

Dept. of Workforce Development: Announces advanced manufacturing technical education equipment grants to serve more than 2,200 students

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MADISON – The Department of Workforce Development (DWD) today announced the award of more than \$473,000 in Technical Education Equipment Grants to 14 school districts.

Funded through the Wisconsin Fast Forward Program, the grants will help school districts expand their advanced manufacturing education programs and connect more than 2,200 students to high-wage, high-demand, and high-skill careers.

“By connecting students to cutting-edge, industry-leading equipment, schools are preparing our future workforce for the needs of employers today,” said DWD Secretary-designee Amy Pechacek. “The value of technical education is evident through Wisconsin’s growing manufacturing industry and thriving economy.”

High school students will train in advanced manufacturing fields to prepare for stable careers while they obtain dual enrollment credits, industry-endorsed certificates, and technical endorsements on high school diplomas. Advanced manufacturing refers to a variety of manufacturing activities that depend on the use and coordination of information, automation, computation, software, sensing, and networking, and/or use of cutting-edge materials and emerging production capabilities enabled by the physical and biological sciences (e.g., nanotechnology, chemistry, and biology). This involves developing new ways of manufacturing

existing products, and manufacturing new products that emerge from advancing technologies.

Schools will use the technical education equipment grants to install new equipment, including computer numerical control (CNC) machines, robotic welders, fiber laser cutting machines, 3D printers, and more.

The new awards include:

Cornell School District | \$50,000

Cornell School District, located in Chippewa County, will use grant funds to purchase a Bystronic Xpress 50 Press Brake, which will offer students real world experience on how to bend pre-cut sheet metal properly and efficiently. Students will become experienced operators of press brake tools and laser cutting technology to meet local industry needs.

Nicolet Union High School District | \$21,190

Nicolet Union High School District, located in Milwaukee County, will use grant funds to purchase a CNC plasma machine package, CNC milling machine, and an automated band saw. This will allow the school district to expand its manufacturing lab and increase the number of students trained, while maintaining a high level of programming, which will give students industry standard future ready skills.

Arrowhead Union High School District | \$20,750

DWD issued a grant of \$20,750. Arrowhead Union High School District, located in Waukesha County, will use grant funds to purchase a CNC Vesta-660 Machining Center. It will give students hands-on training using industry grade equipment, build programs of study along career pathways in Engineering and Manufacturing, and build students' workforce readiness skills to meet the needs and demands of employers in their region.

School District of West De Pere | \$34,760

The School District of West De Pere, located in Brown County, will use grant funds to purchase an APT Robot Weld Cell Certification Cart and additional end of arm tooling. The project will integrate the APT Robot into the curriculum to train capstone manufacturing students and upper-level robotics students in material handling and ArcTool welding applications. Students will be exposed to a wide range of hands-on training and will increase the number of students qualified to sit for certification assessments through NOCTI and Smart Automation Certification

Alliance.

Grafton School District | \$35,097

Grafton School District, located in Ozaukee County, will use grant funds to purchase a Boss FC ACCU-CUT Fiber Laser Cutting Machine, which will enable Grafton SD to specifically target the advanced manufacturing skills set of Computer Aided Manufacturing. This will allow them to meet the National Institute of Metalworking Skills (NIMS) standards for CNC Machining and train students towards obtaining the Safety, Measurement and Material NIMS certification. The equipment will provide students with the experiences needed to program, setup, run a CNC Laser, and fill employment needs of Grafton manufacturers.

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

Cedar Grove-Belgium School District, located in Sheboygan County, will use grant funds to purchase a Haas ST-10 CNC Lathe, which will help students experience a real-world manufacturing environment and gain exposure to today's automated fabrication technology. Using the equipment, the school district will be able to support high demand careers of CNC machine operators and provide tangible skills development.

School District of Superior | \$50,000

The School District of Superior, located in Douglas County, will use grant funds to purchase a Fortune/Eisen Model S-2A Vertical Turret Mill and Fortune Model 1440G Lathe. The School District will offer two new manufacturing courses starting in 2023-24 using the equipment and expose students to career opportunities in manufacturing, and other skilled trades. The purchase of equipment will also allow National Institute of Metalworking Skills Credentials to be embedded into three courses within the manufacturing pathway.

Elmbrook School District | \$14,542

Elmbrook School District, located in Waukesha County, will use grant funds to purchase V5 Robotic Kits, Rev Robotics Edu V2 Kits, and Arduino Kits for the Robotics and Automation Center, which will provide opportunities for students to engage in engineering, robotics, electronics, and manufacturing career pathways, including coursework, career-based experiences, and industry certifications that directly connect to employability.

Muskego-Norway School District | \$50,000

Muskego-Norway School District, located in Waukesha County, will use grant funds

to purchase an ARC Welding Robot that will provide students with the knowledge and confidence to operate a variety of material handling and ARCMate robots to support local employer's needs to develop more efficient and profitable welding processes. This training will provide the students with real-world, hands-on technical training in advanced automation and industry 4.0 technology.

Watertown Unified School District | \$42,530

Watertown Unified School District, located in Dodge and Jefferson Counties, will use grant funds to purchase a Metal Fiber Optic Laser CNC Table for the metals lab, which will allow STEM students to use more efficient fabrication methods and increase students' exposure to advanced manufacturing training and careers beyond graduation. In addition, this equipment will be utilized by Madison College for adult welding courses during the evening as well as potential training opportunities for local employers.

Pardeeville Area School District | \$8,885

Pardeeville Area School District, located in Columbia County, will use grant funds to purchase a Baileigh Metal Lathe to expand the Technology and Engineering Education program. With this purchase, students will gain access to more technical education classes and a solid foundation of technical skills, preparing them for youth apprenticeships, college classes, and/or Madison College Academies while still in high school.

Whitewater Unified School District | \$10,500

Whitewater Unified School District, located in Walworth County, will use grant funds to purchase Formlabs Form 3+ SLA 3D Printer and LJ Create Training Systems - Equipment - Injection Molding Trainer. This will provide high school students hands-on industry relevant experiences using design software and manufacturing equipment, by exposing students to a variety of plastics related design and manufacturing curriculum.

Mukwonago Area School District | \$34,925

Mukwonago Area School District, located in Waukesha County, will use grant funds to purchase an Amatrol Skill Boss Smart Factory that will enable students to practice over 60 authentic skills in electronic, electrical, fluid power, and mechanical systems. This equipment will allow students to earn associate level one and three certifications through the Smart Automation Certification Alliance, as well as level one and two certifications through the National Institute of Metalworking Skills.

School District of Gilman | \$50,000

School District of Gilman, located in Taylor County, will use grant funds to purchase Amatrol Process Control Learning (PLC) Systems, which will be used to develop a one-of-a-kind K-20 in process control. The school district will use industry-relevant equipment to offer learning and career exploration in the fields of PLC programming, electrical systems, sensors, automated processes, relay control, process control, pneumatics, and smart sensors. They will focus on micro credentials through the Smart Automation Certification Alliance and Chippewa Valley Technical College. As a result, students will be workforce ready with industry recognized certifications.

Learn more about [Wisconsin Fast Forward](#).