



"Leadership in Public School Governance"

JOHN H. ASHLEY, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

122 W. WASHINGTON AVENUE, MADISON, WI 53703
PHONE: 608-257-2622 FAX: 608-257-8386

TO: Members, Senate Committee on Workforce Development, Military Affairs and Senior Issues
FROM: Dan Rossmiller, WASB Government Relations Director
DATE: May 24, 2017
RE: SUPPORT for SENATE BILL 127, relating to career and technical education incentive grants

The Wisconsin Association of School Boards (WASB) **supports** Senate Bill 127.

The WASB testified in favor of the original proposal by the late Sen. Gudex and Rep. Petryk to create this grant program and we support the robust funding mechanism provided under this bill to ensure the continued growth of robust and focused career and technical education programs in our schools.

In support of the bill, several points stand out:

- Career and technical education incentive grants are only awarded to school districts that have an industry-recognized certification program approved by the State Superintendent. Thus, the grant program encourages school districts to establish industry-recognized certification programs. Having industry-recognized certification programs in our public schools provides benefits both to industry and to students. It helps to ensure that students are acquiring skills that will prepare them for success after high school and it helps to ensure that Wisconsin will have the supply of well-trained skilled workers it needs to grow our economy and make our state an attractive location for companies seeking to expand or locate;
- Career and technical education incentive grants are only awarded if the pupil successfully completes an industry-recognized certification program in a school year in which the certification program was approved by Department of Public Instruction (DPI). Thus, these grants encourage school districts to make sure students don't just enroll in these classes and programs but actually achieve industry certification. Removing the per pupil cap on the award of grants to individual districts will reward districts in which pupils receive multiple industry certifications. This encourages districts to help pupils to be both more well-rounded in their skill sets and, presumably, more adaptable and more employable.
- The career and technical education incentive grant program helps to foster dialogue around addressing workforce shortages in our state. It requires the DPI to confer with the Department of Workforce Development (DWD) and the Wisconsin Technical College System (WTCS) on an annual basis to identify industries and occupations that face workforce shortages or shortages of adequately trained entry-level workers; and
- This bill would eliminate the need for pro-ration of grants when more students succeed in earning industry-recognized certifications exceeds the grant appropriation. 2013 Wisconsin Act 59, which created the career and technical education incentive grant program, provides that if the appropriation in any fiscal year is insufficient to pay the full amount, then DPI must prorate the amount of its payments among school districts eligible for an incentive grant. By fully funding these grants districts have no disincentive to investing in creating and expanding classes and programs leading to industry-recognized certifications.

For all of these reasons, we encourage you to support Senate Bill 127.