



# SCOTT WALKER

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

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## **Department of Workforce Development and State Partners Formally Enter Wisconsin Fast Forward Agreement**

*\$15 Million Grant Program Will Foster Collaboration, Help Ensure Effective, Flexible Training*

**Madison** – A formal agreement was signed today between state agencies to implement the Wisconsin Fast Forward initiative and its \$15 million worker training grant program by the end of the year.

“The Wisconsin Fast Forward initiative is quickly moving forward to provide workers with the training they need for the jobs of today and tomorrow,” Governor Walker said. “These grants will be used help Wisconsin workers gain new skills, connect workers with jobs, and foster job creation and expansion by offering innovative training solutions that match employers’ current needs.”

Department of Workforce Development (DWD) Secretary Newson signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Reed Hall, Executive Director of the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC), and Morna Foy, President of the Wisconsin Technical College System (WTCS).

“In keeping with Governor Walker’s initiative, which received overwhelming, bipartisan support in the Legislature earlier this year, we formally pledge to work together to ensure a nimble, effective training program,” Secretary Newson said. “This agreement reflects the collaborative spirit evident from the start and keeps us moving swiftly forward and on pace to launch the grant program in the months ahead.”

The Wisconsin Fast Forward legislation authorized an Office of Skills Development at DWD to administer the program. While DWD is the oversight agency, it will consult with WTCS and WEDC in developing and administering the program, using the grants to foster job creation and expansion.

“We aim to offer innovative training solutions that respond to the needs of employers and equip workers with the right skills,” Secretary Newson said.

Wisconsin Fast Forward is among Governor Walker’s \$100 million in workforce investments over the 2013-15 biennial budget period. The agreement is the latest development in implementation process. In May, Secretary Newson appointed Scott Jansen as Director of the Office of Skills Development. More recently, DWD and its Office of Skills Development:

- Launched a website, [Office of Skills Development](#), and began an OSD Newsletter to keep employers, workers, policymakers, and the public informed;
- Conducted a public hearing on proposed administrative rules for the grant program and incorporated changes based on public comment; and

- Received and analyzed information from employers about the skills gap they face to share with partners as they collaborate in developing and implementing the program.

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