

Fiscal Estimate Narratives

WTCS 12/11/2023

LRB Number	23-5132/1	Introduction Number	SB-0702	Estimate Type	Original
Description funding for technical college oral health care programs					

Assumptions Used in Arriving at Fiscal Estimate

Senate Bill 702 provides that the Wisconsin Technical College System (WTCS) Board may submit a request to the Joint Committee on Finance (JCF) for up to \$20 million in the 2023-25 biennium for technical college district board programs to expand the state's oral health workforce. The request for funding must include a plan that identifies each technical college district board that requests funding, the amount of funding the district board requests, and a detailed description of the eligible expenditures for which the requested funding would be used.

Under the bill, "eligible expenditures" for which the funding can be used include: 1) capital expenditures, such as expenditures for equipment or facility improvements or expansion; 2) expenditures for instructional supplies, teaching materials and resources, consumables, or clinic fees; and 3) hiring bonuses of up to \$5,000 for oral health care instructors if certain requirements are satisfied. Funding may be used only for eligible expenditures to expand an existing oral health care program that has a capacity limit and a current waiting list or to create a new oral health care program after a finding of demonstrated community interest and need for the program. The technical college must provide 20 percent matching funding, except that the technical college must provide no less than 50 percent matching funding for instructor hiring bonuses.

The plan must include requests for 1) up to \$2 million for Northcentral Technical College to expand current dental hygienist and dental assistant programs and for development of a dental therapy program; 2) up to \$1,430,000 for any other technical college that offers a dental hygienist program; and 3) up to \$1 million for any technical college that offers no dental program or only a dental assistant program, to create a new program or expand an existing program. The fiscal effect for WTCS colleges cannot be determined because each college's eligible expenditures are unknown and it is unknown whether a 20 percent or 50 percent match will be required based on the expenditure type. If \$20 million is provided to the technical colleges, the costs to technical colleges will increase at least \$4 million over the 2023-25 biennium. Importantly, this estimate assumes a 20 percent match requirement; any expenditures for hiring bonuses require a larger matching proportion from the technical colleges and therefore the costs to technical colleges will be higher if funds are used for this purpose.

Under the bill, if JCF approves the plan, funding is provided to the WTCS Board. The WTCS Board must reimburse each technical college for eligible expenditures under the approved plan if the technical college complies with the requirements in the bill. If a technical college has not requested reimbursement within 12 months of the plan approval or if the technical college will not implement the program changes described in the plan, the WTCS Board may submit a request to JCF to redistribute the funds for approval under a 14-day passive review process. In addition, the bill requires each technical college to report to the WTCS Board the amount of funding received, a detailed description of all expenditures for which the funding was used, and the impact of the funding on the district board's oral health care programs. The WTCS Board must submit a report to the legislature summarizing the information received from the technical colleges. The plan creation, implementation, oversight, modification, and reporting requirements will increase administrative costs to WTCS colleges and to the WTCS Board. These administrative costs are unknown. It is expected that the administrative costs to the WTCS Board can be absorbed within the agency budget.

Long-Range Fiscal Implications