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It is my pleasure to provide my support for the Wisconsin application for the New Skills for Youth (NSFY) comprehensive grant program. The focus of the grant, “to dramatically increase the number of students in the U.S. who successfully complete career pathways that begin in high school and culminate in postsecondary degrees and/or industry credentials with labor market value,” aligns well with the goals of the University of Wisconsin System. The University of Wisconsin System plays a key role in preparing Wisconsin’s future workforce and this grant can help advance this work in partnership with the Department of Public Instruction, the Wisconsin Technical College System, and other members of this grant team.

The University of Wisconsin System looks forward to working with the Wisconsin team to support two overarching goals of New Skills For Youth (NSFY) Grant:

1. To dramatically increase the number of students in the U.S. who successfully complete career pathways that begin in secondary school and culminate in postsecondary degrees and/or industry credentials with labor market value: and
2. To catalyze transformational approaches to the design and delivery of programs and policies to increase students’ career-readiness in a cohort of leading states and disseminate lessons learned to the rest of the country.

The University of Wisconsin System already partners with the Department of Public Instruction on two similar projects, the Wisconsin College and Career Readiness Partnership and Academic and Career Planning process.

I have asked Bob Jokisch, Senior Policy Advisor for Financial Aid and Student Success to represent the University of Wisconsin System on the Wisconsin team. Bob coordinates our work across the UW System on both college readiness and dual enrollment policies. These are two key areas for the University of Wisconsin System. I have established a goal of improving college readiness to decrease the number of students who need development education over the next four years. In addition, the UW System is working hard to provide additional opportunities for students to take college level courses in high school so as to increase student success and decrease time to degree.

I want to thank The Council of Chief State School Officers in partnership with the National Association of State Directors of Career Technical Education Consortium and the Education Strategy Group for launching the New Skills for Youth (NSFY) comprehensive grant program, and JPMorgan Chase & Co. for their financial support. This is a wonderful opportunity to better prepare Wisconsin’s future workforce.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ray Cross".

Ray Cross  
President, University of Wisconsin System