



August 9, 2012

Summer Legislative Update IV

New Legislative Districts by Technical College District *Redistricting shifts Assembly, Senate and Congressional District Maps*

Redistricting has shifted – sometimes significantly – how new Assembly, State Senate and U.S. Congressional districts match with technical college districts. New electoral districts will be in place beginning with August 14th primaries and for 10 years through 2022. All 99 Wisconsin Assembly seats, one-half (even number districts) of State Senate seats, and all 8 U.S. House seats are on this fall's ballots, as is the U.S. Senate seat being vacated by the retiring Herb Kohl.

[The new guide linked here](#) lists new legislative districts by technical college district. Only the current (or most recent) incumbent serving each district is listed. This does not account for 2012 challengers, and does not reflect who will actually serve effective January, 2013, when the new state legislature and U.S. Congress are seated. This guide will be updated based on fall election results.

Importantly, redistricting has led to a number of current incumbents running in new numbered districts. Redistricting has significantly changed the shape of districts, and many Wisconsinites - *more than 2.36 million according to the U.S. District Court* – have been moved from one Assembly district to another (***Baldus v. Brennan***, No. 2:11-cv-00562, ED Wis., opinion of March 22, 2012, page 14).

Who's on (elected in the) 1st?

Just how much are some areas changing? One need not understand, let alone diagram, the following example to get the general picture:

Much of the Madison's former 76th Assembly District served by Terese Berceau (D-Madison) is now the new 77th District. Berceau is running in the 77th to maintain most of her former constituency and to not move herself. The old 77th was served by Brett

Hulse (D-Madison), who is running in the new 78th. The new 78th covers much of his current constituency and his home, and is currently served by Mark Pocan (D-Madison), who is leaving the Assembly to run for Congress. Pocan's former 78th District and the former 48th District, served now by Representative Chris Taylor (D-Madison), were mashed together, setting up a contest between two incumbent Democrats had Pocan sought reelection. That new district is the new Assembly 76th, which Taylor is seeking. It's Berceau's former district number, but largely Pocan's and Taylor's neighborhood. Kelda Roys (D-Madison) has seen her former District 81 moved out wholesale to rural Dane County. She is leaving the Assembly to challenge Pocan for the Democrat slot for Congress... (!).

While the extent of "musical chairs" occurring across most of the state is less pronounced than in Madison, all of the chairs are moving to some extent, even if the incumbent occupants themselves are not.

While many voters statewide will be in familiar districts, and still more will see familiar names on the ballot, it is fair to characterize this redistricting process as shifting more boundaries in more significant ways than in any recent decennial redistricting process.

The Redistricting Process

2012 marked the first time since 1972 that the legislature itself successfully drew new district maps. In recent decades, a panel of three federal judges has drawn the state's new district boundaries absent the state legislature's ability to do so. When the state legislature does not agree on redistricting maps, the court steps in to draw them. For the 2012 process, Republicans held the majority in both houses as well as the Governor's office. Redistricting bills passed quickly on party lines and were signed into law as Act 43 (Assembly and State Senate maps) and Act 44 (U.S. Congress maps).

The new maps were challenged in court. However, the suits were brought to declare the 2012 maps constitutionally faulty, not to have the court draw them. In the *Baldus v. Brennan* decision cited above, the federal court found the maps to be constitutional except for two heavily Hispanic Assembly districts in Milwaukee. In upholding the vast majority of 2012 redistricting as constitutional, the court did note that "...the final product needlessly moved more than a million Wisconsinites and disrupted their long-standing political relationships...." This result, however, was not prohibited under federal law or the Constitution.

Using the Legislative Districts by College Guide Until November

The [guide](#) lists each college's new electoral districts by number. Because the current incumbent is listed for each district until after fall elections, some confusion may be unavoidable at this point. Here are two tips to minimize that confusion:

First, the official named is the current or most recent person to hold that numbered district even though the boundaries have shifted. *A number of incumbents are seeking reelection to serve the same general area they serve now by running in new (number) districts.*

Second, the districts in which you live may have changed and you may vote in new numbered districts. Whether they are the same or new number districts, any incumbent seeking office may be your current elected official, or, may be an incumbent who served a nearby (but not your) district until now. Of course, there are plenty of challengers too.

The Impact of New Legislative Districts on College Districts

For decades, Wisconsin has had 99 Assembly, 33 Senate, and 16 technical college districts. This has not changed. However, 11 of 16 colleges will now have more total state senators and representatives covering their college boundaries than before 2012 redistricting. Just 5 colleges will be served by the same total number of legislators. No technical college district will have fewer Assembly or Senate districts than before redistricting.

Some changes are significant. As reflected below, the Moraine Park District has gone from being served by 4 State Senate districts to 7. It has gone from being covered by 6 to (a stunning) 13 Assembly districts. Fox Valley Technical College has gone from being served by 5 to 8 Senate districts and from 10 to 14 Assembly districts. Blackhawk doubled (2 to 4) its Senate districts and increased its Assembly districts by 50%.

Change in Senate and Assembly Districts Serving Technical College Districts Due to 2012 Redistricting:

Blackhawk	From 2 to 4 senators; from 4 to 6 representatives
Chippewa Valley	From 3 to 5 senators; from 8 to 10 representatives
Fox Valley	From 5 to 8 senators; from 10 to 14 representatives
Gateway	Remains at 5 senators; from 10 to 11 representatives
Lakeshore	Remains at 3 senators; from 5 to 7 representatives
Madison	From 7 to 8 senators; from 16 to 17 representatives
Mid-State	Remains at 6 senators; from 5 to 7 representatives
Milwaukee	Remains at 8 senators; from 21 to 22 representatives
Moraine Park	From 4 to 7 senators; from 6 to 13 representatives
Nicolet	Remains at 2 senators and 4 representatives
Northcentral	From 6 to 7 senators; from 9 to 10 representatives
Northeast	Remains at 4 senators and 10 representatives
Southwest	Remains at 3 senators and 5 representatives
Waukesha	Remains at 6 senators; from 10 to 11 representatives
Western	From 3 to 4 senators; from 6 to 7 representatives
Indianhead	Remains at 4 senators and 8 representatives

Contacting Candidates and Legislators

To confirm your new voting districts, go to www.legis.wisconsin.gov and click on “Who Represents Me?” Both old and new districts are listed when an address is entered. Immediately following August 14th partisan legislative primaries is a great time to communicate with candidates in support of technical colleges. Candidate contact information is available through the Government Accountability Board (GAB) site at this location: <http://gab.wi.gov/elections-voting/2012/fall>. This year’s general fall election takes place Tuesday, November 6th.

This report was prepared by Paul Gabriel for the Wisconsin Technical College District Boards Association. Any analysis or opinion in this report is exclusively the author’s.