

Letter Report

Dental Education Contract

Marquette University School of Dentistry

August 2005



Legislative Audit Bureau

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STATE OF WISCONSIN
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Janice Mueller
State Auditor

August 5, 2005

Senator Carol A. Roessler and
Representative Suzanne Jeskewitz, Co-chairpersons
Joint Legislative Audit Committee
State Capitol
Madison, Wisconsin 53702

Dear Senator Roessler and Representative Jeskewitz:

As required by s. 39.46, Wis. Stats., we have completed a limited-scope review of the dental education contract between the State of Wisconsin and the Marquette University School of Dentistry for fiscal year (FY) 2001-02 through FY 2003-04. In FY 2003-04, the State provided \$8,753 each to a maximum of 145 Wisconsin residents enrolled in the undergraduate dental education program, for a total of nearly \$1.3 million. The overall funding increased to \$1.4 million in FY 2004-05; however, the maximum number of students also increased, effectively keeping the per capita aid payment the same.

Overall, we found that Marquette University was in compliance with its contract with the State and with requirements set forth in s. 39.46, Wis. Stats. During our review, we found the students for whom Marquette University claimed tuition aid were certified by the Higher Educational Aids Board as Wisconsin residents and were eligible to receive this state aid. In addition, we found that Marquette University expended state funds only for the undergraduate dental school program, gave preference in admissions to Wisconsin residents, and promoted minority enrollment.

We appreciate the courtesy and cooperation extended to us by Marquette University staff during our review.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Janice Mueller".

Janice Mueller
State Auditor

JM/JG/bm

cc: Senator Robert Cowles
Senator Scott Fitzgerald
Senator Mark Miller
Senator Julie Lassa

Representative Samantha Kerkman
Representative Dean Kaufert
Representative David Travis
Representative David Cullen

Ms. Margaret Burns, Comptroller
Marquette University

Ms. Connie Hutchison, Executive Secretary
Higher Educational Aids Board

DENTAL EDUCATION CONTRACT

Marquette University operates the only dental school in the State of Wisconsin. Since 1973, the State, through the Higher Educational Aids Board, has contracted with the Marquette University School of Dentistry to provide dental education services for Wisconsin residents. As authorized under s. 20.235(1)(d), Wis. Stats., and in accordance with the terms of the contract with the School of Dentistry, the State provides a specified per capita aid payment for a prescribed maximum number of Wisconsin residents enrolled as full-time students in the undergraduate dental education program.

As required by s. 39.46(1), Wis. Stats., the Legislative Audit Bureau reviews the Marquette University School of Dentistry's compliance with contract provisions and with various statutory requirements. For fiscal year (FY) 2001-02 through FY 2003-04, we tested the residency and the enrollment status of dental students for whom Marquette University claimed tuition assistance, to ensure the students were Wisconsin residents and that they were claimed for no more than five years. In addition, we examined expenditures charged to the state contract account to ensure Marquette University spent state funds solely for the undergraduate dental education program. Finally, we reviewed the School of Dentistry's admissions and minority enrollment policies.

State Tuition Aid to Wisconsin Residents

Since academic year 2001-02, the maximum number of students who could be claimed for tuition aid steadily increased, while total program funding fluctuated. As shown in Table 1, the statutory limit of the number of students who could receive aid increased from 115 students in academic year 2001-02 to 160 in 2004-05.

Table 1

State Tuition Aid for Wisconsin Residents

Academic Year	Number Of Students ¹	Per Capita Aid Payment	Total Tuition Aid Available
2004-05	160	\$ 8,753	\$1,400,400
2003-04	145	8,753	1,269,050
2002-03	130	11,670	1,517,100
2001-02	115	11,670	1,342,100
2000-01	100	11,670	1,167,000
1999-00	100	11,670	1,167,000
1998-99	100	11,670	1,167,000
1997-98	100	11,670	1,167,000
1996-97	100	11,670	1,167,000
1995-96	100	11,670	1,167,000
1994-95	100	11,670	1,167,000
1993-94	100	11,330	1,133,000
1992-93	100	11,000	1,094,500
1991-92	93	8,500	786,250
1990-91	90	5,447	490,200
1989-90	100	5,217	521,700
1988-89	132	5,012	606,452
1987-88	175	5,012	839,510
1986-87	214	5,012	1,009,917
1985-86	265	5,012	1,258,013
1984-85	350	5,012	1,543,696
1983-84	350	4,866	1,605,780
1982-83	400	4,724	1,773,862
1981-82	450	4,374	1,810,836
1980-81	500	4,050	1,812,375
1979-80	500	3,920	1,871,800
1978-79	500	3,450	1,709,475
1977-78	500	3,300	1,620,300
1976-77	500	2,800	1,393,000
1975-76	500	2,800	1,373,400
1974-75	No limit	3,000	1,362,000
1973-74	No limit	3,000	1,305,000

¹ Number of students is limited by s. 20.235(1)(d), Wis. Stats.

Because total aid has not increased proportionately with the increase in number of students, the per capita aid payment provided to students has decreased. Each full-time resident student received \$11,670 in academic years 2001-02 and 2002-03. This level of per capita aid had been provided since academic year 1994-95. For academic years 2003-04 and 2004-05, the annual per capital aid payment decreased to \$8,753, which represents a decrease of 25.0 percent.

The dental education contract requires that the School of Dentistry request tuition aid only for full-time students who are Wisconsin residents, that tuition aid be provided for no more than five years to each student, and that the tuition rates for Wisconsin residents and nonresidents be equivalent before considering the tuition aid. The Higher Educational Aids Board certifies the residency status of all students claimed by the school.

We reviewed the residency status of students claimed for tuition aid by the School of Dentistry and evaluated the effectiveness of the system for monitoring tuition payments and the number of times students were claimed for aid. We concluded that the system, which involves both the Higher Educational Aids Board and Marquette University staff, is effective in ensuring that tuition aid is paid only for eligible students and that, for FY 2001-02 through FY 2003-04, the students for whom School of Dentistry claimed for tuition aid met the eligibility criteria. We also concluded that tuition rates for Wisconsin residents and nonresidents are equivalent before considering the tuition aid, as required by the dental education contract.

The Legislature has directed that, in return for receiving state aid, the School of Dentistry develop an admissions policy that gives Wisconsin residents preference in admissions. Marquette University staff noted that they actively recruit resident applicants by visiting several Wisconsin universities. Our review of student admissions procedures found the School of Dentistry gave preference by enrolling more Wisconsin residents than the student maximum levels for which the State provided tuition aid. For example, for the 2003-04 academic year, 26.7 percent of the 164 Wisconsin residents who applied as first-year students were accepted into the School of Dentistry, compared to only 6.2 percent of the 1,953 nonresident applicants.

Finally, the dental education contract stipulates that tuition aid will be used to fund undergraduate dental education. We reviewed expenditures incurred by the School of Dentistry from FY 2001-02 through FY 2003-04 and determined that it had complied with the contract and spent state funds solely on undergraduate dental education.

Minority Enrollment

The dental education contract and s. 39.46(2)(g), Wis. Stats., require the School of Dentistry to make every effort to ensure that at least 5 percent of total enrollment consists of minority students, but neither the contract nor statutes define who is to be considered a minority student for this purpose. To assess whether the School of Dentistry met the 5-percent minority enrollment goal, we used the definition included both in s. 39.44 Wis. Stats., which relates to state grants to minority undergraduate students at institutions of higher education, and s. 39.40, Wis. Stats., which relates to the minority teacher loan program. By this definition, minority students are African Americans; Hispanics; Native Americans; and some former citizens of Laos, Vietnam, or Cambodia and their descendents.

The School of Dentistry does not have information readily available for the number of students from or having ancestors specifically from Laos, Vietnam, or Cambodia. Therefore, for the purpose of our analysis, we did not include students whose applications indicated Asian or Pacific Island heritage. As shown in Table 2, based on the number of students who identified themselves as African American, Hispanic, or Native American, minority enrollment at the School of Dentistry has exceeded the 5-percent goal in each year of our review period.

Table 2

Minority Enrollment
by Academic Year

	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04
African American	7	5	7
Hispanic	25	27	22
Native American	5	6	4
Laotian, Vietnamese, or Cambodian ¹	N/A	N/A	N/A
Total Minority Students	37	38	33
Total Enrollment	303	305	308
Percentage of Total Enrollment	12.2%	12.5%	10.7%

¹ Information on this group of students was not readily available.

Marquette University staff indicate that the School of Dentistry continues its efforts to recruit minorities throughout the state, as well as from college campuses throughout the country. In order to enlarge the pool of qualified Wisconsin minority applicants, the School of Dentistry participates in local high school and middle school programs that focus on minorities and dental education.
