

# Northeast Wisconsin Technical College: State support could allow NWTC to get more students to graduation

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News that the coming state budget could provide more technical college funding was considered a positive sign for communities that need more skilled workers. In fact, the president of Northeast Wisconsin Technical College took time to issue a “thank you” to state government leaders.

“We truly appreciate the way Governor Evers and state legislators have come together to support our students and our communities,” said Dr. Jeff Rafn this week. “As they find common ground in career and technical education, they create opportunity in the classroom and on the job for thousands of residents in Northeast Wisconsin.”

Gov. Evers proposed historic investment in technical colleges in the executive budget for 2019-21. Members of the Joint Finance Committee voted to invest even more which, if approved by the full legislature, will provide \$25 million over the next two years. Legislators on both sides of the aisle have visited NWTC locations, requested data and spoken with students as they decide where state dollars can do more for Wisconsin.

Rafn said that added funds would help make the high school to college transition more efficient and help more students gain the career skills employers need.

“NWTC will use the funds to continue its expansion of dual credit opportunities into 32 high school districts, to develop additional high school academies, and to strengthen wrap-around services to students, thereby increasing program completions. We are also restructuring the delivery of classes into eight-week blocks which promises to allow dual credit and transfer students to start a degree program without waiting until other students have caught up to them. Finally, we have new programs under development that can help Wisconsin grow in high demand industries.”

The state legislature’s decision to invest in technical colleges follows the release statewide of new data about how Wisconsin Technical College graduates are succeeding in the workforce. NWTC recently posted a new report on 2018 graduate success; 92% of graduates were employed within six months of graduation, with a median salary for associate degree grads of \$42,000. In addition, 95.5 percent are employed in the state of Wisconsin and 97.7 percent are satisfied or very satisfied with their training, making NWTC a favorite of both students who want a college education and employers who need workers.

“These dollars are a wise investment that will pay taxpayers back with strong local economies and strong local businesses,” Rafn said. “Thank you for your commitment to Wisconsin’s workforce and ongoing support for the Northeast Wisconsin Technical College community.”