



SCOTT WALKER

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

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Contact: Tom Evenson, (608) 267-7303

Governor Scott Walker Announces the Launch of the Department of Workforce Development's Skill Explorer Job Search Tool

Green Bay – Governor Scott Walker today announced the launch of the Department of Workforce Development's (DWD) new Skill Explorer website during a visit to Northeast Wisconsin Technical College. The new Skill Explorer is a free job search tool allowing Wisconsin workers to search for employment opportunities that match their existing skills and training.

"DWD's new Skill Explorer job search tool will help job-seekers find opportunities that require skills which they already have," Governor Walker said. "This tool suggests jobs matching workers' experiences and training, showing similar opportunities in career fields that workers might not have considered. By providing more information and options, the Skill Explorer will help workers succeed and connect employers with workers that hold the skills they need."

Workers can search for new career opportunities on the Skill Explorer website by typing in their past or current job title. Skill Explorer will provide a list of current openings relating to the work experience of that job through openings on the Jobs Center of Wisconsin. The website will also provide overviews explaining what each specific job entails, how much workers typically make in that position, and any special training or background needed for the occupation. Skill Explorer's mapping function will show hot spots in the state for particular occupations, as well as allow individuals to search for current openings by county.

The Skill Explorer tool is part of a larger investment in workforce development aimed at equipping workers with the skills they need to find jobs in the modern workforce. Governor Walker recently announced workforce development priorities for the upcoming 2013-14 legislative sessions, which included a package of eight workforce development bills.

Six of the proposed workforce development bills specifically focus on skills training, including:

- **LRB 2949 - Investing in Youth Apprenticeship:** Increase funding for Youth Apprenticeship by \$500,000 annually to meet demand. Last year, nearly 1,900 apprentices were trained at 1,300 employers, with 81 percent of program graduates receiving job offers with the employer who provided the training.
- **LRB 2976 - Apprenticeship Tuition Reimbursement for Apprentices and Employers:** Provide funding to reimburse the student or employer for 25 percent of apprenticeship tuition and fees, up to \$1,000 per apprentice. The average annual earnings of a person who completes an apprenticeship roughly equal those of a college graduate and nearly double those of a high school graduate.

- **LRB 3115 - Technical Education Incentive Grants:** Invest in an incentive program, originally proposed by Superintendent Tony Evers, offering a \$1,000 per pupil incentive payment to school districts. Eligible school districts will establish programs encouraging students to earn industry recognized certificates in high-need occupations before graduation from high school. High-need occupations would be determined in cooperation with the Department of Workforce Development and the Wisconsin Technical College System. Encouraging schools to graduate more pupils with industry recognized credentials in high-need fields is important for the future of our workforce.
- **LRB 3026 - Technical Excellence Higher Education Scholarship:** Fund new scholarships to reward students who are top of their class for technical education to use at state technical schools. The current Academic Excellence Higher Education Scholarship rewards students who are the top of their class with a state scholarship. This new scholarship would mirror the current one, but allow school boards to design the criteria for awarding the scholarship. Scholarships would first be awarded in the 2015-16 academic year giving schools time to establish criteria and select scholarship award winners.
- **LRB 3054 - Wisconsin Workers Win Update:** Continue and improve the Wisconsin Workers Win pilot program, a tool created last session to help unemployed workers gain jobs skills for available jobs. In less than one year of operation, the program saw 166 participants have positive employment outcomes and reduced the weeks on UI for participants. Implementing recommendations to improve the original program will make it an even more impactful tool to help unemployed workers gain jobs skills for available jobs and match job-seekers with potential employers.
- **LRB 3183 - Transitional Jobs Program Expansion:** Create a new Transitional Jobs Program to serve cities or counties with high unemployment and/or child poverty rates through the Department of Children and Families. The Transitional Jobs Demonstration Project, which ended in June 2013, was established to provide low-income adults with an immediate income, an opportunity to develop skills and experience their local labor market demands, and a positive work history. From September 2010 to June 2013, 4,074 workers participated in the program.

For more information about programs and resources available through the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, please visit: <http://dwd.wisconsin.gov>.

To access DWD's new Skill Explorer tool, visit <http://skillexplorer.wisconsin.gov>.

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