



WISCONSIN TECHNICAL COLLEGE
DISTRICT BOARDS ASSOCIATION



A Guide to the Appointment of Wisconsin Technical College District Board Members

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Appointing Committees

Technical college district boards are appointed on a merit selection basis by public appointing committees comprised of the college district's:

- County board chairpersons (13 of 16 districts),
- County board chairpersons and the Milwaukee County executive (MATC Milwaukee), and
- School board presidents (Fox Valley and Southwest Wisconsin).



The Committee's Important Role

Wisconsin technical colleges comprise the state's largest higher education system with more than 300,000 adults enrolling annually. Their strength is based on close local connections with residents, employers and taxpayers. As the college district's governing body, the board is at the center of these local connections. Each board member is a public official serving as a member of a local government body.

Each appointing committee selects its college's board members based on state law and the local "plan of representation" it crafts. The merit-based appointment process is driven by detailed candidate applications and by interviews conducted in public hearings.

Board Selection Checklist



The Candidate. . .

- Meets the legal criteria to serve and the local plan of representation.
- Understands and supports the college's mission.
- Is knowledgeable about community issues and needs and how the college meets those needs.
- Understands the local education system and the college's role in the Wisconsin Technical College System and regional and statewide higher education.
- Will advocate for the college and its students in the district and at the state and national level.
- Understands that board members are public officials operating transparently and accountably with individual and institutional ethical and legal obligations.
- Will commit the time and effort required for board duties, college and community events and board member education and development.
- Is sensitive to the perspectives of all district constituencies including students, taxpayers, and employers.
- Understands the board as a whole, not individual board members, governs the college.
- Will contribute toward and support board consensus while respecting diversity of opinion and the free exchange of ideas.

Primary Responsibilities

Meeting Educational Needs

Board members are responsible for meeting the district's rapidly changing educational and training needs in fulfilling the college mission. This includes formulating policy, employing faculty and staff, providing facilities, and stewardship of public resources.

Ethical Leadership

The public trust of governance requires board members to serve:

- Without personal gain.
- Without partisan political or personal agendas.
- Consistent with ethics rules and state law for public officials.

Strengthen the Board

Boards are comprised of strong individuals reflecting diverse perspectives, expertise and experiences. Diversity gives the board balance, depth, and a variety of resources, ensuring the needs of the entire community are recognized and addressed. Diversity in ethnicity, gender, age and geography is desirable.

Knowledge and Commitment

Excellent board members are knowledgeable about the community and its needs and issues within the broad context of the educational, social, political and economic environment. Board members must have commitment to the technical college mission. Board service also requires a commitment to attend official meetings, college and community events, and to engage in board education and development activities.

District Board Composition

Wisconsin law provides for specific categories of board service, including “employer” and “employee” members, “at-large” members, and one member each who is a school district administrator and an elected official (for MATC-Milwaukee, “businessperson” categories replace employers/employees). Members are appointed for staggered, three-year terms or to complete a term if a vacancy occurs.

For more information, see “*Wisconsin Technical College District Board Governance*” available at www.districtboards.org or contact the Association. The board appointment process is overseen by the Wisconsin Technical College System and is detailed in Wisconsin Statutes Ch. 38 and in Wisconsin Admin. Code Ch. TCS 2.



Wisconsin Technical College Mission



The Wisconsin Technical College System delivers comprehensive technical, occupational and adult education that:

- Provides individuals with skills needed for full participation and advancement in the workforce through courses, certificates, diplomas and associate degree programs;
- Supports life-long learning and career advancement including incumbent worker training, pathways to college for high school students, and pathways to further higher education such as bachelor’s degree programs;
- Provides access for the developmental, basic and refresher education adults need to succeed in college-level programs;
- Responds locally as part of a coordinated state system to meet business, industry and employer needs and to foster economic development, prosperity, entrepreneurship and job creation.