



**-- In his speech to educators gathered in Milwaukee, Walker continued to tout the importance of technical schools and two-year colleges, saying that Wisconsin needs to encourage and honor skilled trades as highly as four-year degrees.**

"I believe that it's imperative that we treat our sons and daughters who chose to be highly-skilled welders, machinists and fabricators just as highly as we treat those who chose to be doctors and lawyers, because increasingly that first category are needed more and more in today's society," Walker told hundreds gathered for the 94th State Education Convention.

He told the educators they, and society as a whole, need to change the focus on post-high school education.

"Help us by finding ways to send a clear message to your students that there is value in careers in two-year technical college degrees," Walker said. "And one of the easiest ways you can do that: by changing your brochures, changing your literature, changing your websites to acknowledge graduates in Milwaukee, to two- and four-year colleges and universities."

Walker said this initiative ties into his idea he introduced yesterday, which would allow individuals to obtain a teacher's license through life experience instead of a bachelor's degree in education.

"We want to find ways to help people who are professionals, but just as we've done with the UW System Flex Option, we're not going to just give people credit for life experience. We want this to be competency based," Walker said.

Walker said the final decision will be left up to the local school body whether to hire teachers without bachelor degrees in education.

Walker also addressed school accountability. He said the goal of the bill is to hold schools accountable to their performance, good or bad, so that families can decide for themselves the best school for their children.

"One of our biggest goals was not to just find fault, but to throw attention to schools that do things well, to try and replicate success," Walker said. "The best thing ... is to provide objective, comparable information that ultimately can be presented not just to the public, not just to the school board, or the Legislature, or the government, but most importantly to the parents."

*Wispolitics PM update January 23, 2015.*