
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Thursday, March 6, 2014

CONTACT: DWD Communications, 608-266-2722

On the Web: <http://dwd.wisconsin.gov/dwd/news.htm>

On Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/WIWorkforce>

On Twitter: @WIWorkforce

Secretary Newson Applauds Tech Ed Teachers, Partners in Building Skilled Workforce; Cites Governor Walker's Workforce Investments in Students

Walker record includes increased Youth Apprenticeship funding, tech ed incentives, scholarships

WISCONSIN DELLS – Department of Workforce Development (DWD) Secretary Reggie Newson today applauded Wisconsin's technical education teachers for their contributions as partners in building a skilled workforce and cited Governor Walker's workforce investments in youth to keep Wisconsin moving forward.

Speaking at the Wisconsin Technology Education Association (WTEA) annual conference at Chula Vista, Secretary Newson said media coverage and public attention have focused on the current skills gap that employers face. Governor Walker's comprehensive agenda is addressing this skills gap with the Wisconsin Fast Forward initiative and its \$15 million worker training grants, as well as increased state support for the adult apprenticeship program.

"Governor Walker continues to make strategic investments that ensure a skilled workforce in the future, avoiding another skills gap such as the challenge this administration encountered," Secretary Newson said. "Working with the Legislature, he has increased funding for Youth Apprenticeship and encouraged students to consider technical education as a career path to family-supporting jobs. With February being Career and Technical Education Month, we sought to highlight the good work you are doing and alert other students, as well as their parents, to the opportunities a technical education offers. It is a message we will continue to send in the year ahead."

In fall 2013, as part of Governor Walker's fall legislative agenda, the legislature passed with overwhelming bipartisan majorities legislation to encourage students to consider career and technical education, including:

- **Youth Apprenticeship** – Increased funding for the nationally-recognized youth apprenticeship program by \$1 million;
- **Apprenticeship tuition reimbursement** – Enables apprentices or sponsors to receive a reimbursement of \$1,000 or 25% of tuition, whichever is less.
- **CTE incentive grants** – Reimburses school districts \$1,000 per pupil for completing industry-recognized certifications in high-demand industries and occupations; and
- **Technical Excellence higher education scholarships** – Allows school districts to nominate high school seniors showing proficiency in technical subjects to receive a \$2,250 scholarship to a Wisconsin technical college.

As part of his *Blueprint for Prosperity*, Governor Walker has proposed a \$35 million expansion of the Wisconsin Fast Forward program, which will empower DWD to reduce waiting lists for programs in high-demand fields at state technical colleges, increase resources for innovative school-to-work programs like the Waukesha County Technical College Dual Enrollment Academy, and provide training for individuals with disabilities into in-demand jobs.

WTEA is an organization of educators who teach classes in a variety of disciplines including electronics, construction, welding, machining, automotive repair, computer networking, engineering, manufacturing, and graphic design. The conference brings together teachers from around Wisconsin to discuss best practices and to learn about innovative programs from around Wisconsin.