

MINUTES OF MEETING
WISCONSIN TECHNICAL COLLEGE SYSTEM (WTCS) BOARD
NOVEMBER 12-13, 2024
MID-STATE TECHNICAL COLLEGE

Tuesday, November 11, 2024

Members Present: Quincey Daniels, Jr., Janixa Franco Gonzalez, Douglas Holton, Sr., Dan Klecker, Amy Pechacek, Sara Rogers, Daniel Sperberg, Leslie Svacina, S. Mark Tyler, Sharon Wendt for Jill Underly, Karen Walsh.

Members Absent: Lindsay Blumer, Alex Lasry.

System Office Staff Present: Sarah Arneson, Hilary Barker, Rachel Colla, Julie Drake, Tou Ya Khang, Betsy Leonard, Christina Lorge, Ward Lyon, Colleen McCabe, Layla Merrifield, Jeremy Nichols, Katy Pettersen, Dan Scanlon, Chrystal Seeley-Schreck, Lenard Simpson, Latisha Spence-Brookens, Megan Stritchko, Brandon Trujillo, Julie Tyznik, Ann Westrich, Danika Woods, James Zylstra.

District/Others Present: Joni Geroux, Erin Greenawald, Chippewa Valley Technical College; Chuck Bolstad, Diane Handrick, District Boards Association; Phillip Blair, Gamber-Johnson; Greg Bruckbauer, Karen Brzezinski, Jackie Esselman, Logan Hamman, Mandy Lang, Betty Bruski Mallek, Peter Mallek, Chelsea Martin, Rick Merdan, Shelly Mondeik, Angie Morgan, Suzanne Rathe, Brad Russell, Dylan Saylor, Chris Severson, Angie Susa, Are Vang, Mid-State Technical College; Bonnie Baerwald, Moraine Park Technical College; Kate Ferrel, Nicolet Area Technical College; Jeannie Worden, Northcentral Technical College; Kristen Raney, Northeast Wisconsin Technical College; Kim Pearson, Northwood Technical College; Karen Bolstad, Southwest Wisconsin Technical College; Kai Brito, Wisconsin Student Government.

Board President Tyler called the meeting to order at 4:31 pm. Julie Drake read the open meeting statement and roll call indicated that a quorum was present.

Board President Tyler thanked President Dr. Shelly Mondeik and her team for hosting the WTCS Board. Dr. Mondeik welcomed the Board.

WTCS Ambassador Dylan Saylor, graduate of Mid-State's Criminal Justice program, now attending the Law Enforcement Academy addressed the Board.

ITEM A: Approval of September 10-11, 2024, Meeting Minutes

It was moved by Board Member Sperberg, seconded by Board Member Rogers, that the September 10-11, 2024 meeting minutes be approved. Motion carried unanimously.

Board Member Franco Gonzalez left the meeting at 4:41 pm.

ITEM B: Report of the Board President

The Universities of Wisconsin Board of Regents report for September was shared with Board Members on November 8, 2024.

Board President Tyler is a member of the Board Workgroup on Strategic Directions, sharing comments on the process and how well the mission, vision and values align.

System President Merrifield and Board Member Underly were invited to the Classroom to Career Summit at The White House on November 13.

Board President Tyler congratulated Executive Vice President James Zylstra for his 29 years of state service, 19 at WTCS, who will be retiring on January 10, 2025. He thanked Mr. Zylstra for sharing his guidance and wisdom. Mr. Zylstra thanked the Board, staff and colleges who he enjoyed working with over the years.

Board Member Franco Gonzalez joined the meeting at 4:44 pm.

ITEM C: Report of the System President

System President Layla Merrifield shared System updates:

- WisCORE, based on the National Conference on Race and Ethnicity (N-CORE), was held at Waukesha County Technical College (WCTC) on October 24-25, 2024. All 16 of Wisconsin's technical colleges sent representatives with a total of 187 attendees where the goal is to include students in WTCS conversations regarding equity and inclusion in order to improve student success outcomes. Merrifield thanked WCTC for hosting the event and shared that next year's event will be held at Fox Valley Technical College.
- The Common Ground Conference was held October 29-30, 2024 at Northeast Wisconsin Technical College (NWTC) with more than 215 attendees of Adult Education practitioners and advocates. Special thanks to President Kristen Raney who opened the conference challenging attendees to review their processes to ensure they are open to all students. The conference had tracks focused on Re-entry, GED/HSED, English for speakers of other languages, WIOA partnerships, digital literacy, workforce needs and integrated education and training (IET).
- The Foster Youth Program was hosted on November 1 by Lakeshore College with attendees from NWTC, St. Norbert, Lakeland University and UW-Green Bay to share updates on their initiatives supporting foster youth college completion.
- Manufacturing Month, Wisconsin's largest industry, was celebrated throughout October with many colleges hosting events.
- National Apprenticeship Week will take place November 17-23, 2024. WTCS will highlight Ascendium's Tools for the Trade scholarships, careers and opportunities available.
- American Institutes for Research (AIR) interviewed System President Merrifield. WTCS Provost and Vice President Dr. Colleen McCabe will present at Achieving the Dream Conference February 18-21, 2025 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Another perfect example of the System's work being exemplified across the country.
- Enrollment Grant Success – each WTCS college received \$200,00 in FY 2022-23 and 2023-24 to make investments in software, marketing and outreach. A video was shared of [Mid-State Technical College's success](#).

Mid-State Technical College and President Dr. Shelly Mondeik have been recognized with several awards:

- The Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT) honored Dr. Shelly Mondeik with the 2024 Chief Executive Officer Award for the Central Region (Minnesota, Michigan, Iowa, Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Missouri, Kentucky and Ohio).
- Dr. Shelly Mondeik was recognized at the Annual ACCT Leadership Congress in Seattle in October.

- Recently the Advanced Manufacturing, Engineering Technology and Apprenticeship (AMETA™) Center was named a Top 10 Bellwether Finalist in the category of Planning, Governance and Finance. The Bellwether is a nationally recognized award program that highlights trend-setting community college programs deemed worthy of replication.

ITEM D: Teaching & Learning – Partnerships Through Collaboration

Wisconsin Technical College System Director of Agriculture and Natural Resources Betsy Leonard and Director of Business, General Education and Transfer Sarah Arneson provided an overview of positive impacts of successful partnerships the System Office and System colleges engage with, highlighting work with students, employers and a wide variety of local, state and national partners across sectors.

Mid-State Technical College Dean, School of Applied Technology Ryan Kawski, Associate Vice President of Academics Suzanne Rathe, Dean of Admissions and Recruitment Jackie Esselman and Articulation Specialist Chelsea Martin discussed the benefits and expansion their college has experienced due to elevated partnerships, especially in the areas of K-12 education, work with other institutions in higher education and collaboration with community partners.

Board Member Holton arrived at the meeting at 5:01 pm.

Board Member Klecker inquired how many students continue with higher education after high school. Last year 17% continued with higher education and for those taking Dual Credit 35% went on to direct admission, but more are coming back in that one-to-three-year time frame.

Kawski explained that the AMETA project partners included 130 businesses; 150 individuals; Gamber-Johnson; 8 state/federal grants, all done without going to referendum. Board Member Pechacek shared that the Governor's Department of Workforce Development provided \$9 million for the project. Board President Tyler applauded Mid-State for their work with community partners to build the AMETA Center.

Rathe and Martin shared that they have partnerships with four-year Institutions with 64% of their students transferring to UW-Stevens Point. The goal is to have all graduates workforce and transfer ready. Mid-State has had a 30% growth in headcount compared to the period before the COVID-19 pandemic and 222 in the AMETA Center. Board Member Holton asked if the AMETA Center is maxed out in number of students. Kawski explained that they are not, with the potential for growth with evening programming and an additional 8.7 acres with 48,000 square feet.

Board Members Svacina and Franco Gonzalez left the meeting at 5:22 pm.

Board President Tyler asked how much is being saved in tuition costs for high school students through Dual Credit. At Mid-State, the savings is \$1.6 million and Systemwide it is \$41.6 million. The [Dual Credit report](#) has been updated and is located on the website indicating a savings of \$44.2 million.

System President Merrifield asked Dr. Mondeik to share the need in Adams County, one of Wisconsin's most distressed counties. Mondeik indicated that almost 50% of those who graduate from high school do not pursue higher education or work. They have grown the Adams Center (not a campus) from 155 students to 630 students and brought resources and programs to them. They received a three-year grant to provide a shuttle between their four campuses and UW-Stevens Point dorms to reduce barriers.

Board Member Klecker was first introduced to Mid-State Technical College when he worked for Wisconsin Automobile & Truck Dealers Association when he attended a career fair. While not a lot of students visited his table, the best thing about that day was when Mid-State faculty invited him to see

the labs and started a relationship that evening and shared so many techniques for recruitment that he still uses today. He expressed kudos to Dr. Mondeik and her team.

ITEM G: Futuremaker Partner Award

The Board recognized Gamber-Johnson with the Board's Futuremaker Partner Award for their ongoing partnership with Mid-State Technical College and their strong commitment to fostering growth in the community through their partnership and their dedication to developing local talent and ensuring that they have a well-prepared workforce for years to come.

It was moved by Board Member Pechacek, seconded by Board Member Klecker, to recess the meeting until Wednesday, November 13, 2024. The Board adjourned at 6:11 pm. Motion carried unanimously.

Wednesday, November 13, 2024

Members Present: Quincey Daniels, Jr., Janixa Franco Gonzalez, Douglas Holton, Sr., Dan Klecker, Amy Pechacek, Sara Rogers, Daniel Sperberg, Leslie Svacina, S. Mark Tyler, Sharon Wendt for Jill Underly, Karen Walsh.

Members Absent: Lindsay Blumer, Alex Lasry

System Office Staff Present: Sarah Arneson, Hilary Barker, Rachel Colla, Julie Drake, Mandy Johnson, Tou Ya Khang, Colleen Larsen, Betsy Leonard, Christina Lorge, Ward Lyon, Joel Mathis, Colleen McCabe, Carolann Nelson, Jeremy Nichols, Katy Pettersen, Dan Scanlon, Chrystal Seeley-Schreck, Lenard Simpson, Latisha Spence-Brookens, Megan Stritchko, Brandon Trujillo, Julie Tyznik, James Zylstra.

District/Others Present: Tracy Pierner, Blackhawk Technical College; Joni Geroux, Lynette Livingston, Chippewa Valley Technical College; Chuck Bolstad, Diane Handrick, District Boards Association; Brenda Riesterer, Lakeshore Technical College; Jack Daniels, III, Valentina Ahedo, Fred Brechlin, Sylvia Ramirez, Madison Area Technical College; Brigitta Altmann-Austin, Rick Anderson, Karen Brzezinski, Logan Hamman, Mandy Lang, Betty Bruski Mallek, Peter Mallek, Rick Merdan, Shelly Mondeik, Suzanne Rathe, Angie Susa, Daniel Wall, Mid-State Technical College; Anthony Cruz, Milwaukee Area Technical College; Bonnie Baerwald, Jim Barrett, Moraine Park Technical College; Jenna Allen, Kate Ferrel, Nicolet Area Technical College; Jeannie Worden, Northcentral Technical College; Kim Pearson, Northwood Technical College; Rich Barnhouse, Waukesha County Technical College; Roger Stanford, Western Technical College; Mike Mosher, Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development; Kai Brito, Wisconsin Student Government.

Board President Tyler called the meeting to order at 9:31 am. Julie Drake read the open meeting statement and roll call indicated that a quorum was present.

Board President Tyler commended Mid-State on the impressive AMETA Center and the many partners to bring it to fruition, showing the broad base of community support.

ITEM H: Wisconsin Technical College District Boards Association

Wisconsin Technical College District Boards Association (DBA) President and Southwest Wisconsin Technical College Trustee Chuck Bolstad and DBA Interim Executive Director Diane Handrick updated the Board on recent activities.

In October, 53 DBA members attended the Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT) Leadership Congress in Seattle, Washington where WTCS was prominently featured. Mid-State President Dr. Shelly Mondeik received the 2024 Central Regional CEO Award and was also recently recognized as

one of the Top 50 Women Leaders of Wisconsin for 2024 by *Women We Admire*. Under Mondeik's leadership, the college saw over a 20% increase in headcount in 2022 and 2023.

The DBA is transitioning and hiring an executive director, with a proposal to the full Board of Directors to make Handrick's interim role permanent on November 22.

The DBA fall meeting will be held at Fox Valley Technical College November 20-22, focusing on universal design in education and neurodiversity. Dr. Maureen Dunne, author of *The Neurodiversity Edge*, will be speaking on the topic of neurodivergence in the workplace.

In January 2025, DBA will host a Legislative Seminar with legislative appointments on January 16 followed by an ACCT Governance Leadership Institute on January 17 which is exclusive to college presidents and trustees.

ITEM J: WTCS Presidents' Association

Dr. Rich Barnhouse, president of Waukesha County Technical College and chair of the Association, updated the Board on recent activities.

Barnhouse highlighted the impressive AMETA Center and how it represents our System and how quickly we continue to move forward, continuously changing to meet the demands of employers. Our success is because of the wonderful partnership between the Board, colleges, WTCS and businesses.

The Presidents' Association will meet the afternoon of November 13 to discuss the benefit consortium, Aspen Board Development, the Biennial Budget, Legislative Summit planning and committee updates.

In September, they discussed aligning general education for transferability, making it seamless for students and making sure students are not taking courses that are not transferable.

Several technical colleges are supporting students affected by UW campus closures, highlighting a strong partnership.

Dr. Barnhouse recognized the following:

- Madison College President Dr. Daniels, retiring in December.
- WTCS Executive Vice President James Zylstra, retiring in January.
- Mid-State President Dr. Mondeik on her successes.

Barnhouse also thanked and recognized all veterans.

Board President Tyler praised Wisconsin's technical colleges for their collaboration with four-year institutions, focusing on student success.

ITEM K: Consent Agenda

It was moved by Board Member Klecker, seconded by Board Member Holton that the Board approve the program and facilities development requests with the exception of the Waukesha County Technical College facilities development requests. Motion carried unanimously.

It was moved by Board Member Wendt, seconded by Board Member Pechacek that the Board approve the facility development requests for Waukesha County Technical College. Board Member Franco Gonzalez abstained. Motion carried.

ITEM I: Mid-State Technical College – Project Concept Review – Remodeling for Dental Programs at the Wisconsin Rapids Campus, Remodeling and Construction of Facilities at the Adams Campus

WTCS Facilities Director Dan Scanlon provided an overview of the projects, which is the first review of two for these projects.

It was moved by Board Member Sperberg, seconded by Board Member Rogers, that upon the recommendation of the president of the Wisconsin Technical College System, the Wisconsin Technical College System Board finds that the concepts for Mid-State Technical College’s proposed construction and remodeling at the Adams Campus and remodeling at the Wisconsin Rapids Campus are reasonable. The final scope and design of the projects are subject to review and approval by the Board as required by s. 38.04(10) Stats.

Board Member Tyler inquired about community use of the dental facility, and Dr. Mondeik clarified it is for dental assistant programs, with future potential for community services.

Board Member Holton raised concerns about the \$560/square foot cost for the Adams Campus remodel, and Scanlon explained the high costs due to extensive plumbing and floor replacement.

ITEM J: Madison Area Technical College – Project Review – Construction of Additional and Remodeling of Existing Facilities at the Goodman South Campus in Madison

WTCS Facilities Director Dan Scanlon provided an overview of the project where the District proposes to construct and remodel facilities for an Early Learning Center (ELC) at Goodman South Campus, costing \$8.4 million, funded by \$2.5 million in district borrowing and gifts, grants and donations totaling \$5.9 million.

Scanlon shared that \$2.5 million is unusual, and this is the first time it has been used. Statutes allow the district to borrow against their \$1.5 allowance, up to \$1 million additional if they have federal matching funds. So, they have used their two-year allowance and \$1 million for the next two years for the campus.

Board Member Pechacek noted that Dr. Daniels and Madison College received a \$3.3 million Workforce Innovation Grant and an additional \$1 million from the Governor for early childhood programs. The Board emphasized the importance of this work.

It was moved by Board Member Wendt, seconded by Board Member Franco Gonzalez, that upon the recommendation of the president of the Wisconsin Technical College System, the Wisconsin Technical College System Board grants approval to the Madison Area Technical College System District to construct additional and remodel existing facilities at the Goodman South Campus in Madison at a cost of \$8,400,000. Motion carried unanimously.

ITEM K: 2024-27 WTCS Facilities Plan

WTCS Facilities Director Dan Scanlon presented the 2024-2027 WTCS Facilities Plan, summarizing capital maintenance budgets and planned projects.

Board President Tyler suggested asking the legislature to increase the \$1.5 million consent agenda limit to \$2.5 or \$3 million, as projects above this amount require a two-step review.

Board Member Holton inquired about the basis for the request, and Scanlon cited rising construction costs and difficulty finding contractors for smaller projects.

It was moved by Board Member Wendt, seconded by Board Member Sperberg, that upon the recommendation of the Wisconsin Technical College System president, the Wisconsin Technical College System Board accepts the 2024-2027 WTCS Facilities Plan. Individual projects included in the Plan are subject to the Board’s review and approval, pursuant to s. 38.04(10) Stats. Motion carried unanimously.

ITEM L: WTCS 2024 Five-Year Follow-up Report of 2017-18 Graduates

WTCS Director of Strategic Directions Katy Pettersen provided an overview of the 2024 Five-Year Follow-up Report for 2017-18 graduates, which had a 23% response rate.

The median salary grew impressively by 67%, from \$40,245 six months after graduation to \$67,080 five years later. Notably, 83% of alumni live and work in Wisconsin, with 58% staying in their college district. Graduates reported high satisfaction, with 82% finding their education important for starting a career and 72% for career advancement. Additionally, 85% would recommend a technical college. Sixty percent took further career-related courses, and 28% earned a bachelor’s degree or higher.

The Board reconvened at 10:45 after a break.

ITEM M: Strategic Directions Development 2026-2030

Wisconsin Technical College System Provost and Vice President Dr. Colleen McCabe and Director of Strategic Directions Katy Pettersen provided an update on developing the Board’s 2026-2030 Strategic Directions and the work conducted to-date.

Board President Tyler indicated that the Board Workgroup did an environmental scan of the colleges missions, visions and values and found many similarities as well as what is unique for each college district. We are a system, but we have 16 vastly different districts that we want to value.

The two workgroups reviewed the current mission statement and the Board workgroup found that the words “training” and “accessible” could be added, while the System Office workgroup found the words “pillar” or “pillar of a thriving community,” “collaboration” and “innovation” could be considered.

Board Member Rogers suggested honing in on the priorities, which is a roadmap of how the input can be woven together and how others can add input.

A survey will go out to all WTCS stakeholders to get feedback, and the Board and staff groups will review that feedback to ensure we are moving in the right direction.

Board Member Klecker volunteered to be on this workgroup and has some ideas from a business side, but he has never participated in anything like this and appreciates Dr. McCabe’s and Ms. Pettersen’s process and activities they have implemented with the workgroups. He looks forward to continuing the process.

Board President Tyler asked if our colleges’ priorities and missions are similar or different than technical/community colleges outside of Wisconsin. Dr. McCabe feels WTCS is different, because we are leaders and others are highlighting our work as we continuously keep things fresh and innovative. Tyler added that we have colleges that are distinctive in some ways and part of the system in other ways, and we are in an exceptionally good spot as Dr. Barnhouse articulated this morning. We function as a System with college presidents in lockstep and the power of that is undeniable. WTCS Executive Vice President Zylstra referenced a recent article by Advance CTE on [Leveraging Learning Voice in CTE: Empowering Learners, Enhancing CTE](#), which highlights five states as leaders with Wisconsin being one of them.

Board President Tyler sees advertisements for WyoTech and asked if we should market outside of Wisconsin to meet our employer's needs and give everyone possible a sense of belonging.

Board Member Daniels would like the group to consider adding the word "justice" to the values, which encompasses inclusion.

The Board will have Strategic Directions updates at all board meetings until next November.

ITEM N: Legislative Update

WTCS Executive Vice President James Zylstra, along with Policy Advisors Megan Stritchko and Brandon Trujillo and DBA Interim Executive Director Diane Handrick provided an overview of legislative items affecting the System.

Zylstra noted the legislature's absence over the past six months and changes following the elections, including four additional Democrats in the Senate and two members of Joint Finance losing their elections.

System President Merrifield will meet with legislature leadership about the WTCS budget request, which the Governor's office viewed as reasonable.

Trujillo briefed the Board on 2025 Wisconsin Student Government initiatives and priorities.

Handrick, the new Interim Executive Director of DBA, provided an introduction. She has three years with the DBA and previously served as a Wisconsin State Assembly staffer for five representatives (1999-2021) and began her government service career as an aide to a U.S. Senator. The DBA is committed to unified messaging with WTCS and supporting students and the colleges.

WTCS Policy Advisor Stritchko shared federal updates.

Board President Tyler expressed concern about the potential disbanding of the Department of Education (DOE) and its impact on WTCS. Ms. Stritchko noted the effects are not known until more information is released. Tyler requested the Board be kept informed of developments.

Board President Tyler noted speculation that the loss of Republican seats might lead to more openness to funding initiatives. Zylstra emphasized that much of it is speculation and the need for closer collaboration in the Senate and Assembly.

ITEM O: Announcements/Adjourn

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board will be held January 21, 2025, at the Hill Farms Office Building in Madison.

It was moved by Board Member Pechacek, seconded by Board Member Sperberg, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 11:28 am.

Respectfully submitted,
Julie Drake