



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Wauwatosa School District Receives \$25K Fab Lab Grant

WEDC Fabrication Laboratories grant will be used to purchase equipment for expansion of Wauwatosa West Fab Lab

WAUWATOSA, WI — The Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) has awarded the Wauwatosa School District with a \$25,000 state grant to fund equipment for the Wauwatosa West laboratory, also known as a “Fab Lab.”

Fab labs are open-concept, high-tech workshops that use the latest equipment, including computer-controlled manufacturing components like 3D printers, laser engravers and computer numerical control routers. Having these additions at Wauwatosa West will help equip students with essential skills for the 21st century’s global economy by supporting science, technology, engineering, arts and math (STEAM) education, while also preparing students for the manufacturing jobs of the future.

“We are incredibly excited to have the opportunity to provide our Wauwatosa West students with hands-on experiences in areas like design, engineering and manufacturing,” said Wauwatosa School District Superintendent, Phil Ertl. “Along with enhancing the educational STEAM experiences of West students, students at East High School and students in the Elmbrook School District will have access to the space and equipment, as well. We are grateful to receive this support from WEDC as we move forward with this project.”

The District currently has two existing Fab Labs - one at Wauwatosa East and one at Wauwatosa West. The funds from this grant will be used to purchase additional equipment for the Wauwatosa West Fab Lab.

Wauwatosa and Elmbrook students can access the technology through the districts’ LAUNCH program. The career-based learning experience started as a pilot program in 2018 and expanded to become a part of the District’s Academic and Career Planning (ACP) initiatives for the 2019-20 school year. It consists of 15 “strands” or areas of studies, including Advanced Manufacturing & Design, Hospitality Innovation, Media Solutions and Business Analytics.

In addition to receiving funds, Wauwatosa West will have access to an online tool to increase collaboration and the sharing of resources among school districts with fab labs. This tool was

created by WEDC in conjunction with the University of Wisconsin-Stout and Fox Valley Technical College.

The tool, developed by the UW-Stout Discovery Center with guidance from teachers statewide, will allow Wauwatosa West teachers and others at fab lab schools to communicate with one another on topics such as curriculum development and implementation, equipment usage and troubleshooting, training and professional development.

The Wauwatosa School District applied for the WEDC grant last year. The application went through a competitive process and was evaluated based on the district's readiness and long-range planning, curriculum, business and community partnerships and financial need.

Including Wauwatosa West, approximately 30 school districts throughout the state have been awarded more than \$500,000 in Fab Lab grants this year to establish or expand their fab labs.

About The Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation

Since the program's inception, WEDC has awarded more than \$2.7 million in grants to 60+ districts. In April 2020, grants totaling more than \$600,000 were awarded to 31 districts. More information on the program can be found at wedc.org/fablabs.

About Wauwatosa School District

Wauwatosa School District is a high achieving, forward-thinking, richly diverse public school district serving approximately 7,200 students and families. The District consists of 16 schools: 11 elementary schools, two middle schools, two high schools and the Wauwatosa Virtual Academy. Among these are two charter schools: Wauwatosa Montessori and Wauwatosa STEM. A full STEM program is offered at Underwood Elementary and at both middle schools. Additionally, the District provides education for several county programs including Children's Hospital, Vel R. Phillips Juvenile Justice Center and River Hills School. The educational community's long history of excellence has been recognized both regionally and nationally.

For more information, visit the Wauwatosa School District [website](#), [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [Instagram](#) pages.

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