

Gov. Evers: Gov. Evers, DWD announce advanced manufacturing technical education equipment grants to serve nearly 2,800 students

Posted on Thursday, Sep 1, 2022

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MADISON — Gov. Tony Evers, together with the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD), today announced that students in 16 school districts statewide will benefit from new advanced manufacturing training in preparation for high-demand job opportunities thanks to grants from the Wisconsin Fast Forward Program. Earlier this week, the governor [announced](#) that an additional 11 Wisconsin school districts would receive more than \$414,000 in grant funding through the program as well.

The current round of Wisconsin Fast Forward grants from DWD totals \$450,000 for school districts across the state to train students for careers paths involving robotics, welding, plasma cutting, 3D printing, drones, and more.

“As our kids prepare for their futures and explore career options, it’s critical that we’re doing everything we can to present different pathways for them to pursue, from offering specialized training to providing opportunities to earn industry-recognized credentials,” said Gov. Evers. “These grants are going to help ensure we’re investing in our own homegrown talent, giving them the tools and resources they need to learn skills for high-demand jobs in critical industries across our state while fueling collaboration among employers, school districts, and agency partners.”

This investment comes after Gov. Evers and DWD also announced [earlier this week](#) that Wisconsin high school juniors and seniors will have 14 new occupational pathways that local employers can support this fall.

DWD Secretary-designee Amy Pechacek said the investments in high school technical education programs produce a more competitive workforce, while saving students and their families money.

“Upon graduation, students will have obtained dual enrollment credits, industry-recognized credentials, and technical endorsements on their high school diplomas,” Pechacek said. “They come out ahead as job applicants, with some additional academic requirements already out of the way.”

Previous Fast Forward grant recipients have used the funding to purchase training equipment related to robotics and automation, allowing the students to obtain Manufacturing Standards Skills Council (MSSC) and Smart Automation Certification Alliance (SACA) certifications.

Advanced manufacturing refers to a family of manufacturing activities that depend on the use and coordination of information, automation, computation, software, sensing, and networking, and/or use cutting-edge materials and emerging production capabilities enabled by the physical and biological sciences (e.g., nanotechnology, chemistry, and biology). This involves both new ways of manufacturing existing products and manufacturing new products emerging from advanced technologies.

The awards announced today include:

School District of Lodi, Columbia and Dane County | \$19,220

The school district will use grant funds to purchase a CNC Laser engraver, a 3D printer, several welding benches, and Arc and MIG welders that will be used by roughly 275 students per year.

School District of Mellen, Ashland County | \$20,860

The school district will use grant funds to purchase a CNC Mill with tooling and accessories, a mobile workbench, and a CNC Lathe with tooling and accessories that will be used by approximately 25 students per year.

Saint Croix Central School District, St. Croix County | \$49,385

The school district will use grant funds to purchase a Haas CNC Mini Mill, tooling, software, and accessories that will be used by 350 students per year.

Rib Lake School District, Taylor County | \$5,000

The school district will use grant funds to purchase a Jet Horizontal/Vertical Bandsaw, a Jet Industrial Grinder and Belt Sander, and five Lincoln Power MIG 210 Multi-Process Welders (Aluminum One-Pak) that will benefit an estimated 45 students per year as they upgrade their newly renovated welding shop.

Sauk Prairie School District, Sauk County | \$49,853

The school district will use grant funds to purchase a CNC plasma cutter, a metal bandsaw, and fabrication tables that will benefit roughly 180 students per year.

School District of Wild Rose, Waushara County | \$47,658

The school district will use grant funds to update its machine tool and metal fabrication equipment with the purchase of a ShopSabre RC8 CNC Router, a ShopSabre Sidekick 8 Plasma Cutter, a Flashforge Finder 3D Printer, five X-Tronic Model XTS Digital Display Soldering Iron Stations, a Universal Professional Laser Cutter and Engraver, a Brother GTX T-Shirt Press, and a TrueVIS SG2-540 Roland Digital Printer. An estimated 140 students per year will use the equipment.

Prescott School District, Pierce County | \$6,170

The school district will use grant funds to purchase a planer with a helical cutterhead to enable students to process rough sawn lumber into dimensional lumber for customized CNS projects that will benefit approximately 300 students per year.

School District of Waukesha, Waukesha County | \$10,000

The school district will use grant funds to purchase a Bridgeport Standard Knee Mill for use by an estimated 470 students enrolled each year in technical education, robotics, and engineering courses at Waukesha South High School and its charter school, Waukesha Engineering Preparatory Academy.

Stone Bank School District, Waukesha County | \$5,840

The school district will use grant funds to purchase three 4x4 Foundational Robotics UGV Lab kits, a MINDS-i drone gimbal rig, five MINDS-i Electric Car Lab kits, software, and curricula that will benefit an estimated 60 students per year.

Clintonville Public School District, Waupaca County | \$50,000

The school district will use grant funds to purchase a Miller AugmentedArc Augmented Reality Welding System and five MobileArc Welding Simulator Packages to develop a welding and manufacturing career pathway that will benefit an estimated 76 students per year.

School District of Ladysmith, Rusk County | \$40,000

The school district will use grant funds to purchase a Bridgeport milling machine package with DX6 work vice, 11 piece collet set, a Fortune precision lathe package with tooling, and a Tormach xsTECH CNC Router/Benchtop milling machine to prepare 40-50 students per year to take the Machining Level 1 NIMS certification exam.

Eau Claire Area School District, Eau Claire County | \$12,635

The school district will use grant funds to purchase 10 ¾ HP Belt Drive Bench Lathes as it begins to upgrade the high school’s Technology and Education Department equipment to benefit an estimated 286 students.

School District of West Salem, La Crosse County | \$46,485

The school district will use grant funds to purchase new welding equipment to update and to expand its metals lab courses. The school district plans to purchase an ArcPro 4800X 4’ x 4’ CNC Plasma System with tooling and accessories, five Millermatic 255 MIG/Pulsed MIG Welders, five Miller Syncrowave 210 Auto-Line TIG Welders, and a JET ELITE Vertical Milling Machine that will serve approximately 100 students each year.

Oshkosh Area School District, Winnebago County | \$18,030

The school district will use grant funds to purchase a Torchmate CNC Plasma Table with instructor training and a ShopSabre RC4 CNC Router for use by an estimated 200 students each year.

School District of Wausaukee, Marinette County | \$12,265

The school district will use grant funds to purchase a CNC Router, a vinyl cutter, several robotics kits, two 3D printers, and associated computers and software that will benefit approximately 96 students per year.

Cedar Grove-Belgium School District, Sheboygan County | \$50,000

The school district will use grant funds to purchase FANUC Fencelless ER-4iA R-30iB Mate Plus Controllor CERT Cart robotic arm and two Minds-i STEM Integrated Robotics: UGV/UAV Drones Labs for the engineering design, mechanical and electrical engineering of autonomous vehicles that will be used by approximately 130 students per year.

Learn more about the Wisconsin Fast Forward grant program [here](#).



An online version of this release is available [here](#).