

Rep. Swearingen: Touts Fab Lab Day in 34th Assembly District

Posted on Tuesday, Apr 25, 2017

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Madison, WI – Representative Rob Swearingen (R-Rhineland) traveled throughout the 34th Assembly District today with state leaders to highlight “Fab Lab Day” in Wisconsin and announced the next round of Fab Lab grant funding for local school districts. Similarly, Governor Scott Walker and Lt. Governor Rebecca Kleefisch made stops at a number of schools to announce additional Fab Lab grants.

Fab Labs are small-scale workshops where students can learn about and participate in the fabrication of different materials and items. From being able to design an item to creating it with a 3D printer, laser engraver or control router, Fab Labs are becoming a popular addition to school curriculums because it enhances student learning of engineering, material processing and problem solving.

“Today was an exciting day for school districts located in the 34th Assembly District, where five schools received additional grants for the development or expansion of Fab Labs in their communities,” Rep. Swearingen stated. “To showcase the local Fab Labs and demonstrate the impact that they have on student learning and workforce development is a real win for the area. I am happy to say that northern Wisconsin has and continues to be a leader in driving Fab Lab growth statewide.”

The Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation awarded nearly \$500,000 in Fab Lab Grants throughout the state. The local schools that were awarded grants include Florence High School (\$25,000), Northland Pines High School (\$25,000), Lakeland Union High School (\$49,999), Rhineland High School (\$25,000) and Phelps School (\$15,000). Each of these schools was one of 21 school districts to receive a Fab Lab grant.

“We understand that not every student is going to attend a four-year university. These labs are providing students with a skill set that they need to succeed right out of high school, whether they decide to pursue work right away or an education at the technical college level. I am confident that the additional funding will play a vital role in providing the resources needed to continue to develop and improve Fab Labs in my district.”

“I would like to thank Governor Walker, the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation, local school districts, and all of the stakeholders who have worked tirelessly to make Fab Labs a real success for our students,” Rep. Swearingen concluded.

Governor Walker has proposed in his 2017-2019 biennial state budget to double the state’s investment for Fab Labs. The Governor’s budget would require the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation to allocate \$1 million total over the two-year budget for the Fabrication Laboratories Grant Program.