



STATE OF WISCONSIN

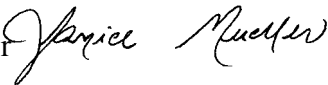
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Janice Mueller
State Auditor

DATE: January 6, 2010

TO: Senator Kathleen Vinehout and
Representative Peter Barca, Co-chairpersons
Joint Legislative Audit Committee

FROM: Janice Mueller 
State Auditor

SUBJECT: Proposed Audit of the Wisconsin Technical College System's (WTCS's)
Educational Programs for Working Adults—Background Information

At your request, we have gathered some background information the Joint Legislative Audit Committee may find useful in considering an audit of WTCS's educational programs for working adults. WTCS includes 48 campuses in 16 technical college districts that are local units of government and are each governed by an appointed board. The Wisconsin Technical College System Board, a state agency, establishes statewide policies and standards for the educational programs and services provided in the 16 technical college districts, which are directly responsible for operating their schools and programs.

WTCS is responsible for developing educational programs below the baccalaureate level, and provides occupational education, training, and retraining through more than 300 educational programs. WTCS offers associate degree programs, technical diplomas and certificates, and customized training provided directly to businesses. In fiscal year 2007-08, 69,632 full-time equivalent students were enrolled at WTCS, and 23,617 degrees were granted.

Concerns have been raised about the number and type of WTCS courses offered during the mid-afternoon and evening because these courses are important to working individuals interested in enrolling. Concerns have also been raised about the extent to which technical college districts rent their classroom space to private educational institutions, rather than use the space to offer their own mid-afternoon or evening courses. In addition, questions have been raised about efforts taken by WTCS to respond effectively to the needs of dislocated workers or others negatively affected by the current economic recession.

An audit of WTCS's educational programs for working adults could:

- examine the Wisconsin Technical College System Board's statewide policies and standards for educational programs, particularly any pertaining to when courses are scheduled, as well as the relevant policies that the technical college districts have promulgated;

- determine the times courses are offered for selected educational programs in the technical college districts;
- analyze how other midwestern states provide courses during late afternoons and evenings;
- determine the extent to which technical college districts rent classroom space to private educational institutions and the times of day the space is rented;
- analyze efforts that have been taken by WTCS to assess the level of interest in mid-afternoon and evening courses among both current and potential students; and
- analyze efforts that have been taken by WTCS and other state agencies to offer education and training to workers dislocated or negatively affected by the current economic downturn.

I hope you find this information helpful. If you have any additional questions regarding this request, please contact me.

JM/DS/bm

cc: Senator Robert Jauch
Senator Mark Miller
Senator Robert Cowles
Senator Mary Lazich

Representative Andy Jorgensen
Representative Mark Pocan
Representative Bill Kramer
Representative Samantha Kerkman

Daniel Clancy, President
Wisconsin Technical College System