at 9:30 am. Julie Drake read the open meeting statement and roll call indicated that a quorum was present.

Board President Rogers thanked CVTC President Beaton-Garcia and the culinary students, chef and instructors for the dinner served on Tuesday evening. The Board recognized [Eau Claire Energy Cooperative](#) for their strong partnership with CVTC, which exemplifies the power of collaboration in workforce development. By working closely with CVTC to align educational programming with industry needs, the Cooperative helps ensure a steady pipeline of skilled professionals, from line workers to engineers and beyond.

ITEM G: Wisconsin Technical College District Boards Association

Wisconsin Technical College District Boards Association (DBA) President and Lakeshore College Trustee John Wyatt and Executive Director Diane Handrick updated the Board on recent activities.

Association President Wyatt introduced himself. He shared that education has been a lifelong passion, highlighted by his twelve years of service on the Elkhart Lake Glenbeulah School Board. He is currently in his ninth year on the Lakeshore College Board, where he recently completed his second term as Board Chair. Additionally, Mr. Wyatt has served on Lakeshore's IT Advisory Committee for 29 years, contributing to the launch of the IT Networking and Cybersecurity programs and the expansion of existing IT offerings.

Board Member Daniels arrived at 9:40 am.

Association President Wyatt provided an update on DBA's recent reorganization efforts. An ad-hoc committee developed a staffing plan to support the Association's mission of trustee education, college collaboration with the System and public policy advocacy. Following the committee's recommendation, a search was conducted for a second staff member focused on trustee engagement. A strong candidate has been identified, and the hiring process is underway. This new role will help enhance educational opportunities for all 144 trustees and promote sharing of best practices across the System.

DBA continues to serve as a unified voice for trustees statewide and looks forward to collaborating with the WTCS Board, Presidents' Association and Wisconsin Student Government Association to shape messaging for state and national policymakers. A strong trustee presence is expected at the upcoming Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT) Leadership Congress in New Orleans in October and the National Legislative Summit in Washington, D.C. in February 2026.

Executive Director Diane Handrick reiterated that as part of DBA's ongoing evolution, efforts are underway to bring on a second full-time staff member. Local volunteer trustees remain deeply committed to student success and community engagement. In collaboration with the WTCS Board,

System leadership, business partners and education stakeholders, DBA continues to support workforce advancement across Wisconsin.

ITEM H: Delivering on the Promise: Advancing Student Success Through Research and Partnership

WTCS Associate Vice President for Student Success Dr. Christina Lorge and Director of Student Success Dr. Colleen Larsen, joined by University of Wisconsin-Madison Barbara and Glenn Thompson Endowed Professor in Educational Leadership Dr. Xueli Wang, shared insights from the recent Delivering on the Promise event highlighting research-driven imperatives, college success stories and the transformative work ahead. The presentation emphasized the growing partnership between UW-Madison and WTCS, grounded in both quantitative and qualitative data.

ITEM I: 2026-2030 Strategic Directions

WTCS Director of Strategic Advancement Katy Pettersen provided the Board with the final draft of the 2026-2030 Strategic Directions.

It was moved by Board Member Klecker, seconded by Board Member Sperberg that the Wisconsin Technical College System Board approves the 2026-2030 Strategic Directions as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

[2026-2036 Strategic Directions](#)

The Board reconvened at 11:11 after a short break.

ITEM J: Consent Agenda

It was moved by Board Member Nixon, seconded by Board Member Sperberg that the Board approves the program and facilities development requests and interim district board appointments as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

ITEM K: Moraine Park Technical College – Project Review – Construction of Additional Facilities and Remodeling of Existing Facilities in Fond du Lac

WTCS Facilities Director Dan Scanlon provided an overview of the project. The district proposes to construct additional and remodel existing facilities at its Fond du Lac Campus at a cost of \$11,075,000, funded through district borrowing as approved in a \$55,000,000 November 8, 2022 referendum.

It was moved by Board Member Underly, seconded by Board Member Sperberg, that the Board grants approval to the Moraine Park Technical College district to construct additional and remodel existing facilities in Fond du Lac at a cost of \$11,075,000. Motion carried unanimously.

ITEM L: Northeast Wisconsin Technical College – Project Review – Acquisition of Improved Facilities at the Main Campus in Green Bay

WTCS Facilities Director Dan Scanlon provided an overview of the project. The district requests approval to acquire improved facilities. The estimated cost for the remodeling is \$2,700,000 and will be funded by the Green Bay Area Public Schools successful referendum.

It was moved by Board Member Nixon, seconded by Board Member Underly, that the Board grants approval to the Northeast Wisconsin Technical College district to acquire improvements at the Main Campus in Green Bay. Motion carried unanimously.

ITEM M: State Workforce Advancement Training (WAT), Apprentice-Related Instruction and Federal Perkins Grant Guidelines

WTCS Grants Manager Tou Ya Khang provided an overview of the guidelines for FY2026-27 for State WAT and Apprentice-Related Instruction and Federal Perkins Grant Guidelines recommendations.

An [Apprenticeship video highlighting Western Technical College](#) was shared with the Board.

It was moved by Board Member Daniels, seconded by Board Member Sperberg, to adopt the funding categories for the State of Wisconsin WAT, Apprentice-Related Instruction and Perkins V Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century grant programs for fiscal year 2026-27. Motion carried unanimously.

ITEM N: Announcements/Adjourn

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board will be held November 4-5, 2025, at Aspen Prize winner Southwest Wisconsin Technical College in Fennimore.

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

The meeting adjourned at 11:31 am.

Respectfully submitted,
Julie Drake