

**Assembly Committee on Workforce Development**  
**May 3, 2017**

**Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction**  
**Testimony in Support of Assembly Bill 199**

Representative Neylon and members of the committee, thank you for engaging around the highly successful. The Department of Public Instruction (DPI) is supportive of Assembly Bill 199.

- This bill provides additional funding to promote career and technical education in Wisconsin schools by allocating \$1,000,000 annually for technical education equipment grants to school districts.
- Providing matching grant awards to school districts for the acquisition of equipment that is used in advanced manufacturing fields in the workplace will help better prepare students to enter the workforce.
- Increasing support for career and technical education will increase the number of students graduating with the skills that employer's need, particularly in industries facing workforce shortages.

**Description of Assembly Bill 199**

A school district would be eligible for grants between \$10,000 - \$50,000 to use for acquisition of advanced manufacturing equipment and related software and instructional materials. In order to be eligible School Districts must provide matching funds equal to 100 percent of the grant amount awarded. The bill offers flexibility in providing the match funds, it can be in the form of money contributed from private sources or in-kind services or both.

Grant application must describe the purpose and need for the grant, the projected outcomes that the school district is seeking to achieve as a result of receiving the grant, the amount and source of the required matching funds, and any other information that the department may require under the rulemaking authority authorized under this legislation.

As a condition of receiving a grant the school district must annually file a report with DWD by September 1 of each of the first three fiscal years after the grant was received. The report must describe how the grant moneys were expended, describe the outcomes achieved as a result of receiving the grant, share the best practices employed by the school district regarding the training of pupils in the use of the equipment acquired with the grant moneys, include a plan for sustainability of that training, and provide such other information as the department may require.

AB 199 requires that the DWD Secretary must appoint an advisory committee comprised of representatives of the department, representatives of private organizations engaged in advanced manufacturing, and other persons as the Secretary may select to assist DWD in reviewing and evaluating grant applications.

#### **Legislative Action in Previous Session**

**2013 Wisconsin Act 9** created a workforce training program under the name **Wisconsin Fast Forward (WFF)**. Under this program, the Department awards grants to public and private organizations for the development and implementation of workforce training programs. Funding for the program is provided through two GPR appropriations. Grants are made from a continuing appropriation. The grants program was initially provided \$7.5 million GPR each year in the 2013-15 biennium. **2013 Wisconsin Act 9** also created a biennial appropriation within DWD for the administration of the workforce training program as well for an upgrade of the Department's labor market information system (LMIS) database.

**2013 Wisconsin Act 59** created an appropriation within the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) for career and technical education incentive grants. Under the act, DPI is required to award **career and technical education incentive grants** to school districts in the amount of \$1,000 per each pupil in the school district who, in the prior school year, obtained a diploma from a school in the school district and successfully completed an industry-recognized Certification program approved by DPI.

**2015 WI Act 55 (2015-17 State Budget)** Transferred \$3,000,000 GPR annually from DPI to DWD to eliminate DPI funding for grants to school districts for career and technical education. The program was moved to DWD which is required to make awards of at least \$3,000,000 annually to school districts, with \$1,000 awarded to districts for each pupil who meets the criteria established for the DPI program under current law.