

# Help Plant the Seeds

Governor **Scott Walker** nixes accountability board, promotes technical schools, and addresses alternative licensure options for educators

**H**ammering home themes already laid out prior to introduction of the 2015-17 biennial budget, Governor Scott Walker told convention attendees he opposed an “accountability board” suggested by legislators. Walker also asked for help from school board members to plant the seed in young minds that Wisconsin’s technical schools are an underutilized gem offering promising careers.

On accountability, which is one of the first major educational measures discussed in the new Legislature, Walker said, “I don’t want an extra set of bureaucrats or politicians of either party ... making decisions about sanctions. I trust parents. The best way to be accountable is to provide objective information for communities.”

He added, “My belief is that every school that receives public funds should be accountable. We’re going to work with you, but, ultimately, we need to trust parents.”

Using the example of a NASA scientist who wants to teach physics in a secondary school, Walker proposes an alternative certification process determined by content mastery. While details at this writing are sketchy, the ability to actually teach does not appear to be part of the recommendation.

“The decision (about approving alternative certification) is still ultimately up to (school board members). We have an incredible opportunity. Career and technical education is one of the most important things we can do.” Walker noted the shortage of technical employees faced by Wisconsin manufacturers. “We have a

need today. We need to do more to attract students into these areas.

“It’s not just about a job — these are careers,” Walker added. “We need to treat our welders with the same respect as doctors and lawyers. We need more than just resources — we need more of a focus and acceptance of the tremendous career opportunities.”

Walker said that *all* school employees need to send the message to students about impressive careers available through the technical colleges. He offered that message needs to impress upon students that a two-year degree is “just as noble and needed and accepted” as a student



**“My belief is that every school that receives public funds should be accountable.”**

attending a university. “We need to start that discussion early on,” suggesting sixth-grade career exploration as a good starting place.

Concluding, Walker asked school board members to, “Help us send a clear message that there’s value in a two-year degree.” ■

## ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES FOR EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES

Count on Balestrieri, the leading specialist in environmental services, for your next project. We offer turn-key solutions, from lead and asbestos abatement to interior demolition and hazardous waste removal. With decades of successful environmental service projects for all types of educational facilities, we understand what it takes to meet and exceed your expectations.

**800.453.2965**  
**www.BalestrieriGroup.com**

