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## WISCONSIN LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

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### BUILDING WISCONSIN'S WORKFORCE

Room 412 East, State Capitol  
Madison, Wisconsin

August 18, 2008  
10:00 a.m. - 4:40 p.m.

[The following is a summary of the August 18, 2008 meeting of the Special Committee on Building Wisconsin's Workforce. The file copy of this summary has appended to it a copy of each document prepared for or submitted to the committee during the meeting. A digital recording of the meeting is available on our Web site at <http://www.legis.state.wi.us/lc>.]

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#### Call to Order and Roll Call

Chair Strachota called the meeting to order. The roll was called and it was determined that a quorum was present.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Rep. Pat Strachota, Chair; Sen. Robert Wirch, Vice Chair; Reps. Gordon Hintz and Mark Honadel; Sen. Alberta Darling; and Public Members Jim Golembeski, John Keckhaver, Steve Mercaitis, Peter Thillman, Carol Wagenson, Judy Warmuth, and Karen Wilken.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS EXCUSED: Sen. Robert Jauch; and Public Member Mark Kessenich.

COUNCIL STAFF PRESENT: Scott Grosz and Jessica Karls, Staff Attorneys.

APPEARANCES: State Superintendent Elizabeth Burmaster, Department of Public Instruction (DPI); Pat Herdrich, Superintendent, West Bend School District; Tom Still, President, Wisconsin Technology Council (WTC); Dan Clancy, President, Wisconsin Technical College System (WTCS), and Paul Gabriel, Executive Director, Wisconsin Technical College District Boards Association; Kevin Reilly, President, and Gail Bergman, Katharyn May, Larry Rubin, and David Schejbal, University of Wisconsin (UW) System; and Rolf Wegenke, Ph.D, President, Wisconsin Association of Independent Colleges and Universities (WAICU).

## **Approval of the Minutes of the Committee's July 21, 2008 Meeting**

The committee unanimously approved the minutes of the July 21, 2008, meeting by voice vote.

### **Presentations by Invited Speakers**

[Note: PowerPoint presentations and other documents referred to by the speakers are posted on the committee's Internet site.]

#### **State Superintendent Elizabeth Burmaster, DPI**

Superintendent Burmaster explained that education is the foundation for economic growth and development in Wisconsin. She noted that interdependence exists between the school system and communities. She described several programs that school districts use to address workforce needs, including Project Lead the Way; Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM); and cooperative (co-op) education programs. She noted that some school districts are experimenting with career academies.

Superintendent Burmaster described the following models that school districts may use to guide students into careers: (1) career cluster pathway model; and (2) new school counseling model. The career cluster pathway model provides a pathway of courses for a student interested in a particular career cluster. The new school counseling model involves multiple individuals in the counseling of a student.

Superintendent Burmaster explained that regional solutions are needed to meet employer and workforce needs. She described the Business Summit on 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills, which involved the DPI, UW System, and WTCS. In the Summit, industry and business leaders indicated they needed the following skills from employees: critical thinking, problem identification and solving, ethics, nimbleness, personal responsibility, and collaborative communication.

Superintendent Burmaster noted that DPI is in the process of revising the model academic standards for English language arts and mathematics. She explained that the revisions must focus on the international labor market, not only on the Wisconsin labor market.

Following her presentation, Superintendent Burmaster responded to questions from committee members.

#### **Pat Herdrich, Superintendent, West Bend School District**

Ms. Herdrich began her presentation with background information about the West Bend School District. She described the educational system in China. In China, the core subjects taught include Chinese, math, English, science and history, and art and physical education, and emphasis is placed on foreign language. Chinese students are assessed after each grade level. She also noted that the Chinese focus on educating the top 20% of their children and that children who do not advance in the educational system generally work in the manufacturing sector in China.

Ms. Herdrich described the following characteristics of those countries that perform high in education: (1) high ambitions and universal standards; (2) strengthened teacher professionalism; (3) focus on responsibility with accountability; and (4) diversity and personalization. In addition, she described programs that the West Bend School District has used or will use, including Mandarin; career academies for health care, biotech, economy, manufacturing, and world cultures; Project Lead the Way; and teacher evaluation and administrative pay-for-performance. She explained that new requirements should focus on targets, not rules.

Following her presentation, Ms. Herdrich responded to questions from committee members.

### **Tom Still, President, WTC**

Mr. Still described WTC and the growth of the technology and entrepreneurial sectors in Wisconsin. He emphasized the need for workers in Wisconsin to be skilled and globally competitive. He noted that although Wisconsin keeps 80% of its college graduates, Wisconsin does not attract enough college graduates from other states.

Mr. Still described WTC's "Vision 2020: A Model Wisconsin Economy," which includes recommendations to address workforce challenges in the technology field. The recommendations include the following: (1) focus on Wisconsin's interdisciplinary research and development strengths; (2) build around technology-based career clusters; (3) invest in emerging industries; (4) reinforce education collaboration; (5) aspire to be globally competitive; and (6) build the I-Q Corridor, stretching from Chicago to Minneapolis/St. Paul.

Following his presentation, Mr. Still responded to questions from committee members. When asked by Chair Strachota about areas that the Special Committee should focus on, he responded that the Special Committee should focus on math and science; foreign languages; "soft" skills, including writing, communication, and teamwork; financial education; early vocational exposure; and teacher exposure to other ideas, such as best practices.

### **Dan Clancy, President, WTCS, and Paul Gabriel, Executive Director, Wisconsin Technical College District Boards Association**

Mr. Clancy provided an overview of WTCS, including the demographics of students in WTCS. He noted that WTCS can meet the specific training needs of an employer. He discussed the remedial education needed for students who enter WTCS, noting that one-sixth of students are enrolled in remedial courses.

Mr. Clancy and Mr. Gabriel discussed the shared programming between WTCS campuses and WTCS's involvement in regional collaborations, such as the New North and Milwaukee Seven, and statewide collaboration. They also described collaboration with the Department of Workforce Development (DWD), DPI, and private and public higher education.

Mr. Clancy and Mr. Gabriel described specific programs and strategies that WTCS uses to address the needs of its students and local employers. They noted that every program has an advisory committee that includes private employers. They discussed expanded learning options, such as accelerated learning, dual enrollment, and on-line education. They also discussed the Regional Industry Skills Education (RISE) Initiative, which creates a predictable path to advancement for employees and a

means to address skill shortages for employers. They described WTCS's expansion of its instructional capacity for health care occupations and its participation in DWD's Select Committee on Health Care Workforce Development. Lastly, Mr. Clancy emphasized the need to ensure access to students who do not have adequate financial resources.

Following their presentation, Mr. Clancy and Mr. Gabriel responded to questions from committee members.

### **Kevin Reilly, President, UW System**

Mr. Reilly described the growth agenda for the UW System, which includes an increase in baccalaureate degrees, attracting educated workers to Wisconsin, and working with local communities. He noted that a direct relationship exists between the number of baccalaureate degrees and per capita income in a state. He discussed the high rate of college graduates who stay in Wisconsin and the low rate of college graduates from other states who come to Wisconsin to work.

Mr. Reilly emphasized the need for the UW System to attract working adults, especially those with some college credit but no degree. He described the UW System's flexible course offerings, including online, evening, and weekend courses. He noted that students who complete remedial education are just as likely to graduate as those who do not need remedial education.

Mr. Reilly described the transfer agreements between the UW System and WTCS and indicated that additional transfer agreements would be discussed in the future. In addition, he described an Internet credit transfer program that demonstrates how credits may be transferred between institutions. He discussed how the UW System has addressed shortages in the health care and engineering fields, noting the collaboration between different UW campuses and between the UW System and WTCS.

Following his presentation, Mr. Reilly, along with Gail Bergman, Katharyn May, Larry Rubin, and David Schejbal, responded to questions from committee members.

### **Rolf Wegenke, Ph.D, President, WAICU**

Mr. Wegenke provided information about the members of WAICU, including statistics about student enrollment; degrees awarded; productivity and growth in key occupational areas, such as engineering, computer science, and health care; and share of teacher certifications. He emphasized the need for different educational institutions to work together to address workforce needs.

Mr. Wegenke noted that private colleges and universities have tailored their curriculum to meet the needs of local employers. For example, Carroll University created a printing management curriculum for Quad Graphics employees. He recommended the following to address workforce needs: (1) provide means-tested financial aid; (2) increasingly involve employers, such as providing an education tax credit for employers who pay tuition for employees; and (3) coordinate systems to target the workforce needs, including providing incentives to students and institutions.

Following his presentation, Mr. Wegenke responded to questions from committee members.

### **Discussion of Committee Assignment**

Chair Strachota described the tentative agenda for the committee's September 23, 2008, meeting. She noted that the committee would hear from invited speakers about regional perspectives regarding workforce shortage issues.

### **Other Business**

There was no other business brought before the committee.

### **Plans for Future Meetings**

The next meeting of the Special Committee will be *Tuesday, September 23, 2008, in Room 412 East, State Capitol, Madison*. Chair Strachota noted that future meetings may be held on October 21, 2008, and November 17, 2008.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 4:40 p.m.

JK:ksm