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## ADMINISTRATIVE SALARIES AND STAFFING IN TECHNICAL COLLEGE DISTRICTS

The Wisconsin Technical College System Board sets statewide policies and standards for technical college educational programs and services and is the coordinating agency for the State's 16 technical college districts. Each district is governed by a local board, which is authorized to hire staff and determine salaries. In fiscal year (FY) 1996-97, the districts spent \$63.4 million to compensate 787.4 full-time equivalent administrators. This figure includes salaries and fringe benefits paid to senior administrators, such as technical college presidents; other professional administrators and supervisors, such as directors of admissions and student development; and faculty with assigned administrative responsibilities, whose teaching time is counted separately.

### Compensation of Senior Administrators Varies Significantly Among Districts

We examined FY 1996-97 salary information for four senior-level administrative positions in the Wisconsin technical college districts: the president or chief executive officer, the chief academic officer, the chief business affairs officer, and the chief student affairs officer. The salaries of district presidents averaged \$101,700 but ranged from a high of \$128,600 to a low of \$74,397. The highest and lowest salaries for chief academic officers and chief business officers differed by approximately \$30,000, while salaries for student affairs officers varied by almost \$40,000. On average, however, salaries for senior administrators in the 16 districts were lower than the average salaries for similar positions at 56 two-year midwestern public colleges. For example, other midwestern college presidents earned 5.6 percent more than the average annual salary of Wisconsin technical college presidents.

In addition to salaries, senior administrators—technical college presidents—a variety of fringe benefits that other district staff do not typically receive. The value of these expanded benefits also varies significantly among districts. In FY 1996-97, 15 districts provided their presidents with an automobile or a vehicle allowance, the value of which ranged from \$8,640 to \$1,268. Eight districts provided their presidents with tax-sheltered annuities, which ranged in value from \$10,000 to \$1,500, and two districts paid their presidents bonuses: one was \$5,000, and the other was \$4,000. In addition, several districts provided their presidents with enhanced retirement benefits, paid health insurance after retirement, and paid sabbatical leaves.

### Total Administrative Salaries Have Increased

From FY 1991-92 through FY 1996-97, average salary increases for senior and other professional administrators, supervisors, and faculty working in assigned administrative capacities were higher at Wisconsin technical colleges than increases nationwide. Nationally, hourly administrative salaries at public colleges and universities increased 17.1 percent; the Wisconsin technical college districts showed an average increase of 22.3 percent. However, administrative salaries increased at different rates among the districts: in 4 Wisconsin districts the increase was less than or similar to the national rate; in the remaining 12 districts it exceeded 20 percent, and in 3 of these it exceeded 30 percent.

Salary increases were lower for administrators than for faculty and other staff. The average rate of increase was 25.3 percent for faculty in Wisconsin technical college districts, and 26.1 percent for staff.

### Administrative Positions Increased While the Number of Students and Faculty Decreased

Although administrative staffing levels vary substantially among the districts, the number of administrative positions

increased 4.5 percent overall from FY 1991-92 through FY 1996-97. The number of full-time equivalent students decreased by 10.5 percent during the same period, while the number of faculty decreased by 2.1 percent. Five districts reduced the number of administrators by 10 percent or more; five other districts increased the number of administrators by more than 10 percent.

### **District Boards Need More Information On Salaries and Staffing**

The Wisconsin Technical College System Board collects salary and staffing data to help determine the amount of state aid for each district, and this information is provided to the districts. However, the Wisconsin Technical College System Board has not analyzed and reported system-wide salary and staffing information in a way that could help local districts understand how their staffing and salary decisions compare to those of other districts or the system as a whole. Because such information has not been available, the local boards have not determined whether variances are the result of differences in organizational structure, geographic area, educational programs, cost of living, enrollment, or other factors.

To facilitate comparisons of current salaries and staffing levels among districts, as well as salary and staffing trends, we have recommended that the Wisconsin Technical College System Board regularly provide local district boards with additional management information.

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