



Department of Education

PERKINS V

Iowa's State Plan for the Strengthening Career and Technical
Education for the 21st Century Act

2025-2029 Plan

State of Iowa

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Narrative Descriptions

A. Plan Development and Consultation

1. **Describe how the State Plan was developed in consultation with the stakeholders and in accordance with the procedures in section 122(c)(2) of Perkins V. See Text Box 1 for the statutory requirements for State Plan consultation under section 122(c)(1) of Perkins V.**

The Bureau of Career and Technical Education (CTE) and Postsecondary Readiness (Bureau) of the Iowa Department of Education (Department) developed its Four-Year State Plan under the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Perkins V) through an inclusive and collaborative process that prioritized engagement with different types of stakeholders. The approach adhered to the consultation requirements outlined in section 122(c)(2) of Perkins V and reflected Iowa's commitment to fostering access to high-quality CTE.

Throughout the whole stakeholder engagement process, represented stakeholder groups included:

- **Secondary school stakeholders:** Educators, students, and administrators at the secondary level formed a significant portion of the stakeholders. Their insights emphasized the day-to-day implementation challenges and successes of CTE programs in schools.
- **Postsecondary representatives:** Community college faculty, staff, and administrators provided valuable perspectives on aligning secondary and postsecondary CTE programs and addressing transitions for students.
- **Business and industry leaders:** Employers who partner with CTE programs highlighted the importance of WBL, IRCs, and workforce readiness in CTE pathways.
- **Parents and guardians:** Feedback from parents focused on the value of CTE in preparing students for college and career opportunities while expressing concerns about access and clear pathways.
- **Policy makers and administrators:** Respondents from these groups emphasized the need for stronger connections between state policies, funding structures, and local program implementation.
- **Special populations advocates:** Participants who work with students with disabilities, economically disadvantaged groups, and English Language Learners highlighted challenges such as transportation, resource gaps, and access to opportunities.

Initial Stakeholder Engagement

A comprehensive stakeholder meeting hosted in October of 2024 was central to the development of the State Plan, bringing together secondary and postsecondary educators, business leaders, and representatives of special populations. Representatives from the Association for Career and Technical Education (ACTE) facilitated this stakeholder meeting. The meeting agenda centered around structured discussions on key topics, including:

- Industry-recognized credentials (IRC)
- Work-based learning (WBL)
- Career and Technical Student Organizations (CTSOs)
- Concurrent enrollment and the career academy model
- Career counseling for middle grades
- CTE teacher pipeline
- Special populations

During the initial stakeholder meeting, the facilitators from ACTE utilized structured activities to maximize the feedback collected about these topics. Activities included:

- **Data review:** Participants reviewed and discussed 2022-23 Perkins Consolidated Annual Report (CAR) data to identify trends and gaps, providing insights into areas requiring targeted improvement.
- **Gallery walk:** Small groups rotated through topic stations, documenting strengths, challenges, and potential solutions on flip charts and sticky notes.
- **Root cause analysis:** Using methods like the "5 Why's" and a fishbone analysis, attendees explored the root causes of major challenges, such as transportation barriers in WBL and counselor knowledge gaps in CTE.
- **Prioritization of strategies:** Participants engaged in a final gallery walk, using colored dots to prioritize strategies, solutions, and resources for addressing challenges. This activity ensured alignment with stakeholder priorities.

Additional Stakeholder Engagement

In addition to hosting an initial stakeholder meeting that had cross-representation from education and business throughout the state, additional targeted stakeholder feedback was collected from different stakeholder groups. For example, via teleconference, input was gathered from the Regional Planning Partnership (RPP) coordinators, community college chief academic officers, and community college presidents. During these meetings, conversations focused on recurring feedback from the initial stakeholder meetings. These discussions were instrumental in developing Iowa's vision for CTE over the next four years.

In addition to conversations with targeted stakeholder groups, a [survey](#) was sent to additional groups to collect more feedback. The survey collected feedback from a diverse cross-section of stakeholders integral to Iowa's CTE ecosystem in alignment with section 122(c)(1) of Perkins V. The survey respondents represented various roles, ensuring comprehensive input on the strengths, challenges, and priorities of CTE programs.

Over 200 stakeholders responded to the survey. The survey included the following questions:

- What strengths do you see in existing CTE programs?
- What challenges do you believe CTE programs currently face?
- What strategies do you think the state should prioritize supporting over the next four years to strengthen CTE programs?

Targeted Outreach to Special Populations

Recognizing the unique needs of special populations, the Department consulted with groups such as the Iowa School Counselors Association, Iowa Educational Services for the Blind & Visually Impaired, Iowa School for the Deaf, and iJAG. These efforts focused on identifying barriers to access, such as transportation and interpreter shortages, while leveraging strengths like differentiated instruction and supportive employer relationships for students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs).

- 2. Consistent with section 122(e)(1) of Perkins V, each eligible agency must develop the portion of the State Plan relating to the amount and uses of any funds proposed to be reserved for adult career and technical education, postsecondary career and technical education, and secondary career and technical education after consultation with the State agencies identified in section 122(e)(1)(A)-(C) of the Act. If a State agency, other than the eligible agency, finds a portion of the final State Plan objectionable, the eligible agency must provide a copy of such objections and a description of its response in the final plan submitted to the Secretary. (Section 122(e)(2) of Perkins V)**

The Iowa Department of Education provides general oversight of public school districts, accredited nonpublic secondary schools, and two-year comprehensive community colleges. Within the Department, the Bureau of CTE and Postsecondary Readiness provides oversight of secondary and postsecondary CTE supported by the Strengthening Career and Technical Education Act for the 21st Century (Perkins V). Iowa Workforce Development (IWD) is the state agency that provides oversight of adult education and literacy programs, including English language learner and high school equivalency diploma programs.

Throughout the State Planning process, agency staff provided input on the proposed uses of Perkins funds, ensuring consistency with state workforce development strategies and the needs of learners across various populations. No objections were raised by any state agency regarding the use of funds within the State Plan. This consensus reflects the collaborative and strategic approach undertaken to align Perkins V's goals with Iowa's broader workforce and education initiatives.

- 3. Describe opportunities for the public to comment in person and in writing on the State plan. (Section 122(d)(14) of Perkins V)**

The public comment period for Iowa's four-year State Plan was open from March 24, 2025 through April 24, 2025. During this time, a draft of the State Plan, and the secondary and postsecondary State-Determined Levels of Performance (SDLPs) were made accessible through the Department's website.

To inform and engage stakeholders, the Department issued a press release through its communication team, which was distributed to all media contacts and key constituent groups via Department-maintained email listservs. The press release provided details on how to submit comments and included information about public hearings. Additionally, updates were shared through Bureau-managed email listservs and the Department's website ensuring broad awareness.

Feedback was collected via email at cte@iowa.gov, as well as via USPS mail to the Iowa Department of Education, Bureau of CTE and Postsecondary Readiness, 400 E. 14th St., State Grimes Building, Des Moines, IA 50319.

The Bureau also arranged for public comments to be submitted during public hearings, which was an opportunity for the public to present their views and make recommendations regarding the State Plan. These hearings were held on March 25, 2025 and April 1, 2025.

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This public engagement process ensured that stakeholders from all regions of Iowa had the opportunity to provide feedback and contribute to the development of the State Plan.

Several comments were received during the public comment, especially in regards to the secondary and postsecondary SDLPs, CTSO requirements, and the secondary and postsecondary funding split. To address some of this feedback, several updates were made to the state plan, including:

- Modifications were made to the SDLPs.
- The requirement for CTSOs were eliminated at the postsecondary level.
- The secondary and postsecondary funding split was adjusted in favor of secondary education to reflect higher CTE enrollments in Iowa's high schools.

B. Program Administration and Implementation

1.a. Provide a summary of State-supported workforce development activities (including education and training) in the State, including the degree to which the State's career and technical education programs and programs of study are aligned with and address the education and skill needs of the employers in the State identified by the State workforce development board. (Section 122(d)(1) of Perkins V)

The foundation for Iowa's workforce development activities was built by the Future Ready Iowa Initiative, which was established in 2016 to meet the anticipated skills needs of Iowa's workforce by making sure that at least 70 percent of Iowans received some form of post-high school education or training by 2025, a goal that was attained in 2022. [Several resources and programs](#) were created as a result of the Future Ready Iowa Initiative, including the Last Dollar Scholarship program and multiple career exploration resources.

The [Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act \(WIOA\)](#) was designed to help job seekers access employment, education, training, and support services to succeed in the labor market and to match employers with the skilled workers they need to compete in the global economy. Congress passed the Act in 2014 with a wide bipartisan majority; it was the first legislative reform of the public workforce system since 1998. WIOA consists of four core programs, or "Titles," which are administered by IWD:

- **Title I** Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs
- **Title II** Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) program
- **Title III** Employment Service program under the Wagner-Peyser Act
- **Title IV** Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Iowa Department for the Blind also administers Title IV services separate from Iowa Workforce Development.)

1.b. Describe the State's strategic vision and set of goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce (including special populations) and for meeting the skilled workforce needs of employers, including in existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations as identified by the State, and how the State's career and technical education programs will help to meet these goals. (Section 122(d)(2) of Perkins V)

The strategic vision of Iowa's previous Perkins State Plan centered around the implementation of House File 2392, which was passed in May of 2016. This legislation, also known as the "CTE Redesign," improved access to high-quality CTE through a statewide system of Regional Planning Partnerships to assist school districts in providing an effective, efficient, and economical means of delivering programs; aligned secondary CTE offerings to in-demand occupations to meet the needs of employers; and reformed career and academic planning and CTE programming to encourage students to explore opportunities aligned to their interests through holistic career guidance, exploratory CTE coursework, and WBL opportunities.

During the next four years, the Bureau's strategic vision is to continue to improve the quality of CTE established in House File 2392 by focusing on several key initiatives: student attainment of industry-recognized credentials; increased emphasis on work-based learning; CTE instructor recruitment, retention, and professional development; CTE in the middle grades; career and technical student organizations (CTSOs); expansion of career academies through regional centers, and adoption of the updated National Career Clusters Framework.

Attainment of Industry-Recognized Credentials

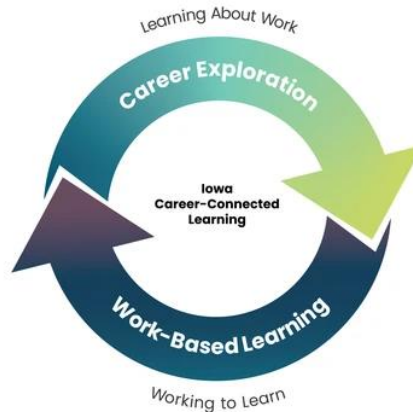
At both the secondary and postsecondary levels, students should have the opportunity to earn education- and work-related credentials that verify skill mastery, educational attainment, and the ability to perform a task or operation. These credentials are also valuable to employers, allowing them to determine the skill or education level of job applicants without having to perform an assessment of each one. An IRC is a certification that has been widely acknowledged as holding value within a specific industry or field. Recipients of such credentials have demonstrated that they possess the knowledge, skills, and competencies required to perform specific tasks or roles within that industry. IRCs are awarded by certifying bodies, trade associations, or professional organizations that have established standards for proficiency and knowledge within that domain. Designated as a validation of an individual's expertise, IRCs serve as a trusted benchmark for employers and stakeholders.

The Bureau will support IRC attainment through targeted grants using Perkins reserve funding and other incentives, such as an IRC diploma seal. The Bureau will continue to refine its list of state-approved IRCs specific to secondary education based on criteria for what constitutes a quality industry certification and develop strategies to align these quality IRCs to secondary CTE programs. This includes directly offering industry certifications in a secondary CTE program or delivery through concurrent enrollment by a community college. The Bureau's goal is to continue to produce a list of state-approved IRCs that have the support of Iowa businesses that are stackable, transferable, and portable. The Bureau will also work to provide guidance to community colleges related to the awarding credit to students entering postsecondary programs having already attained an IRC in high school. Additionally, the Bureau will develop a postsecondary-specific state-approved credentials of value list to accompany the secondary IRC list.

The Bureau will also continue exploring methods that will allow for reliable tracking of industry certifications awarded to secondary and postsecondary students enrolled in CTE programs. This work will build on past work to identify industry certifications already incorporated into community college CTE programs or for which students are prepared after completing a community college CTE program. It also includes investigating the best ways to collect IRC attainment at the secondary level through the school district's student information systems.

Emphasis on Work-Based Learning

In Iowa, Career-Connected Learning includes a continuum of structured activities utilizing the partnership between industry and education to engage student learning. Through real or simulated experiences with industry professionals, participants are able to foster first-hand engagement with in-depth application of academic, technical, or professional skills to the tasks required of a given career field while meeting specific learning objectives. Career-connected learning is a progression through the two stages of career exploration and WBL to support learning for future success. Career exploration activities help students in learning about work, while WBL supports students working to learn toward the knowledge and skills they need to succeed in the workplace and beyond. These two stages are carefully connected and build upon each other, ensuring students get the best possible learning experience, develop important skills, and are prepared for success after high school.



WBL remains a cornerstone of Iowa's CTE programs, connecting students to authentic career experiences. Teachers and administrators are supported in pursuing multi-occupation endorsements, expanding access to WBL opportunities. The passage of Senate File 2411 in May 2024 clarified a consistent definition of work-based learning as "...sustained project-based learning in partnership with an employer, simulated work experiences aligned with industry-recognized credentials, high-quality pre-apprenticeships aligned to an apprenticeship, student learner programs, internships, and apprenticeships."

The Bureau will continue to expand access to WBL experiences at the secondary and postsecondary levels. In partnership with IWD, the Bureau will provide technical assistance to school districts and community colleges to increase the number of WBL opportunities for students, with the ultimate goal of ensuring that each student has a WBL experience as part of their program of study. In order to increase WBL opportunities, the two agencies will assist school districts in identifying and removing barriers to work-based learning, such as lack of qualified/credentialed instructors, inadequate equipment, absence of business partners, and transportation issues. A special emphasis will be placed on assisting students attending school districts in rural areas to work-based learning opportunities.

CTE Instructor Recruitment, Retention, and Professional Development

A recurring theme from stakeholder feedback centered around the shortage of CTE instructors in the state. Secondary CTE instructors must obtain an Initial CTE Authorization to teach in Iowa. In order to qualify for the Initial CTE Authorization, instructors must meet one of the following qualifications:

- 6,000 hours of recent and relevant experience;
- 4,000 hours of recent and relevant experience if the applicant holds a baccalaureate degree;
- 3,000 hours of recent and relevant experience if the applicant holds an associate's degree in the teaching endorsement area sought, if such a degree is considered terminal for that field of instruction;
- Hold a baccalaureate or graduate degree or closely related degree in the teaching endorsement area sought; or
- Hold a baccalaureate degree in any area of study if at least 18 of the credit hours were completed in the teaching endorsement area sought.
- For a CTE cluster endorsement, meet one of the above qualifications, and at least 2,000 hours of recent and relevant experience or 9 semester hours each in two additional areas within the cluster endorsement. Combinations of experience and education may be approved by the Bureau of Educational Examiners. Cluster areas include: Agriculture, Industrial Technology, Business, Family and Consumer Sciences, Health Sciences, and Information Solutions.

The term length for the Initial CTE Authorization is three years. After this period of time, CTE instructors must complete the following courses to receive Full CTE Authorization:

- Iowa-approved Human Relations course
- Methods of Teaching Career and Technical Education
- Curriculum Design and Construction
- Evaluation of Programs and Students (Educational Psychology)
- Coursework in the Instruction of Exceptional Learners
- Ethics Training

Data from the Bureau of Educational Examiners shows that almost half of CTE instructors with an Initial CTE Authorization allow their authorization expire before pursuing Full CTE Authorization. To address this issue, efforts are being made to make it easier for CTE instructors to complete the pedagogical coursework required for Full CTE Authorization. The Bureau will also continue to explore expanded career cluster endorsements for CTE instructors. Additionally, the Bureau will develop a CTE Teacher Academy to provide mentoring support and some of the pedagogy needed for Full CTE Authorization. Perkins reserve funds will be used to support this programming.

CTE in Middle Grades

The state is committed to building intentional connections with middle school career learning and development. By recognizing the value of early and broad exposure to career-focused exploration and discovery activities, Iowa aims to provide students with a strong foundation in career awareness and connection to self-understanding. This includes not only labor market information, general career pathways, and educational requirements, but also the development of Individual Career and Academic Plans (ICAP), career counseling, and essential employability skills that will support students as they prepare for their future postsecondary plans and future careers.

There is a crucial role in engaging middle school students in the academic planning process, providing a strong foundation for future decision-making. Through career exploration and development activities starting in the middle grades, CTE programs introduce students to various career opportunities while equipping them with the skills and knowledge to make informed decisions about their academic and career paths. By connecting academic work to real-world applications, students gain a clearer understanding of how their education supports their long-term goals. This early engagement in the academic planning process empowers students to think critically about their interests and strengths, setting the stage for thoughtful decision-making as they progress through high school and beyond. Iowa currently requires career exploration and development instruction starting in seventh and eighth grades. Twenty-first century skills—including, but not limited to, financial literacy, family life and consumer sciences, and employability skills—are addressed through a variety of curricular activities from kindergarten through twelfth grade.

Middle school is a pivotal time for students to begin developing their ICAP, which is central to their academic and career success. The ICAP process, starting in grade 8, encourages students to design, reflect, and map out the steps necessary to achieve their postsecondary goals. CTE programs at the middle school level serve as a critical support in this process, helping students connect their interests to potential careers and laying the groundwork for more focused academic planning. By actively participating in career exploration activities, students gain a better sense of the skills they need to develop, the courses they should take, and the opportunities available to them after graduation. The early exposure to career pathways and employability skills ensures that students are better prepared for the ongoing development of their ICAP. Additionally, continuous feedback from teachers, counselors, and other stakeholders supports students in refining their plans each year, allowing for more targeted academic planning. This approach strengthens the ICAP process, guiding students as

they transition from middle school to high school and setting them up for success in higher education, training, or the workforce.

Through Perkins, the Bureau will also be the first to provide financial support to districts seeking to deliver a more holistic, integrated approach to career exploration and development at the middle school level (grades 5-8). School districts with an endorsed CTE instructor that meet a minimum of 12 best practices including technical, academic, employability knowledge and skills have access to federal funds to implement quality CTE programming at earlier middle grades. This initiative will allow districts to develop and implement quality programming rooted in meaningful student activities and experiences, which will help guide students in their career exploration process, laying the groundwork for their future academic and career success.

Career and Technical Student Organizations

Iowa's vision for Career and Technical Student Organizations (CTSOs) is to ensure that all CTE students, in both secondary and postsecondary settings, have access to a CTSO as an integral, intra-curricular component of their educational experience. CTOSs are not extracurricular activities; rather, they are embedded within CTE programs to enhance classroom instruction with real-world applications, leadership development, and hands-on learning experiences that align with industry standards.

Iowa is committed to expanding access to CTOSs across all career pathways at high schools and community colleges, ensuring that every student benefit from opportunities to develop technical, leadership, and employability skills that prepare them for success in both the workforce and postsecondary education. By fostering strong partnerships between educators, industry leaders, and communities, Iowa's CTOS vision supports broad participation, career readiness, and lifelong learning, ultimately strengthening the state's workforce and economic prosperity.

Additionally, Iowa recognizes only CTOSs that are members of the National Coordinating Council for Career and Technical Student Organizations (NCC-CTSO). These CTOSs include Business Professionals of America (BPA); DECA; Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA); Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA); FFA; HOSA-Future Health Professionals; Professional Agriculture Student (PAS); SkillsUSA; and Technology Student Association (TSA). If additional CTOSs become members of NCC-CTSO in the future, the state will recognize these as well. At the secondary level CTOSs must be aligned broadly by service area and, more narrowly, by CIP code. At the postsecondary level, participation in CTOSs is not required, but highly recommended. This ensures that students are engaged in nationally-recognized, high-quality organizations that provide meaningful leadership and career development opportunities aligned with industry and educational standards.

Expansion of Career Academies Through Regional Centers

Career academies, which are programs of study that pair two years of sequential secondary CTE coursework with a community college CTE program through concurrent enrollment, are often offered through regional centers. Regional centers are facilities dedicated to the delivery of CTE programming, with the intention of providing for increased and access to a variety of high-quality CTE program opportunities for all high school students across the state. They deliver high-quality advanced CTE coursework by internalizing the high capital costs to cohesively offer structured programming and garner the necessary, yet scarce, teachers and other professional talent so that all students in Iowa, especially those in rural areas, are able to consistently access high-quality advanced CTE coursework all across Iowa.

Through collaboration with RPPs, the Bureau will continue to promote the establishment of regional centers in areas around the state where students do not have easy access to CTE programming. The Department will also explore funding opportunities for the development of regional centers and policy changes that will make it easier to provide CTE programming in remote areas of the state.

Adoption of the National Career Clusters Framework

The National Career Clusters Framework, developed by Advance CTE, provides a structural alignment and common language that bridges education and work. This framework has recently been modernized to reflect the evolving world of work, integrating federal labor codes and national labor market data to help states and local agencies organize and describe their CTE systems effectively. The new framework consists of 14 Clusters and 72 Sub-Clusters that serve as the primary organizing structures for CTE programs. These structures are supported by five Cluster Groupings aligned to three Cross-Cutting Clusters that provide both skills and careers that can stand alone and intersect with all other Clusters. Twelve Career-Ready Practices ensure that every program includes the skills that are essential to every career and life.

The state of Iowa plans to adopt this new National Career Clusters Framework. During this adoption, programs of study will be designed to align with national labor market trends, ensuring students are prepared for dynamic and evolving careers. Programs will also be designed to incorporate multiple on- and off-ramps, allowing flexibility for all learners, including secondary students, adult learners, and job seekers. Adoption of the Framework enables programs to reflect the needs of current and emerging sectors, such as advanced manufacturing, data science, and artificial intelligence, integrating skills-based approaches to meet workforce demands. The interdisciplinary nature of the Cross-Cutting Clusters allows programs to demonstrate how skills and competencies overlap between Career Clusters. With the new Framework, CTE students will be able to leverage transferable skills to explore, access, and create future career pathways that are specific to their preferences, interests, and aptitudes.

By leveraging the modernized National Career Clusters Framework, the Iowa Department of Education ensures that its CTE programs of study are innovative, responsive, and impactful, preparing learners for success in a rapidly changing economic landscape.

1.c. Describe the State's strategy for any joint planning, alignment, coordination, and leveraging of funds between the State's career and technical education programs and programs of study with the State's workforce development system, to achieve the strategic vision and goals described in section 122(d)(2) of Perkins V, including the core programs defined in section 3 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C. 3102) and the elements related to system alignment under section 102(b)(2)(B) of such Act (29 U.S.C. 3112(b)(2)(B)); and for programs carried out under this title with other Federal programs, which may include programs funded under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 and the Higher Education Act of 1965. (Section 122(d)(3) of Perkins V)

The Department collaborates closely with Iowa Workforce Development to align CTE programs with the state's workforce development initiatives. This partnership involves regular consultations to ensure that CTE curricula are responsive to current labor market demands and future workforce trends. This data is shared to local recipients via tableau dashboards accessible via the internet, and data is supplied to local recipients in report form via the comprehensive local needs assessment process. By integrating labor market information into program planning, Iowa ensures that CTE students acquire skills that are relevant and in demand.

Additionally, the Department and IWD have been collaborating and will continue to collaborate on increasing the number of WBL opportunities for students. This includes co-hosting WBL webinars; identifying school districts with low WBL participation; and providing technical assistance, resources, and tools to school districts.

1.d. Describe how the eligible agency will use State leadership funds made available under section 112(a)(2) of Perkins V for each of the purposes under section 124(a) of the Act. See Text Box 2 for the required uses of State leadership funds under section 124(a) of Perkins V. (Section 122(d)(7) of Perkins V)

(1) conduct State leadership activities to improve career and technical education, which shall include support for—

(A) preparation for non-traditional fields in current and emerging professions, programs for special populations, and other activities that expose students, including special populations, to high-skill, high-wage, and in-demand occupations;

The Bureau will utilize state leadership funds to conduct activities that improve CTE, focusing on supporting initiatives to prepare students for non-traditional fields and emerging professions. These activities will include targeted support for special populations defined under Perkins V and other efforts to expose all students, including those from special populations, to high-skill, high-wage, and in-demand occupations.

In alignment with section 112(a)(2)(C) of the Act, the Bureau is proposing to budget \$5,000 of State leadership funds specifically for the recruitment and support of special populations and \$75,000 for the recruitment and support of non-traditional programs and students. The Bureau will develop a comprehensive strategy for deploying these funds, incorporating input from internal staff and key external stakeholders. This strategy will emphasize programs and activities designed to increase access to CTE opportunities, enhance career readiness, and ensure participation in fields with significant labor market demand.

Furthermore, all students, including special populations, must access quality CTE. The Perkins V Act mandates that states, districts, and community colleges engage stakeholders to create plans supporting access to CTE. These plans aim to address achievement gaps for special populations identified in the Perkins CLNA. Focused on supporting special populations, the requirement challenges recipients to allocate resources to close performance gaps and remove barriers.

Additionally, technical assistance and support from Bureau staff will prioritize activities such as mentoring programs, awareness campaigns for non-traditional careers, and developing resources that address underrepresented groups' participation barriers. Established relationships with industry representatives will assist in the development of career development activities for CTE program participants. These efforts will ensure that Iowa's CTE system continues to provide pathways to success in the workforce for every student.

(B) individuals in State institutions, such as State correctional institutions, including juvenile justice facilities, and educational institutions that serve individuals with disabilities;

The Bureau will continue to prioritize support for individuals in state correctional institutions under the Perkins V State Plan. This support will include initiatives aimed at improving access to career-oriented programming for incarcerated individuals. The Bureau will allocate 0.80% from the state leadership fund to provide education and training opportunities that align with labor market needs.

Additionally, the Bureau is engaged in efforts to research and develop strategies for optimizing the delivery of educational programs in state correctional institutions. These efforts include identifying good practices for expanding access to educational services and creating scalable models for systemic improvement in program delivery.

The Bureau remains committed to leveraging state leadership funds to enhance educational opportunities for individuals in state correctional institutions and juvenile justice facilities. This includes

leveraging technology to deliver instruction in high-skill, in-demand occupations to prepare these individuals for employment upon reentry into society and the workforce. These efforts reflect Iowa's dedication to equipping these individuals with the skills and credentials to achieve meaningful employment and reintegration into the community.

(C) recruiting, preparing, or retaining career and technical education teachers, faculty, specialized instructional support personnel, or paraprofessionals, such as preservice, professional development, or leadership development programs; and

The Bureau will use state leadership funds to support recruitment, preparation, and retention activities for CTE teachers, faculty, specialized instructional support personnel, and paraprofessionals. These efforts will include coordinating initiatives such as preservice preparation, professional development, CTSO onboarding, and content area specific implementation of new technology to enhance the pipeline of qualified CTE educators.

In the most recent bi-annual CLNA cycle that kicked off in January of 2024 for the FY25 Perkins local application due on June 30, 2024, a suite of state-level resources was gathered, organized, and curated by Bureau employees to aid eligible local recipients in completing the comprehensive local needs assessment. These resources were accompanied by webinars delivered to the field, regional large group workshops, and one-on-one technical assistance sessions. Resources included guidebooks, templates, data dashboards, and more. A local driven need based on the CLNA process resulted in many recipients recognizing a need for additional professional development for career and technical education educators, a Perkins activity that was identified in many grantee budgets.

The Bureau will continuously seek feedback on the effectiveness of these activities to ensure their ongoing relevance and alignment with recipients' needs. Strategies will be adjusted to support the development of a robust, well-prepared workforce of CTE educators who can meet the evolving demands of Iowa's students and workforce.

(D) technical assistance for eligible recipients; and report on the effectiveness of such use of funds.

The Bureau provides targeted technical assistance and support to eligible secondary and postsecondary CTE program grant sub-recipients. Consultants specialize in Iowa's six CTE content areas and address specific priorities aligned with the goals of the State Plan, such as IRCs, WBL, CTSO integration, concurrent enrollment, implementation of middle school CTE opportunities, and Perkins accountability. The consultants collaborate closely with a data team within the Bureau and other departmental experts to offer comprehensive support to CTE programs.

To strengthen the impact of its support, the Bureau leverages insights from Program Management Committees. These committees, composed of educators, business representatives, and community organizations, act as advisory groups to guide strategies that address:

- Current and future education trends and needs in each CTE service area;
- Recruitment and retention strategies targeting special population students in CTE;
- Development of professional development and recruitment opportunities for CTE educators;
- Enhanced linkages between secondary and postsecondary education, the workforce, and the community; and
- Completing and aligning programs of study to support students' understanding of career pathways.

The Bureau will monitor the effectiveness of technical assistance activities through continuous feedback from recipients, program evaluations, and performance data. Based on this feedback, strategies will be adjusted to ensure ongoing alignment with state and federal CTE goals. Furthermore,

the Bureau will comprehensively review technical assistance resources and guides on the Department's website. This review will ensure that these resources reflect current policies, practices, and priorities, making them a reliable tool for recipients.

By maintaining robust advisory networks, providing specialized technical assistance, and regularly evaluating its strategies, the Bureau ensures its efforts effectively achieve the goals outlined in the State Plan, strengthening CTE programs, and preparing students for high-demand careers.

Technical Assistance Around Claims & Use of Funds

Webinars that provide technical assistance and professional development to career and technical education coordinators, instructors, consortia contacts, counselors, CTSO advisors, school principals, and business office staff in middle and secondary schools and the 15 community colleges will continue to be delivered.

Training sessions focus on the appropriate use of Perkins funds, ensuring compliance with federal and state financial requirements. These sessions provide comprehensive guidance on financial reimbursement, proper budgeting, and key statutory obligations under the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Perkins V statute).

A critical component of these trainings is covering Perkins-required activities one through six and the CLNA elements one through six. Local grantees learn how to develop a Perkins budget based on CLNA outcomes; ensure that funds are used effectively to support student performance, instructor training, and retention; and align program needs with labor market needs.

To support financial compliance, trainings also covers cost principles and Uniform Grant Guidance (UGG) to ensure that recipients understand the rules governing federal funding. Additionally, participants understand and review outcomes, necessary action items, and important deadlines to ensure they meet compliance requirements related to grant monitoring.

Another key aspect of financial management training covers the claim submission process via the Iowa Grants management system. Items include understanding timelines and required due dates, procedures for equipment purchasing, professional development, and strategies for ensuring a higher percentage of grantees fully utilize their total allocation. Recipients also learn the proper processes for tracking and safeguarding federally funded purchases, including the use of federally compliant state-level templates and procedures.

Inventory management is another focal point to ensure compliance with the electronic Code of Federal Regulations (CFR). This includes training on physical inventory timelines, reconciliation with property records, control and mitigation processes to prevent loss or theft, maintenance procedures to keep equipment in working condition, and adherence to federal sequence guidelines for inventory disposition. Additionally, training covers selling Perkins-funded equipment at fair market value and returning proceeds to CTE programs.

Finally, trainings reinforce documentation policies for state and federal audits, ensuring that all expenditures, including those related to CTSOs, meet compliance requirement. Participants learn best practices for maintaining records such as job descriptions, time and effort tracking, and salary supplanting assurances. Additionally, the sessions clarify the Perkins V, Sec. 211 supplement versus supplant rule, compliance with federal Office of Management and Budget (OMB) guidelines, and regulations surrounding the use of Perkins funds for IRCs. Specific guidance is provided on unallowable expenditures, such as reimbursement for CTE staff credit coursework and required CTE endorsements for curriculum purchases, including Project Lead the Way (PLTW).

Through these structured trainings, participants gain a thorough understanding of how to manage Perkins funds effectively, ensuring compliance, maximizing impact, and strengthening CTE programs across their regions.

2.a. Describe the career and technical education programs or programs of study that will be supported, developed, or improved at the State level, including descriptions of the programs of study to be developed at the State level and made available for adoption by eligible recipients. (Section 122(d)(4)(A) of Perkins V)

The Iowa Department of Education will support, develop, and improve CTE programs and programs of study at the state level to align with Section 122(d)(4)(A) of Perkins V. These efforts integrate the principles of the National Career Clusters Framework, emphasizing consistency, adaptability, and alignment with modern workforce demands.

Standards for Career and Technical Education Programs

At the secondary level, [CTE standards](#) for each of the six CTE content areas—agriculture, food and natural resources; business, finance, marketing, and management; health science; human services; applied science, technology, engineering, and manufacturing; and information solutions—were adopted by the Iowa State Board of Education in 2019. These standards set clear and consistent foundational expectations for what students must learn in high-quality CTE programs across the state. Iowa's CTE standards are reviewed and updated to keep pace with national standards. School districts are required to integrate these standards into CTE programs, and the integration of standards is monitored through the secondary CTE program approval process.

Postsecondary CTE programs develop curriculum locally, in consultation with employer and community stakeholders through local program advisory councils. When available and appropriate, they align course content with national industry standards, occupational licensure requirements, program accreditation standards, and other quality frameworks. All postsecondary CTE programs are under regular review and cataloged in a statewide program management database. Secondary and postsecondary CTE programs work to align program standards and curriculum to ensure seamless student transitions.

Program Advisory Councils

All secondary and postsecondary CTE programs must maintain an active program advisory council. The purpose of the advisory council is to provide advice and guidance on the matters and challenges related to establishing and maintaining a high-quality program. Members of the advisory council must consist of representatives of businesses or employers within the occupation or occupational field related to the program and other stakeholders with expertise and knowledge of the occupation and occupational field. All efforts must be made to include the participation of secondary and postsecondary teachers from related secondary and postsecondary CTE programs.

Program advisory councils are configurable in one of three ways:

1. A standalone program advisory council can be maintained independently by a school district or a community college. To date, this is the primary way by which program advisory councils operate.
2. A joint program advisory council can be shared by a school district and a community college. Any district and community college that maintains CTE programs in the same occupation or occupational field may form a joint program advisory council. The joint program advisory council may serve in place of the local program advisory council, fulfilling the statutory requirement for maintaining a program advisory council.

3. A regional program advisory council established by a Regional CTE Planning Partnership on behalf of the district and/or community college may replace a standalone or joint program advisory council. A district and/or community college that utilizes such a council would fulfill the statutory requirement for maintaining it.

2.b. Describe the process and criteria to be used for approving locally developed programs of study or career pathways (see Text Box 3 for the statutory definition of career pathways under section 3(8) of Perkins V), including how such programs address State workforce development and education needs and the criteria to assess the extent to which the local application under section 1325 will—

Both secondary and postsecondary approval processes emphasize alignment with Iowa's workforce development and education priorities. Programs are evaluated for their responsiveness to state and regional labor market needs. The Bureau uses this labor market data to guide local program development and ensure alignment with high-demand industries. Additionally, advisory councils, including representatives from business and industry, postsecondary institutions, and community organizations, play a critical role in shaping program content and ensuring it meets workforce needs. Programs are reviewed regularly for their ability to provide access to all learners, including special populations, and to prepare students for high-skills, high-wage, and in-demand careers.

School districts and postsecondary institutions develop programs of study and career pathways in Iowa locally. However, to ensure alignment with state and federal requirements and postsecondary institutions. They must adhere to policies and criteria established at the state level under the direction of the Bureau.

Iowa's programs of study are developed based on the six components defined in Section 3(41) of Perkins V:

1. **Challenging state academic standards:** Iowa's CTE standards, aligned with state academic expectations and the Career Clusters Framework, provide a foundation for integrating academic, technical, and employability skills across all service areas.
2. **Integration of academic and technical skills:** The standards reflect Career Ready Practices developed by Advance CTE, which promote competencies required for career readiness. Iowa's programs of study integrate WBL opportunities to foster these skills.
3. **Alignment with workforce needs:** Iowa collaborates with employers and stakeholders to ensure programs align with labor market demands. The Career Clusters Framework's organization around national labor market data helps identify opportunities in emerging fields.
4. **Progression and specialization:** Programs of study include middle-grade CTE offerings to introduce students to career clusters. High school and postsecondary programs build toward specific career pathways, ensuring seamless transitions and alignment.
5. **Multiple entry and exit points:** Programs incorporate stackable credentials, providing flexibility for traditional and non-traditional learners. The Framework's emphasis on interdisciplinary skills supports diverse career paths.
6. **Attainment of recognized postsecondary credentials:** All programs of study are aligned with a credentials of value, which including IRCs; community college certificates, diplomas, and associate degrees; and/or apprenticeships. To ensure quality, postsecondary programs align with national standards and state and programmatic accreditation requirements.

To support the development of local programs of study development, the Bureau provides guidance to ensure programs are aligned with the Career Clusters Framework, integrating national best practices with local needs. Additionally, collaborative advisory councils guide program development, ensuring alignment with industry requirements and workforce demands. Collection of consistent and actionable

data to evaluate program effectiveness drives continuous improvement and ensures access for all student learners, especially those from Perkins V-defined special populations groups.

The specific approval process for locally developed programs of study involves comprehensive review mechanisms designed to ensure alignment with state workforce priorities, educational standards, and the statutory definition of career pathways under Section 3(8) of Perkins V. This process integrates both secondary and postsecondary program reviews.

Secondary Program Approval and Review Process

The secondary program approval process, established under Iowa Code Chapter 258 and enhanced following the passage of House File 2392 in 2016, is the foundation for ensuring all secondary CTE programs meet state standards for high-quality programs of study. The review includes an assessment of the extent to which the competencies in the program are being mastered by the students enrolled, the costs are proportionate to educational benefits received, the CTE curriculum is articulated and integrated with other curricular offerings required of all students, the program permits students with CTE backgrounds to pursue other educational interests in a postsecondary institutional setting, and the programs remove barriers for all students to access educational and employment opportunities. The process incorporates several stages:

1. **Self-evaluation:** Schools conduct a thorough review of their CTE programs using a self-study instrument designed to evaluate alignment with state and federal standards. The evaluation includes indicators such as effective teaching and learning, work-based learning, and stakeholder engagement.
2. **Peer review and feedback:** RPPs facilitate a peer review process where districts receive constructive feedback and support for program improvement.
3. **Approval by the Bureau:** The Bureau reviews the program and associated action plans to ensure compliance with state standards and alignment with workforce needs. Approval is contingent on the inclusion of the core components of a high-quality program of study, including strong secondary-postsecondary partnerships and active engagement with business and industry stakeholders.
4. **Implementation and continuous improvement:** Districts implement approved action plans and monitor progress annually to ensure programs remain responsive to workforce demands and educational priorities.

The approval process operates on a five-year cycle, with approximately 20% of programs reviewed annually. This ensures regular evaluation and alignment with changing workforce needs.

Postsecondary Program Approval and Review Process

Career and technical education programs offered at Iowa's community colleges must meet program approval requirements set by the State Board of Education and require the Director's approval. Additionally, the postsecondary program review process ensures that community college CTE programs meet the following program standards as assessed during the program review process:

- Students are proficient in the knowledge and skills aligned with industry expectations;
- The program yields a positive return on investment for students;
- The general education curriculum in the program is aligned with the program outcomes;
- The program provides opportunities for students to pursue other educational opportunities, other co-curricular opportunities, or both at the community college;
- The program removes barriers for all students, including special populations defined by the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act, to access educational and employment opportunities;

- The curriculum is current and relevant;
- There is continued professional development of instructors;
- The equipment and facilities are adequate;
- Student outcomes, including, at a minimum, program enrollment rates, retention rates, completion rates, and employment rates and wages, are disaggregated, at a minimum, by gender, race and ethnicity, and other special populations defined by the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act, and addressed by the program;
- The program aligns to additional education and training opportunities; and
- The program has implemented prior cycle goals and has developed additional plans for improvement.

Additionally, postsecondary CTE programs must utilize program standards established or recognized by industry and professional organizations when available and appropriate or developed through a group interview process. They must also engage with an advisory council and work with teachers and administrators from secondary institutions to identify competencies required at each pathway and develop pathways between the secondary and postsecondary levels.

The Iowa Department of Education, as part of its overall community college accreditation process, reviews process documentation submitted by the community college and materials from select CTE program reviews to ascertain if the colleges are indeed following their internal processes for approving and reviewing CTE programs. The Community College Perkins Desk Audits are aligned and incorporated into the state accreditation process.

The Bureau monitors the implementation of approved programs through annual evaluations, technical assistance, and the community college accreditation process. RPPs and local advisory councils collaborate to provide ongoing support, ensuring programs remain aligned with workforce needs and educational standards.

By combining robust criteria, stakeholder collaboration, and a commitment to continuous improvement, Iowa's program approval processes ensure that locally developed programs of study and career pathways effectively address the state's workforce development and education priorities.

2.b.i. promote continuous improvement in academic achievement and technical skill attainment;

The Iowa Department of Education has adopted standards for all secondary CTE content areas to ensure alignment with the technical and employability skills valued by business and industry. These standards serve as a foundation for continuous improvement in both academic achievement and technical skill attainment. To support this alignment, the Bureau will continue to map the secondary CTE standards to the Iowa Core academic standards, enabling CTE teachers to identify connections between CTE program standards and traditional academic content. This alignment fosters greater integration of academic learning into CTE programs, ensuring students develop both foundational knowledge and career-ready skills.

Community colleges are expected to utilize standards established and recognized by industry or professional organizations when available and appropriate. In lieu of these standards, community colleges must develop program standards through a structured group interview process, which involves a committee of incumbent workers within an occupational cluster analyzing standards, including new and emerging technologies, job seeking, leadership, entrepreneurial, and occupational competencies. This analysis includes identifying standards that ensure program participants have access to instruction which leads to employment and further training. All standards are analyzed for the reinforcement of academic skills.

Technical skill proficiency is a critical component of high-quality CTE programs. The Bureau will continue to work with local recipients to identify and promote best practices for assessing student attainment of technical skills. Authentic assessments, such as IRCs and postsecondary certifications, will be emphasized as a means of validating student achievement. Embedding these credentials into CTE programs ensures that students graduate with industry-validated competencies, directly aligning their education with workforce needs.

IRCs play a pivotal role in advancing both technical skill attainment and academic achievement by providing tangible, measurable outcomes for student learning. These credentials demonstrate mastery of industry-relevant skills and are widely recognized by employers as indicators of workforce readiness. By integrating these credentials into CTE programs, the Bureau ensures that students not only meet academic and technical standards but also leave programs with meaningful qualifications that enhance employability.

The state will identify and disseminate good practices for using IRCs as part of program assessment and improvement. This includes strategies for aligning credentials with program standards, expanding access to credentialing opportunities, and using credential attainment data to inform program development. By embedding credentials into CTE programs, Iowa's education system equips students with validated, industry-relevant skills while fostering continuous improvement in academic and technical performance.

2.b.ii. expand access to career and technical education for special populations; and

All recipients of Perkins V funding are required to develop and implement strategies to ensure access to CTE programs for all students, including learners within special populations as defined by the Act. The Bureau is committed to supporting this effort through data-driven initiatives, professional development, and targeted strategies to identify and address performance and achievement gaps in CTE programs.

Data-Driven Strategies to Expand Access

The Bureau collaborates with recipients to build their capacity to gather, evaluate, and act on data to expand access to CTE programs for special populations defined by Perkins V. By analyzing Perkins V accountability and performance metrics, the Bureau and recipients identify disparities in participation, performance, and completion rates among these special population group, guiding the development of actionable improvement strategies.

To strengthen these efforts, the Bureau provides:

- **Customized data tools:** The development of state-level data dashboards enables stakeholders to evaluate student performance and participation, with a focus on identifying gaps for underrepresented groups in nontraditional pathways and other special populations. These tools are essential for promoting data-informed decision-making and identifying opportunities for program improvement.
- **Professional development:** Statewide training sessions equip educators and stakeholders with the skills needed to analyze data, identify achievement gaps, and implement evidence-based strategies that foster engagement in CTE programs.
- **Targeted technical assistance:** The Bureau works closely with RPPs and local recipients to ensure data is used effectively to evaluate and address access and participation challenges for each learner.

Expanding Opportunities for Nontraditional and Special Populations

Iowa prioritizes expanding opportunities for students in nontraditional pathways and addressing barriers faced by learners within special populations. Recent initiatives include:

- **Focused training:** The Bureau provides targeted professional development to support local educators in identifying and implementing strategies that address achievement gaps, such as increasing participation and completion rates of underrepresented genders in nontraditional CTE pathways.
- **Strategic planning:** Local recipients are supported in developing action plans to address the specific needs of special populations, ensuring compliance with state and federal requirements while fostering access.
- **Collaboration and engagement:** Stakeholders, including educators, employers, and community representatives, are engaged in efforts to identify barriers to access and develop solutions tailored to the needs of learners.

Sustained Improvement and Expansion

Building on the successes of past initiatives, the Bureau will continue to expand data tools to provide more detailed analyses at the local level and include additional metrics for special populations; facilitate ongoing professional development and technical assistance to help recipients implement inclusive practices and address barriers to participation; and support local efforts to engage families, community organizations, and other stakeholders to identify and address the unique needs of special populations, ensuring programs are accessible.

By using data-informed strategies, Iowa is committed to ensuring that all learners, including those within special populations, have access to high-quality CTE programs that prepare them for success in high-skill, high-wage, and in-demand careers.

2.b.iii. support the inclusion of employability skills in programs of study and career pathways. (Section 122(d)(4)(B) of Perkins V)

The Iowa State Board of Education has adopted standards for all secondary CTE content areas, ensuring that employability skills are integrated across programs of study and career pathways. These employability skills are embedded within the adopted content area standards, equipping students with foundational competencies necessary for workplace success, such as communication, teamwork, problem-solving, and adaptability.

Postsecondary CTE programs also incorporate academic, technical, and employability skills to meet the needs of local business and industry. In consultation with local program advisory councils, these programs align curriculum, learning objectives, and competencies with national standards, program accreditation requirements, and occupational licensure criteria to ensure relevance and rigor.

CTSOs play a vital role in reinforcing employability skills by offering students opportunities to develop leadership, collaboration, and career readiness through co-curricular activities. CTOS provide authentic experiences such as competitions, networking, and skill-building events that align with the technical and employability standards of CTE programs. These organizations serve as a bridge between classroom instruction and real-world application, further preparing students for success in their chosen career pathways.

To support the ongoing inclusion of employability skills in CTE programs, the Bureau will:

- Conduct periodic reviews of adopted content area standards, in consultation with education and employer stakeholders, to ensure they remain relevant to industry needs and workforce demands.
- Oversee the integration of these standards into secondary CTE programs through the secondary program review process. This ensures that employability skills are consistently embedded in classroom instruction, CTSO activities, and program initiatives.
- Encourage secondary and postsecondary CTE programs to align employability skills with industry expectations, fostering a seamless transition for students into the workforce or further education.

By embedding employability skills within program standards, leveraging the opportunities provided by CTSOs, and maintaining strong industry connections, Iowa ensures that all learners are equipped to excel in high-skill, high-wage, and in-demand careers.

2.c. Describe how the eligible agency will—

i. make information on approved programs of study and career pathways (including career exploration, work-based learning opportunities, early college high schools, and dual or concurrent enrollment program opportunities) and guidance and advisement resources, available to students (and parents, as appropriate), representatives of secondary and postsecondary education, and special populations, and to the extent practicable, provide that information and those resources in a language students, parents, and educators can understand;

All information concerning CTE is available on the Iowa Department of Education website (<https://educate.iowa.gov/higher-ed/cte>). Additionally, Perkins grant recipients can access a wide range of multi-year grant management information, such as budgets, CLNAs, claims, assurances, applications, and more, via the www.iowagrants.gov state grant management online system.

School districts can access detailed course and program information through the Secondary Career and Technical Education Reporting Application (SCTERA) and Student Reporting in Iowa (SRI) system. The State of Iowa Curriculum System (STICS) is a curriculum database and program approval system for both secondary and postsecondary programs. At the postsecondary level, STICS is used for approval of CTE and arts and sciences (A&S) courses and programs at Iowa's fifteen community colleges and the storage of the Iowa community college course numbering system (CCN). At the secondary level, STICS is utilized to review and approve CTE programs in Iowa's public school districts. The STICS online platform is a public information tool, requiring no login credentials to look up secondary and postsecondary CTE programs and courses.

In addition to making information available electronically, the Bureau produces several reports, “one-pagers,” and guidance documents for various stakeholders about the different programs it oversees, including Perkins V. Locally, school districts and community colleges maintain catalogs that provide information on locally available courses and/or programs.

The Bureau plans to revamp its “Condition of CTE Report” into a more streamlined “Iowa CTE Impact Report” for more efficient dissemination. The Bureau plans to continue to update and enhance its [Perkins V dashboards](#) as part of the state’s [Iowa Student Outcomes website](#) initiative, a state project that has obtained nationwide recognition due to its multi-agency partnership and wealth of information. Incorporated into this website is the [Iowa Work-Based Learning Dashboard](#).

ii. facilitate collaboration among eligible recipients in the development and coordination of career and technical education programs and programs of study and career pathways that include multiple entry and exit points;

Iowa facilitates collaboration among eligible recipients to develop and coordinate high-quality CTE programs, programs of study, and career pathways that include multiple entry and exit points through a structured framework of policies, partnerships, and planning efforts. The state has implemented several key initiatives to ensure alignment between secondary and postsecondary education, workforce development, and business and industry needs.

Regional Planning Partnerships

A significant component of Iowa's collaborative approach is the 15 RPPs established under House File 2392. These partnerships support the coordination of secondary CTE programs across regions, which roughly mirror the community college service areas. Each RPP comprises representatives from secondary schools, postsecondary institutions, employers, and community stakeholders. Their primary responsibilities include:

- Coordinating regional CTE planning and ensuring that career pathways are aligned across institutions.
- Supporting the delivery of approved CTE programs of study that provide seamless student transitions.
- Facilitating WBL opportunities and ensuring access to career development services.
- Ensuring compliance with state and federal CTE requirements.

Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment

Under Perkins V, Iowa requires eligible recipients to conduct a CLNA every two years. The CLNA process facilitates collaboration by:

- Bringing together secondary and postsecondary institutions to assess regional workforce needs.
- Identifying gaps in program offerings and ensuring career pathways are designed with multiple entry and exit points for learners.
- As identified through labor market analysis, aligning CTE programs with high-skill, high-wage, and in-demand careers.
- Encouraging shared resources and best practices among schools, community colleges, and workforce development entities.

Program Approval Process

Iowa has implemented a secondary and postsecondary program approval process, ensuring that CTE programs at both levels align with one another and with industry needs. This process fosters collaboration by:

- Requiring secondary and postsecondary institutions to work together in program development.
- Ensuring that programs of study are seamlessly articulated so students can transition easily from high school to community college and beyond.
- Encouraging credit transfer agreements and dual enrollment opportunities to create multiple entry and exit points for students.

Statewide Coordination and Oversight

The Iowa Department of Education, through the Bureau of Career and Technical Education, plays a central role in coordinating collaboration efforts. The Bureau is responsible for:

- Overseeing the RPPs and ensuring their effective operation
- Providing technical assistance to eligible recipients on program development and industry engagement
- Facilitating statewide advisory councils to promote alignment between education and workforce strategies

Through these structured initiatives, Iowa ensures that CTE programs are coordinated, aligned, and responsive to workforce needs, providing students with multiple entry and exit points along their career pathways. The combination of RPPs, CLNAs, program approval process, and statewide oversight creates a comprehensive framework for collaboration, driving the development of high-quality CTE programs that prepare students for meaningful careers.

iii. use State, regional, or local labor market data to determine alignment of eligible recipients' programs of study to the needs of the State, regional, or local economy, including in-demand industry sectors and occupations identified by the State board, and to align career and technical education with such needs, as appropriate;

The Bureau will evaluate the alignment of programs of study with state, regional, and local labor market needs using criteria established in the definition of size, scope, and quality. This evaluation will ensure that CTE programs meet workforce demands, including those in in-demand industry sectors and occupations identified by the State Board.

To assist eligible recipients in aligning their programs with labor market needs, the Bureau will establish and maintain labor market datasets to support the development, modification, and continuous improvement of programs of study. These datasets will be informed by data-sharing agreements with agencies such as IWD's Labor Market Information Division, allowing the Bureau to collect and analyze relevant workforce data.

Labor Market Data and Reporting

The Bureau disseminates the following "[Occupational Projections](#)" data visualization occupational projection tool housed by IWD.

These reports include statewide, regional, and district-level labor market data, ensuring recipients can access relevant, up-to-date insights on workforce trends. Bureau staff will regularly consult with recipients to identify additional data sources and refine reporting methodologies to enhance alignment further. Additional resources shared with Perkins grant sub-recipients in bi-annual CLNA seasons are:

- [Top 25 Job Postings in Iowa](#) (Updated monthly)
- [Registered Apprenticeship Data in Iowa](#)
- [Iowa Licensed Occupations](#)

Additional labor market information for school district and community college-specific CTE programs may be found by drilling into and reviewing courses within CTE programs. [O*Net Online](#) is an additional source of labor market information,

Iowa will ensure that all Perkins V recipients have the necessary resources and support to improve student success in CTE programs by implementing a structured accountability framework, targeted interventions, and continuous improvement strategies.

The Bureau also disseminates state and local-level performance results for the Perkins V indicator of performance work-based learning: [Iowa High School Students in WBL Experiences Map Visualization](#).

In addition to labor market alignment reports, recipients will have access to other relevant data and reporting tools, including program outcomes reporting. These reports provide critical insights into student success metrics, such as:

- Completion and transfer rates
- Employment rates and earnings levels
- Industries of employment
- Retention, migration, and transfer trends
- Career cluster and career pathway alignment
- Time-to-degree and earned credit hours

The Bureau's [longitudinal data tracking system](#) follows graduates over time, allowing for trend analysis in education and career pathways for Iowa community college credit and non-credit program completers and leavers. This system enables ongoing assessment of CTE program effectiveness and workforce alignment.

Supporting Data-Driven Decision Making

To ensure that labor market data is effectively integrated into local decision-making, the Bureau will provide training and technical assistance to recipients in partnership with the RPPs. As previously, these training sessions will focus on:

- Interpreting labor market data
- Using data to assess program alignment
- Identifying opportunities for program improvement

Additionally, interactive data visualization tools and annual program outcomes reports will be maintained on the Bureau's website, ensuring that recipients have ongoing access to critical workforce information.

Through these efforts, the Bureau will ensure that state, regional, and local labor market data is systematically used to align CTE programs with workforce demands, promoting economic growth and student success in high-wage, high-demand careers.

iv. ensure equal access to approved career and technical education programs of study and activities assisted under this Act for special populations;

The Bureau is committed to ensuring access to approved CTE programs of study and activities following all applicable rules, regulations, guidance and executive orders. To support this goal, the Bureau will expand the capacity of local recipients to review, interpret, and act on applicable data.

By leveraging data-driving strategies and stakeholder collaboration, the Bureau will ensure that all learners, regardless of background or circumstance, have access to high-quality CTE opportunities that support their academic and career success.

v. coordinate with the State board to support the local development of career pathways and articulate processes by which career pathways will be developed by local workforce development boards, as appropriate;

Per Iowa Administrative Code chapter 46, the State Board of Education constitutes the Board for career and technical education. In that capacity, the Board will approve the Perkins multiyear State Plan

developed by the Director of the Department of Education in accordance with applicable federal laws and regulations governing career and technical education.

The State Board of Education adopts content standards for the career and technical education service areas. Districts will include, at a minimum, the content standards for CTE service areas adopted in CTE programs as the standards are adopted by the board. The program review process ensures that 20 percent of secondary and postsecondary CTE programs are reviewed on an annual basis and that CTE programs meet standards adopted by the board.

The State Board is also responsible for adopting standards pertaining to regional centers. The standards include those which provide for increased access to high-quality career and technical education programs and require that regional centers incorporate appropriate educational programs, meet appropriate state and federal regulations for safety and access, maintain adequate participation, and are located within an appropriate distance of participating high schools, and that transportation is provided to all students.

vi. support effective and meaningful collaboration between secondary schools, postsecondary institutions, and employers to provide students with experience in, and understanding of, all aspects of an industry, which may include work-based learning such as internships, mentorships, simulated work environments, and other hands-on or inquiry-based learning activities; and

The Department has several supports in place to support effective and meaningful collaboration between secondary schools, postsecondary institutions, and employers to provide students with experience in, and understanding of, all aspects of an industry. As mentioned previously, 15 RPPs provide for the active participation of local school districts and community colleges in the delivery of CTE in the region. They also provide for the participation of representatives of business and industry and representatives of sector partnerships and community stakeholders. RPPs promote high-quality, integrated CTE programs of study, including career academies, comprised of secondary and transitory coursework to prepare students for higher-level, specialized academic and technical training aligned with labor market needs; afford students the opportunity to access a spectrum of high-quality work-based learning experiences; and provide for increased access to high-quality CTE programs through the planning and development of a system of regional centers.

Career Academies

A career academy is a program of study that pairs two years of sequential secondary CTE coursework with a community college CTE program through concurrent enrollment coursework. The career academy model requires the following:

1. Designed to meet industry standards and prepare students for success in postsecondary education and the workforce;
2. Foundational and transitory CTE coursework;
3. Integrates as a portion of the career academy a hands-on, contextualized learning component;
4. Integration of academic coursework and work-based learning opportunities and/or credentials of value;
5. Utilization of the individual career and academic planning process; and
6. Allows students enrolled in the academy an opportunity to continue on to a postsecondary degree program.

The secondary program approval process is designed around these foundational concepts of a career academy program, which align with the core elements of a program of study. All secondary CTE programs in Iowa will adhere to the principles of the program of study and career academy models, including alignment to relevant postsecondary credentials and education and training programs.

Traditionally, secondary CTE programs align to postsecondary CTE programs offered by Iowa's 15 community colleges. Indeed, Iowa's community colleges provide robust CTE programs and work intently to create strong connections to secondary CTE offerings, specifically through Iowa's strong concurrent enrollment program. Partnerships between secondary and postsecondary CTE programs focused on strengthening the program of study and career academy programming will afford students the opportunity to seamlessly transition from a secondary CTE program to an aligned postsecondary CTE program that culminates in one or more postsecondary credentials offered by community colleges, including associate's degree, diplomas, and credentials.

Regional Centers

Career academies are often organized into regional centers, which are facilities dedicated to the delivery of CTE programming. The purpose of a regional center is to provide for increased access to a variety of high-quality CTE program opportunities for all high school students across the state of Iowa, regardless of which school district they reside. Maximizing the impact of collaboration by participating stakeholders and regional planning, regional centers have the ability to deliver high-quality advanced CTE coursework by internalizing the high capital costs to cohesively offer structured programming with access to state-of-the-art equipment not otherwise available through individual school districts. Regional Centers must provide access to at least four career academy programs and serve either a combined minimum of 120 students from at least two school districts or a minimum of four school districts with no student minimum. The Department supports the expansion of regional centers through the Career Academy Incentive Fund, which provides targeted grants to support partnerships between school districts and community colleges that expand access to career academy programs, with a focus on programming delivered through regional centers.

The Bureau will continue to support the alignment of secondary CTE to community college CTE programs. This work will expand to include additional forms of articulation and alignment, such as IRCs and recognized WBL programs, such as apprenticeships.

vii. improve outcomes and reduce performance gaps for CTE concentrators, including those who are members of special populations. (Section 122(d)(4)(C) of Perkins V)

The Bureau has prioritized data analysis and strategic support initiatives to improve outcomes and reduce performance gaps for CTE concentrators. To build internal capacity for identifying performance gaps and understanding challenges in CTE programs, the Bureau has completed the National Alliance for Partnerships in Equity (NAPE), Advance CTE, and ACTE trainings related to data.

Moving forward, the Bureau will expand efforts to support eligible recipients in using data to address performance gaps. This includes providing guidance, technical assistance, and resources to help CTE programs implement evidence-based strategies that improve student outcomes. Additionally, the Bureau will offer ongoing and increased support for targeted interventions such as professional development, enhanced student support services, and improved access to high-quality CTE opportunities.

Iowa utilizes Perkins V dashboards and statewide reporting tools to conduct annual reviews of performance results for the indicators of performance, including the disaggregation of data. If a recipient falls below 90% of the SDLP on one or more indicators, root cause analysis will be conducted using available data, CLNA findings, and stakeholder input. Additional information, details, and steps are described in the Accountability section.

By leveraging data-driven decision-making and targeted programmatic support, Iowa is committed to reducing disparities and improving success rates for all CTE concentrators.

2.d. Describe how the eligible agency, if it opts to do so, will include the opportunity for secondary school students to participate in dual or concurrent enrollment programs, early college high school, or competency-based education. (Section 122(d)(4)(D) of Perkins V)

In collaboration with the Bureau of Community Colleges, the Bureau of CTE and Postsecondary Readiness is committed to providing secondary students with a wide range of advanced learning opportunities. One such initiative, the Senior Year Plus (SYP) program, was established in 2008 to consolidate several educational programs under a unified policy framework. This approach aims to enhance consistency in student eligibility, access to courses, and accountability.

Concurrent Enrollment

SYP serves as an umbrella for various programs that allow high school students to enroll in college-level courses, enabling them to simultaneously earn both high school and college credit. A key component of SYP is concurrent enrollment, a robust framework in Iowa that allows students to earn college credit through agreements between school districts and community colleges. These agreements allow students to access a variety of coursework, including arts and sciences and CTE courses, ensuring a seamless transition from secondary to postsecondary education. Iowa consistency ranks as a national leader in concurrent enrollment participation, providing access to postsecondary opportunities for students across the state.

To participate in arts and sciences concurrent enrollment courses, students must meet the entrance and program requirements set by the community college, demonstrating proficiency in reading, mathematics, and science based on the most recent statewide standard assessment, or alternative measures of comparable proficiency as determined by the school district. For CTE courses, students must meet the community college's entrance and program requirements, but proficiency in the three subject areas is not required. This framework offers students the chance to experience a rigorous college curriculum while earning credits toward both high school graduation and postsecondary education.

Key aspects of concurrent enrollment include:

- Courses must apply toward a diploma or degree (Associate of Arts, Associate of Science, Associate of Applied Science, Associate of Professional Studies).
- Courses may be offered at high schools, college campuses, or online.
- Courses must be taught by credentialed instructors who meet community college and state faculty qualifications standards.
- Students enrolled in concurrent courses do not bear tuition costs, as funding is provided through the state's supplementary weighting formula.

The Perkins V State Planning process has enabled Iowa to strengthen the links between secondary and postsecondary CTE programs through innovative uses of the concurrent enrollment program. One key connection is the career academy model. Built around a program of study, the career academy incorporates several Iowa-specific programs and initiatives, such as career development and work-based learning. As stated previously, the career academy is defined as a sequential set of secondary and postsecondary CTE courses, beginning with broad introductory courses that progress into transitional coursework and culminating in specialized, occupationally-specific coursework. Concurrent enrollment is strategically used to create intentional connections between the secondary and postsecondary levels and enhance pathway programming and student access. Through the Perkins V State Plan, the Bureau will continue to expand the number of career academies offered through regional centers to provide more access to CTE programming.

Since early in the implementation of Perkins IV, the concurrent enrollment program has been an essential tenant of secondary and community college CTE partnerships, at the very least constituting the preferred method of program articulation between secondary and postsecondary CTE. Under Perkins IV and Perkins V, each community college is required to spend 5.4% of its allocation on secondary partnerships, a practice that will continue under this four-year State Plan.

Competency-Based Instruction

Iowa is advancing competency-based education (CBE) to provide learner-centered, flexible instruction tailored to individual mastery of skills and knowledge. Key initiatives include:

- Incorporating competency-based measures into secondary CTE program approval processes.
- Expanding work-based learning to reinforce real-world application of skills.
- Partnering with Iowa's RPPs to develop and scale innovative CBE approaches across secondary and postsecondary CTE programs.
- Exploring CBE integration in adult education and workforce training, ensuring lifelong learning opportunities.
- Assisting community colleges in the development of CTE programs that integrate CBE as defined by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC).

Early-College Model

Although students have the opportunity to earn community college certificates, diplomas, and associate degrees via concurrent enrollment coursework, Iowa does not support an official early-college program model.

2.e. Describe how the eligible agency will involve parents, academic and career and technical education teachers, administrators, faculty, career and academic counselors, local business (including small businesses), labor organizations, and representatives of Indian Tribes and Tribal organizations, as appropriate, in the planning, development, implementation, and evaluation of its career and technical education programs. (Section 122(d)(12) of Perkins V)

The Bureau is committed to ensuring broad and meaningful stakeholder involvement in planning, developing, implementing, and evaluating CTE programs. This engagement is embedded within state-mandated program review processes for both secondary and postsecondary CTE programs to ensure continuous improvement, data-informed decision-making, and alignment with workforce needs.

Regional Planning Partnership Meetings

RPPs, which are comprised of the superintendent of a school district within the RPP region, the president of a community college within the region, the chief administrator of an area education agency within the region, representatives of regional economic and workforce entities including regional advisory boards, representatives of business and industry, and career and technical education teachers and faculty, must meet two times per school year to discuss the creation of high-quality CTE programming for students that aligns career guidance, twenty-first century CTE academic curricula, and work-based learning opportunities. They must also develop a multi-year plan addressing the delivery of quality CTE programs.

Comprehensive Stakeholder Engagement in Program Review

Iowa requires all secondary and postsecondary CTE programs to undergo a comprehensive program review to assess effectiveness and ensure alignment with industry and educational standards. These reviews incorporate input from a diverse range of stakeholders, including:

- CTE teachers, academic instructors, and faculty to ensure instructional relevance and quality.
- Administrators and counselors to align career pathways with student needs and educational goals.
- Advisory committees, which are comprised of representatives from local businesses (including small businesses), labor organizations, and community and economic development leaders, to ensure programs reflect current and emerging workforce demands and align CTE with regional economic priorities.

Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment

The Bureau has established a strategy to integrate stakeholder engagement across multiple CTE processes, ensuring that input from diverse voices informs program development and improvement. The evaluation of CTE programming during the CLNA process enhances stakeholder participation by providing structured opportunities for stakeholder feedback at both regional and local levels; ensuring transparency and accessibility to diverse groups, including underrepresented communities; and empowering local recipients to make data-driven decisions on Perkins funding allocations.

District Career and Academic Planning Workshops

The stakeholders involved in district career and academic planning (DCAP) workshops play a crucial role in developing and implementing the district's ICAP process. Required team members include administrators, school counselors, core teachers, CTE teachers, and the individuals responsible for coordinating WBL opportunities. Additional members may include representatives from special populations, students, parents, CTE advisory members, and postsecondary institution staff, based on the district's goals and focus. This team collaborates to outline and execute the district's plan for ICAP, ensuring it aligns with state and regional workforce needs and helps students transition successfully into higher education, training programs, or the workforce. The team's work is essential for creating career-related experiences that engage students and align with labor market demands.

DCAP workshops are conducted throughout the state within each RPP region, providing districts with facilitated training, tools, resources, and extended planning time. These workshops foster collaboration between district teams and regional partners, including local businesses, workforce agencies, and postsecondary institutions, ensuring that the ICAP process reflects local and state labor market needs. This regional approach helps districts design action plans tailored to their community while ensuring the ongoing relevance and quality of career and academic planning. By supporting the districts in this way, the workshops contribute to the continuous refinement and success of the ICAP process, helping districts meet educational goals and prepare students for postsecondary education and career success.

Ensuring Continuous Engagement in CTE Development

Stakeholder participation is not limited to program approval but is an ongoing component of CTE program planning, implementation, and evaluation. Strategies to sustain engagement include:

- Regular stakeholder meetings and advisory councils to review program effectiveness and recommend improvements.
- Integration of industry and labor representatives in curriculum development to ensure relevance.
- Collaboration with workforce development entities to align CTE programs with in-demand occupations.
- Utilization of data from the CLNA and program review processes are also utilized to identify areas of high need to inform strategic decision-making.

Through this structured and inclusive engagement process, Iowa ensures that CTE programs remain responsive to student, industry, and community needs. By incorporating diverse stakeholder

perspectives, the Bureau strengthens program quality, workforce alignment, and access to career and technical education opportunities across the state.

2.f. Include a copy of the local application template that the eligible agency will require eligible recipients to submit pursuant to section 134(b) of Perkins V. See Text Box 4 for the statutory requirements for local applications under section 134(b) of Perkins V.

- [FY25 Secondary Perkins Application Example](#) (Bi-annual CLNA year)
- [FY25 Postsecondary Perkins Application Example](#) (Bi-annual CLNA year)

2.g. Include a copy of the comprehensive local needs assessment template and/or guidelines that the eligible agency will require of eligible recipients to meet the requirements of section 134(c) of Perkins V. See Text Box 5 for the requirements for the comprehensive local needs assessment under section 134(c) of Perkins V.

- [Perkins CLNA Landing Page](#)

2.h. Provide the eligible agency's definition for "size, scope, and quality" that will be used to make funds available to eligible recipients pursuant to section 135(b) of Perkins V.

The following definitions of size, scope, and quality align with federal Perkins V requirements and state-level statutory requirements for secondary and postsecondary programs. Compliance with these principles will be monitored through the respective state program approval processes to ensure that CTE programs provide meaningful educational and career opportunities for all learners.

Size

CTE programs must be of sufficient size to provide students with the coursework and experiences necessary to achieve concentrator status at the secondary and postsecondary levels, ensuring that programs effectively prepare students for further education or employment.

A secondary program:

- Must consist of a minimum of three sequential courses within a single CTE service area, aligned to state-approved programs of study and articulated to at least one related postsecondary program.
- Must maintain sufficient enrollment that demonstrates sustained student interest and justifies continued support, meeting state "offer-and-teach" requirements for each unit within the program.

A postsecondary program:

- Must be approved through the state's notice of intent (NOI) and program approval process. Most community college programs contain an associate degree (between 60 and 86 credit hours) as the highest-level award for the program, but there may be instances where the program only has a diploma (14 to 48 credit hours) or certificate (0 and 48 credit hours) as the highest-level award. In order for students to be considered "Program Concentrators" for Perkins, students must have earned 12 or more credits in a CTE program or completed such a program if fewer than 12 credits or the equivalent in total.
- Must maintain sufficient enrollment to justify ongoing institutional support.
- Must demonstrate alignment to state-identified high-skill, high-wage, or in-demand occupations, ensuring relevance to the labor market.

Scope

CTE programs must provide comprehensive learning experiences that incorporate rigorous academic and technical instruction, IRCs, WBL experiences, and clear connections between secondary and postsecondary education.

A secondary program:

- Should offer students the opportunity to earn postsecondary credit, IRCs, and/or certifications, licenses, or endorsements relevant to the program's career field.
- Should provide age-appropriate WBL opportunities that align with industry standards.
- Must integrate CTSO activities and curriculum to enhance career readiness skills and leadership development.

A postsecondary program:

- Must lead to the awarding of an associate degree, diploma, or certificate, meeting the standards established in Iowa statute and demonstrating value to students and employers.
- Should provide students with the opportunity to earn IRCs aligned with state and local workforce demands.
- Should provide WBL opportunities that align with industry standards.
- Should integrate CTSO activities and curriculum into associate degree programs to strengthen career and leadership skills.

Quality

CTE programs must be of high quality, incorporating industry-aligned standards and assessments, implementing continuous improvement strategies, and ensuring access for all students, including those from special populations.

A secondary program:

- Must align to state-approved industry and academic standards to ensure students acquire rigorous, relevant skills.
- Must use formative and summative assessments to measure student achievement, leveraging national or industry-recognized certifications and assessments where applicable.
- Must maintain an active program advisory council that ensures the program reflects current workforce needs, industry trends, and occupational standards.
- Must demonstrate continuous improvement by establishing and achieving program goals through the state secondary program approval and review process.
- Must ensure access and success for special populations, making progress toward state-determined Perkins performance targets.
- Must be taught by appropriately licensed instructors, meeting Bureau of Educational Examiners' requirements, and ensuring faculty receive ongoing professional development aligned with industry standards.

A postsecondary program:

- Must incorporate a curriculum that reflects the knowledge and skills required by employers, as validated by the program's advisory council.
- Must assess students using relevant tools and industry-recognized assessments, ensuring alignment with external accrediting bodies and workforce expectations.
- Must demonstrate continuous improvement through the postsecondary program approval and review process, setting and achieving measurable program goals.

- Must demonstrate a positive return on investment for students.
- Must ensure access and success for special populations, making progress toward state-determined Perkins performance targets.
- Must be taught by qualified faculty, meeting state, and institutional credentialing requirements, and ensuring instructors have ongoing professional development to maintain up-to-date industry expertise.

This size, scope, and quality framework ensures that secondary and postsecondary CTE programs provide high-quality learning experiences, meet labor market demands, and support student success in education and careers while fulfilling federal Perkins V and state requirements.

3.a. Describe the eligible agency's program strategies for special populations, including a description of how individuals who are members of special populations—

i. will be provided with equal access to activities assisted under this Act,

The Bureau is committed to serving all individuals who are eligible to access CTE programs, services, and resources. The Bureau's program strategies focus on following all applicable rules, regulations, guidance, and executive orders in alignment with Perkins V requirements.

To ensure equal access to CTE programs and services, the Bureau will assign a dedicated consultant within the Bureau to assist secondary and postsecondary recipients. This consultant will provide technical assistance and training to CTE educators on research-based recruitment and retention strategies, emphasizing partnerships with community organizations, businesses, and educational institutions to provide wraparound services for eligible individuals.

To ensure continuous improvement in serving eligible individuals, the Bureau will analyze Perkins data to identify gaps and inform policy and program development. Based on the results of the data analysis, the Bureau will convene regular meetings with secondary liaisons and community college coordinators to share best practices and emerging strategies. Additionally, the Bureau will work to strengthen secondary to postsecondary transitions by aligning career pathways, improving concurrent enrollment opportunities, and expanding support services. Through these comprehensive strategies, the Bureau ensures that eligible individuals have access to high-quality, career-aligned CTE programs.

ii. will not be discriminated against on the basis of status as a member of a special population;

The Bureau will ensure that no individual is discriminated against. The Bureau will follow all applicable rules, regulations, guidance, and executive orders in alignment with Perkins V requirements.

iii. will be provided with programs designed to enable individuals who are members of special populations to meet or exceed State determined levels of performance described in section 113, and prepare special populations for further learning and for high-skill, high-wage, or in-demand industry sectors or occupations;

All eligible recipients must describe in their Perkins application how they will ensure all individuals meet or exceed SDLs in section 113, and that they are prepared for high-skill, high-wage, or in-demand industry sectors or occupations.

iv. will be provided instruction and work-based learning opportunities in integrated settings that support competitive, integrated employment. (Section 122(d)(9) of Perkins V)

To ensure eligible individuals participate in integrated settings that support competitive employment, the Bureau will:

- Require work-based learning experiences that are inclusive, real-world settings aligned with industry needs.
- Provide career exploration and industry partnerships that offer structured internships, apprenticeships, and on-the-job training in high-demand career fields.
- Support community colleges and K-12 schools in collaborating with employers to provide access to high-quality work-based learning opportunities.

Continue to provide career academies, dual enrollment, and concurrent enrollment pathways to prepare eligible individuals for postsecondary education and workforce success.

4.a. Describe how the eligible agency will support the recruitment and preparation of teachers, including special education teachers, faculty, school principals, administrators, specialized instructional support personnel, and paraprofessionals to provide career and technical education instruction, leadership, and support, including professional development that provides the knowledge and skills needed to work with and improve instruction for special populations. (Section 122(d)(6) of Perkins V).

Like many States, Iowa has a shortage of CTE instructors across all content areas. The success of high-quality CTE programs depends on recruiting, preparing, supporting, and retaining a diverse and well-qualified workforce of teachers, faculty, administrators, and instructional support personnel. The Bureau is committed to implementing strategies that strengthen the CTE educator pipeline, ensuring access to high-quality instruction for all students.

Strengthening the Recruitment Pipeline for CTE Educators

To increase the pipeline of CTE educators and leaders, the Bureau will:

- Collaborate with industry groups and community organizations to build a diverse pool of applicants for CTE educators, including retirees and career transitioning individuals.
- Increase outreach and recruitment efforts through Signing Days, CTSO engagement, and targeted efforts to encourage students to explore CTE teaching as a high-need career.
- Strengthen alternative pathways to licensure, including expanding existing initiatives such as:
 - Community college transfer majors in education.
 - Troops to Teachers to transition veterans into CTE teaching roles.
 - Bachelor of Applied Science models that support industry professionals entering teaching.
 - New "2+2" models to provide seamless pathways for CTE instructor preparation.
- Expand opportunities for business and industry professionals to participate in teaching through WBL, CTE authorization programs, and internships to increase industry engagement.

Preparing and Supporting New CTE Educators

To ensure new CTE educators are prepared to meet the diverse needs of students, the Bureau will:

- Assist with the alignment of teacher preparation programs with industry and workforce needs to ensure new educators receive relevant technical and pedagogical training.
- Strengthen partnerships between secondary and postsecondary teacher preparation programs to ensure seamless transitions into the classroom.
- Encourage new teacher mentoring, pairing CTE educators with mentors in both their content area and local school district to provide specialized support.
- Provide professional development on ensuring new educators are equipped to serve students effectively.

Expanding Professional Development for Current CTE Educators

To retain and continuously support CTE educators, the Bureau will:

- Expand professional learning communities for CTE instructors to promote collaboration, resource-sharing, and best practices.
- Ensure professional development includes updates on new technology, new teaching and assessment strategies, and technical assistance with statewide priorities.
- Support CTSO advisor and student professional development opportunities.
- Promote community college and RPP offerings of high-quality professional development.

Leadership Development for Administrators and Support Personnel

To build leadership capacity in CTE, the Bureau will:

- Provide training for CTE administrators, school principals, and instructional leaders on best practices for CTE program development and workforce alignment.
- Offer targeted professional development for specialized instructional support personnel, including career counselors and paraprofessionals.
- Promote leadership pathways for experienced CTE educators to transition into administrative and instructional leadership roles.

Data-Driven Decision Making and Continuous Improvement

To ensure sustained success in CTE educator recruitment and retention, the Bureau will:

- Use CLNA data to identify gaps and challenges in CTE educator preparation and professional development.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of recruitment and retention strategies to ensure alignment with current workforce and industry needs.
- Work with key stakeholders to develop innovative models that respond to emerging challenges in CTE teacher recruitment and preparation.

Through these strategies, the Bureau will strengthen Iowa's CTE educator pipeline, ensuring that teachers, faculty, administrators, and instructional support personnel are well-prepared to deliver high-quality instruction. Iowa will build a strong, diverse, and well-supported workforce that drives student success and workforce readiness in CTE programs by expanding recruitment efforts, enhancing professional development, and fostering leadership pathways.

C. Fiscal Responsibility

For this iteration of the Perkins State Plan, the Iowa Department of Education will allocate a 7.00% reserve fund to support state priorities, ensuring funds are distributed in compliance with Perkins V Section 112(c). This allocation is an increase from the 3.00% reserve fund that was incorporated into Iowa's previous State Plan. A reserve fund of 7.00% aligns with the national average of 7.45%. Additionally, increasing Iowa's allocation for the reserve fund is a positive step towards matching the reserve funds of several surrounding Midwestern states and states with similar populations and Perkins funding allocations (these states are denoted with an asterisk):

- Arkansas* – 15%
- Illinois – 8.92%
- Kansas* – 15.00%
- Minnesota – 15.00%
- Mississippi* – 7.00%
- Missouri – 0.00%
- Nebraska – 15.00%
- Nevada* – 15.00%
- South Dakota – 10.00%
- Utah* – 10.00%
- Wisconsin – 15.00%

Process for Awarding Reserve Funds

1. **Funding Prioritization** – Reserve funds will be directed toward targeted initiatives, including:
 - Industry recognized credentials support and expansion.
 - College and career readiness support and expansion.
 - CTE educator recruitment and retention support and expansion.
 - CTSO support and expansion.
 - Work-based learning support and expansion
2. **Application and Review** – Eligible recipients must submit a funding request that:
 - Aligns with state CTE priorities and workforce needs.
 - Supports innovative program development.
 - Demonstrates a measurable impact on student outcomes.
3. **Approval and Monitoring** –
 - The Bureau will review applications based on available funding, alignment with Perkins V goals, and expected outcomes.
 - Clear policies and procedures for awarding reserve funds will be developed and incorporated into a consolidated funding and grants guidance document.
 - Recipients must provide progress reports and data to ensure accountability and compliance with federal regulations.

This structured approach ensures reserve funds are used strategically to enhance CTE program quality, accessibility, and workforce alignment.

Iowa Grants

The Iowa Department of Education ensures fiscal responsibility in awarding Perkins V funds through a rigorous application and review process via www.iowaGrants.gov, the State of Iowa agency grant management system developed and supported by vendor Dulles Technology Incorporated.

Using the Iowa Grants System, recipients must submit:

- An annual comprehensive grant application detailing strategies for academic success, skill development, and workforce alignment.
- An annual fiscal year budget plan aligned with priorities identified in the bi-annual CLNA process, (i.e., CLNA covers two fiscal years).
- Executive assurances and agreements per conditions to receive the local Perkins sub-recipient grant award.
- Quarterly claims submissions demonstrating timeliness of expenses and compliance with allowable use of funds.

Bureau consultants review applications to ensure that the budget in the application aligns with the identified needs in the CLNAs completed by districts and community colleges; evidence-based instructional strategies are used; and all of the necessary application forms, including the cover page, executive assurances, state required forms, budget form, bi-annual CLNA form, and consortium form (when applicable), are completed.

1.a. each eligible recipient will promote academic achievement;

Eligible recipients must demonstrate academic achievement as required under Section 122(d)(5) of Perkins V in the bi-annual CLNA and annual Iowa Grants application processes. In the CLNA document, districts are required to rate their district or consortia in terms of how CTE students perform compared to non-CTE students on common federal accountability indicators of performance and how CTE students from disaggregated groups compare to each other on the Perkins indicators of performance and to the general CTE population. They are also required to indicate where the most prominent academic performance gaps are between student population groups after analyzing the disaggregated Perkins indicators of performance results. The Perkins application asks districts or consortia to list their top three funding priorities as identified by the CLNA. Recipients must describe how the CLNA results are used to determine if the district or consortia have an opportunity or gap in the area, identify the specific student opportunity or performance gap to be addressed, name the program or programs the priority is related to, and list the budget requirements that are required to complete this priority.

1.b. each eligible recipient will promote skill attainment, including skill attainment that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential; and.

Eligible recipients must demonstrate skill attainment as required under Section 122(d)(5) of Perkins V in the bi-annual CLNA and annual Iowa Grants application processes. For example, the CLNA template that districts or consortia are required to fill out asks recipients to provide a rating on how engaged students are with work-based learning experiences. As with academic achievement, the Perkins application asks districts or consortia to list their top three funding priorities as identified by the CLNA. Recipients must describe how the CLNA results are used to determine if the district or consortia have an opportunity or gap in the area, identify the specific student opportunity or performance gap to be addressed, name the program or programs the priority is related to, and list the budget requirements that are required to complete this priority.

1.c. each eligible recipient will ensure the local needs assessment under section 134 takes into consideration local economic and education needs, including, where appropriate, in-demand industry sectors and occupations. (Section 122(d)(5) of Perkins V)

Eligible recipients must demonstrate alignment with local workforce needs, as required under Section 122(d)(5) of Perkins V in the bi-annual CLNA and annual Iowa Grants application processes. In the CLNA document, districts are required to rate their district or consortia on the review of workforce and economic data to respond to changes in the labor market and develop new or refine existing CTE

programs. They also need to rate themselves on the ability for students to enter emerging occupations and if there are programs available to meet this need. As with academic achievement and skill attainment, the Perkins application asks districts or consortia to list their top three funding priorities as identified by the CLNA. Recipients must describe how the CLNA results are used to determine if the district or consortia have an opportunity or gap in the area, identify the specific student opportunity or performance gap to be addressed, name the program or programs the priority is related to, and list the budget requirements that are required to complete this priority.

2.a. among career and technical education at the secondary level, or career and technical education at the postsecondary and adult level, or both, including how such distribution will most effectively provide students with the skills needed to succeed in the workplace; and

The baseline allocation between secondary and postsecondary recipients under this Act will be as follows:

FY 2026

- 43.10% of the allocation dedicated for educational institutions will go towards secondary recipients.
 - 91.60% of reserve funds will be dedicated to secondary CTE programming.
- 56.90% of the allocation dedicated for educational institutions will go towards postsecondary recipients.
 - 8.40% of reserve funds will be dedicated to postsecondary CTE programming.

FY 2027, FY 2028, and FY 2029

- 60.00% of the allocation dedicated for educational institutions will go towards secondary recipients.
- 40.00% of the allocation dedicated for educational institutions will go towards postsecondary recipients.

The rationale for providing 60.00% of Perkins funding to the more than 300 high schools in the state is because it allows them financial support to expand their CTE programs and participation in CTSOs. Many CTE programs, like those in the skilled trades or technology, necessitate specialized equipment and materials that can be expensive to acquire and maintain. Perkins funding can also be used to provide professional development for CTE instructors, ensuring they have the latest skills to effectively teach emerging technologies.

Additionally, increased Perkins funding for secondary recipients supports initiatives aligned to Iowa's Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) postsecondary readiness index, which includes WBL participation and IRC attainment (for more information, see [Section D. Accountability for Results](#)).

2.b. among any consortia that may be formed among secondary schools and eligible institutions, and how funds will be distributed among the members of the consortia, including the rationale for such distribution and how it will most effectively provide students with the skills needed to succeed in the workplace. (Section 122(d)(8) of Perkins V)

The Perkins Act does not allow a local education agency (LEA) to receive an allocation unless the allocation is greater than \$15,000. An LEA with an allocation below the minimum of \$15,000 must join a consortium to meet program requirements and access mutual benefits provided by the consortium partnership. The Perkins Act establishes a formula that is used to calculate an allocation for an LEA based on district population. Districts that are members of a Perkins consortium pool their district

allocations to meet the minimum \$15,000 threshold to be eligible for Perkins funds. All school district members of the consortium must have input and determine how Perkins allocations benefit the consortium as a whole. Ultimately, the consortium is required to support only Department-approved CTE programs and the priorities should be based on the outcomes of the comprehensive local needs assessment. Funding decisions should be supported by the goals and strategies identified in the consortium's Perkins Local Plan and result in program improvements. Funds must be used as agreed upon by all consortium members as being mutually beneficial. A formula may not be used for fund distribution.

3. Describe how the eligible agency will adjust the data used to make the allocations to reflect any changes in school district boundaries that may have occurred since the population and/or enrollment data was collected, and include local education agencies without geographical boundaries, such as charter schools and secondary schools funded by the Bureau of Indian Education. (Section 131(a)(3) of Perkins V

Since the first state Perkins V plan went into effect in calendar year 2020, the state has experienced changes in school district boundaries (namely consolidations), and the addition of new charter schools, including charter schools without geographical boundaries. During such instances when geographic boundaries are changed or new schools are added or consolidated, the Bureau works with the Bureau of Information and Analysis to ensure accurate data collection.

4.a. include a proposal for such an alternative formula; and

No alternative formula is proposed.

4.b. describe how the waiver demonstrates that a proposed alternative formula more effectively targets funds on the basis of poverty (as defined by the Office of Management and Budget and revised annually in accordance with section 673(2) of the Community Services Block Grant Act (42 U.S.C. 9902(2)) to local educational agencies with the State. (Section 131(b) of Perkins V)

No alternative formula is proposed.

5.a. include a proposal for such an alternative formula; and

No alternative formula is proposed.

5.b. describe how the formula does not result in a distribution of funds to the eligible institutions or consortia with the State that have the highest numbers of economically disadvantaged individuals and that an alternative formula will result in such a distribution. (Section 132(b) of Perkins V)

No alternative formula is proposed.

6. If the eligible agency will award reserve funds to eligible recipients under section 112(c) of Perkins V, describe the process and criteria for awarding those funds.

Reserve funds that will be used for competitive grants will be distributed to eligible recipients provided they have met all of the criteria described during the grant process. Criteria will be determined by Bureau staff depending on the initiative the competitive grant is based upon. Applications will be reviewed by a team consisting of internal consultants and an external stakeholder. Recipients of grants must adhere to the approved use of Perkins funds when spending grant money.

The reserve fund will be used to address priorities specified in this plan, providing funds to eligible recipients in the manner specified in the Act. Priorities will be funded based on overall availability of funds, and will be used to support targeted initiatives described in this plan. The bureau will develop

clear policies and procedures for awarding reserve funds utilizing the state's Iowa Grants Management system to ensure compliance with all applicable state and federal regulations. The policies and procedures will be supported by existing grants and funding guidance documents maintained by the Iowa Department of Education and Department of Management.

7. Provide the State's fiscal effort per student, or aggregate expenditures for the State, that will establish the baseline for the Secretary's annual determination on whether the State has maintained its fiscal effort, and indicate whether the baseline is a continuing level or new level. If the baseline is new, please provide the fiscal effort per student, or aggregate expenditures for the State, for the preceding fiscal year. (Section 211(b)(1)(D) of Perkins V)

The Iowa Department of Education ensures compliance with Perkins V Section 211(b)(1)(D) by establishing a baseline fiscal effort per student to determine maintenance of effort.

Total Baseline Fiscal Effort Based on FY 2024 (2023-2024 Federal CAR Submission Enrollment)

- The 2024 fiscal effort per student (both secondary and postsecondary combined) was \$105.53, with 113,920 non-duplicated CTE participants.

Secondary Baseline Fiscal Effort Based on FY 2024 (2023-2024 Federal CAR Submission Enrollment)

- The 2024 fiscal effort per secondary student was \$53.18, with 107,398 non-duplicated CTE participants.

Postsecondary Baseline Fiscal Effort Based on FY 2024 (2023-2024 Federal CAR Submission Enrollment)

- The 2024 fiscal effort per postsecondary student was \$967.54, with 6,522 non-duplicated CTE participants.

Data is not yet available to determine the fiscal effort per student for FY 2025 or FY 2026.

Iowa remains committed to maintaining consistent funding levels to ensure sustained investment in high-quality CTE programs that align with workforce needs.

D. Accountability for Results

In addition to Perkins accountability indicators, the state of Iowa recently revised its Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) State plan, which was approved by the U.S. Department of Education in August 2024. The requirements of ESSA are reflected in the Iowa Department of Education's [School Performance Profiles](#) for the 2023-2024 school year, marking the first time new state school performance ratings and federal designations have been determined using an updated State Plan for school accountability and support. In addition to the federal ESSA accountability designations, state school performance ratings provide an overall score and performance rating for all public schools across a number of updated performance measures. One of these new measures is a new Postsecondary Readiness Index (PSRI) measuring college credit, work-based learning (WBL) experiences, and industry-recognized credentials (IRCs) attained by high schoolers.

School districts input data, including data related to WBL participation, IRC attainment, and college credit, into department collection tools, including the Student Reporting in Iowa (SRI) system, Secondary CTE Reporting Application (SCTERA), and community college management information system (CCMIS). The online SRI application collection tool, accompanied by the SRI data dictionary, is the foundation for extracting all CTE course data into the online SCTERA application tool. Iowa utilizes the SCTERA application to enable districts to organize and report their CTE programs (i.e., CIP numbers) and courses (and course enrollments) for each program to aid them in meeting the offer & teach requirements for this CTE accreditation program area. The data collected from SCTERA ensures that school districts comply with state and federal requirements. Furthermore, the annual SRI and SCTERA data collection process is how the state collects, compiles, and stores all course and student-level data for state and federal reporting data processing needs.

The community college management information system (WebMIS) has been developed to house all data about the community colleges, including CTE. The data is reported into the WebMIS using a data dictionary, which provides the parameters and guardrails for how CTE and Perkins data will be entered into the community college WebMIS system.

Both the SCTERA and the WebMIS are utilized to process the data required for the annual consolidated annual report (CAR) to report performance on the Perkins accountability indicators, overall, by population groups, and by career clusters. At the community college level, data has been collected systematically since the late 1990s and methodologically strengthened in subsequent years, allowing for several reporting formats.

Additionally, the Department has a long-standing formal relationship with Iowa Workforce Development, using a memorandum of agreement (MOU) to receive wage and employment data. A robust set of community college data has enabled the Department to produce several reports focusing on education and employment outcomes for the different state and federal programs the Department oversees. More recently, the Bureau of CTE and Postsecondary Readiness has replicated the approach to data reporting used on the community college side by combining the SRI and SCTERA information to produce an inaugural 2018 report on the condition of secondary CTE.

Note: In Iowa, a CTE concentrator at the secondary level is defined as a student who has earned two or more units within a CTE program. A CTE concentrator at the postsecondary level is defined as a student who has earned 12 or more CTE credits in a CTE program, or completed such a program if the program is fewer than 12 credits or the equivalent in total.

1.a. the percentage of CTE concentrators (see Text Box 6 for the statutory definition of a CTE concentrator under section 3(12) of Perkins V) graduating from high school having attained a recognized postsecondary credential;

For this Perkins State Plan, the state will be using 5S1 (Program Quality - Attained Recognized Postsecondary Credential), which is the percentage of CTE concentrators graduating from high school having attained a recognized postsecondary credential, as an indicator of program quality. This is a new indicator for the state of Iowa. Most of the data that will be acquired regarding the attainment of postsecondary credentials will come from IRC data collected through SRI data reporting. Additional postsecondary credential data related to certificate, diploma, or associate degree attainment by high schoolers will come from the community college WebMIS.

5S1: Program Quality - Attained Recognized Postsecondary Credential

Numerator = Number of CTE concentrators who graduated from high school having attained a recognized postsecondary credential.

Denominator = CTE Concentrators who graduate high school with a regular diploma.

Performance = The percentage of CTE concentrators graduating from high school with a recognized postsecondary credential.

1.b. the percentage of CTE concentrators graduating high school having attained postsecondary credits in relevant career and technical education programs and programs of study earned through a dual or concurrent enrollment program or another credit transfer agreement; and/or

The state will not be using any official indicator measuring the percentage of CTE concentrators graduating high school having attained postsecondary credits in relevant CTE programs and programs of study earned through concurrent enrollment. However, college credit is one of the measures in the Postsecondary Readiness Index for the Iowa School Performance Profiles and data will be collected for that accountability measure through the community college WebMIS.

1.c. the percentage of CTE concentrators graduating from high school having participated in work-based learning. (Section 113(b)(2)(A)(iv)(I) of Perkins V)

For this Perkins State Plan, the state will be using 5S3 (Program Quality - Participated in Work-Based Learning), the percentage of CTE concentrators graduating from high school having participated in work-based learning, as an indicator of program quality. Work-based learning data will be collected through SRI data reporting and SCTERA.

5S3: Program Quality – Participated in Work-Based Learning

Numerator = CTE Concentrators who have graduated from high school with a regular high school diploma and participated in work-based learning at any time during high school.

Denominator = CTE Concentrators who graduate high school with a regular diploma.

Performance = The percentage of CTE Concentrators graduating from high school having participated in work-based learning.

2. Provide on the form in Section V.B, for each year covered by the State Plan beginning in program year (PY) 2020-21, State determined performance levels for each of the secondary and postsecondary core indicators, with the levels of performance being the same for all CTE concentrators in the State. (Section 113(b)(3)(A)(i)(I) of Perkins V)

See section V.B for this information.

3.a. a description of the process for public comment under section 113(b)(3)(B) of Perkins V as part of the development of the State determined levels of performance (see Text Box 7 for the statutory requirements for consultation on State determined performance levels under section 113(b)(3)(B) of Perkins V)

Stakeholders interested in providing feedback on the proposed 2024-29 SDLPs were invited to review the [Iowa Perkins V Accountability for Continuation of State Plan](#) document on the Department's website.

Feedback was submitted via email to cte@iowa.gov or USPS mail to the Iowa Department of Education, Bureau of Community Colleges and Postsecondary Readiness, 400 E. 14th Street, Des Moines, IA 50319. All public comments were reviewed by the accountability subcommittee, State Director of CTE, and Director of the Iowa Department of Education for possible revisions to the proposed 2024-29 SDLPs.

3.b. an explanation for the State determined levels of performance that meet each of the statutory requirements in Text Box 8; and

See response to prompt D(3)(c).

3.c. a description of how the State determined levels of performance set by the eligible agency align with the levels, goals and objectives other Federal and State laws, (Section 122(d)(10) of Perkins V).

To ensure that State Determined Levels of Performance (SDLP) align with federal and state laws, the Iowa Department of Education conducted a comprehensive review of historical performance data and established baselines for continued implementation of Iowa's State Plan. Additionally, the Perkins V Accountability sub-committee was reconvened to review a variety of historical data points on Perkins V performance to determine future State Determined Levels of Performance. The work of this group occurred over multiple Zoom meetings over several weeks.

Iowa used historical Perkins V data to the fullest extent possible by analyzing actual levels of performance for 2020-2021, 2021-2022, and 2022-2023 at the local and state level. The Perkins V dashboards and other online reporting tools via www.iowastudentoutcomes.com helped guide sub-committee discussions around trends and gaps, coalescing around baselines and proposed State-determined levels of performance for the second and [last round of public comment](#) that ended September 5, 2024.

Additionally, summary tables and descriptive statistics were compiled for inclusion in the Perkins V [accountability public comment document](#) for the continuation of the state plan and, within weeks of closing this public comment for SDLPs, kicked off the process for the development of the state's next four-year Perkins V state plan.

This, combined with the informed insight of sub-committee members, produced high confidence in the proposed SDLP baselines and targets. Historical data on the secondary performance indicators went back to the 2020-2021 academic year. On the postsecondary side, historical data goes back to 2020-2021.

Alignment with Other Federal and State Laws

- The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) State Plan was reviewed to ensure alignment between secondary Perkins V metrics and ESSA-related measures such as:
 - Four-Year Graduation Rates
 - Assessment proficiency in ELA, and Math
 - Participation in Work-Based Learning
 - Attained Recognized Postsecondary Credential
- The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and state workforce priorities were also considered to ensure that Perkins V SDLP goals support career readiness and high-wage, high-demand industry sectors.

By integrating historical data, stakeholder expertise, and alignment with state and federal laws, Iowa ensures that Perkins V performance indicators remain relevant, data-driven, and aligned with broader education and workforce goals. A detailed publication outlining these baselines and targets is available for public review.

4. Provide a written response to the comments regarding State determined performance levels received during the public comment period pursuant to section 113(b)(3)(B) of Perkins V. (Section 113(b)(3)(B)(iii) of Perkins V).

As part of the written response, include a description of any the changes made to the State determined performance levels as a result of stakeholder feedback.

The initial Perkins V Accountability Performance Targets feedback process solicited four public comments from one organization. Each of the four comments concerned the addition of optional program quality indicator of performance 5S1, Attained Recognized Postsecondary Credential, which Iowa will begin reporting effective with the 2025 CAR (2024-2025AY) reporting cycle (January 2026 submission), in conjunction with, and continued, reporting of the program quality indicator of performance 5S3, Participated in Work-Based Learning.

Iowa effectively implemented this new program quality indicator of performance (5S1) during the 2024-2025 academic year for state-level collection of student-level data from districts' student information systems (SIS). As a result of initial public comment/stakeholder feedback, no changes were made to the proposed state-determined levels of performance (SDLPs) for the secondary or postsecondary indicators of performance.

However, public comment period for the four-year Perkins State plan garnered significant feedback around the SDLPs. These were subsequently adjusted based on the feedback. For example, the public had concerns about the following metrics:

- 4S1: Non-Traditional Program Concentration
- 5S1: Program Quality – Attained Recognized Postsecondary Credentials
- 5S3: Program Quality – Participated in WBL
- 3P1: Non-Traditional Program Concentration

Due to this feedback, these metrics were adjusted to lower growth rates. A summary of public comment received for the four-year plan can be found on the [Department's Perkins webpage](#).

5. Describe how the eligible agency will address disparities or gaps in performance as described in section 113(b)(3)(C)(ii)(II) of Perkins V in each of the plan years, and if no meaningful progress has been achieved prior to the third program year, a description of the additional actions the eligible agency will take to eliminate these disparities or gaps. (Section 122(d)(11) of Perkins V)

As part of the written response, and pursuant to the Report of the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP),⁶ the eligible agency could indicate that it will analyze data on the core indicators of performance to identify gaps in performance, explain how they will use evidence-based research to develop a plan to provide support and technical assistance to eligible recipients to address and close such gaps, and how they will implement this plan. The eligible agency is not required to submit a new State Plan prior to the third program year in order to address this requirement.

The Iowa Department of Education is committed to identifying and addressing disparities and gaps in performance among eligible recipients through a structured data-driven approach, targeted support, and technical assistance. This process ensures all students, particularly those from special populations, have access to high-quality CTE programs.

All recipients are required to accept the state-determined levels of performance or negotiate with the state to agree on the adjusted levels of performance for each core indicator. If a recipient elects to negotiate with the state, the recipient must propose a performance target demonstrating that the recipient will progress toward meeting the state-determined level of performance. The proposed target must be expressed in a percentage form to be objective, quantifiable, measurable, and provide a supporting rationale.

If an eligible recipient misses 90% on an indicator of performance and if no meaningful progress has been achieved after the second program/reporting year, the Bureau of CTE and Postsecondary Readiness will require that a percentage of local Perkins funds be used based on consultation with the state CTE accountability specialist. The state will meet with the local recipient and review program progress and disaggregated data to identify disparities or gaps in performance.

If issues around these factors are identified, the recipient must provide a detailed action plan to the Bureau within 30 days of the meeting, identifying the disparities or gaps in performance and specific actions to be taken. The Bureau will review the action plan, and the parties will come to a final agreement on the action plan. A mutually agreed percentage of grant funds between the State and recipient in the subsequent fiscal year must be spent on enacting the action plan submitted to the Bureau.

The action plan will be reviewed annually and remain in place until the recipient has met or exceeded 90% of the indicator of performance SDLP. Action plans should reflect needs identified in the CLNA process that are consistent with the requirements of the Perkins V Act. In instances of multiple areas of underperformance, the Bureau will help the recipient prioritize areas of performance improvement, and the approved action plan will serve as the guiding document.

Process for Identifying and Addressing Performance Gaps at State-Level and Local-Level

1. Data Analysis and Identification of Disparities

- Iowa will utilize Perkins V dashboards and statewide reporting tools to conduct annual reviews of performance results for the indicators of performance, including the disaggregation of data by:
 - Gender, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, disability, and other special populations.

- Program areas and career pathways to identify achievement gaps.
- If a recipient falls below 90% of the State Determined Levels of Performance (SDLP) on one or more indicators, root cause analysis will be conducted using available data, CLNA findings, and stakeholder input. Additional information, details, and steps are listed in the subsequent section below.

2. Accountability Determination and Required Actions

- Level 1: Compliant
 - If the recipient meets or exceeds 90 percent of each of its approved State Determined Levels of Performance (SDLP) targets for each indicator of performance, the recipient is exempt from formal program improvement plans but will continue to be subject to Perkins Desk Audit monitoring reviews, state monitoring, and the comprehensive local needs assessment (CLNA) process.
- Level 2: Needs Improvement
 - If the recipient falls below 90 percent on one or two of its approved SDLP targets for indicators of performance, the recipient is required to submit a Program Improvement Plan (PIP), which must include:
 - Strategies and activities for improving performance.
 - Evidence-based interventions aligned with state CTE priorities.
 - Projected timelines and expected outcomes to bring performance back to 90 percent and above performance for compliance.
 - The recipient may be randomly selected for on-site technical assistance visits.
- Level 3: Priority Improvement
 - If the recipient falls below 90 percent on three or more of its approved SDLP targets for indicators of performance the recipient must submit a detailed action plan, which must include:
 - Expected timeline for district/consortium/community college reaching compliance (within two years).
 - Analysis of performance gaps across student population groups and other contributing factors (when applicable).
 - Allocation of Perkins and local funding for improvement efforts (when applicable).
 - Implementation of targeted evidence-based strategies to improve outcomes (where applicable).

Recipients that remain in the priority improvement category for four years will become monitored agencies, requiring intensified support and oversight.

3. Technical Assistance and Support Strategies

The Bureau will provide targeted support to underperforming recipients, including:

- One-on-one consultation and site visits to review disaggregated data, identify disparities, and develop customized solutions.
- Professional development and training on best practices for improving student outcomes, including interventions for special populations.
- Collaboration with statewide networks of CTE administrators, workforce partners, and educational institutions to share successful strategies.
- Funding prioritization for recipients implementing innovative solutions to close performance gaps.

4. Additional Actions for Recipients Failing to Show Meaningful Progress

If no meaningful progress is achieved after two program years:

- The Bureau will require a percentage of local Perkins funds to be directed toward evidence-based improvement strategies.
- A state-led review will assess program performance, and a formal intervention plan will be implemented.
- The Bureau will engage external experts to provide specialized technical assistance and program redesign support.

5. Continuous Monitoring and Evaluation

- The CLNA process will be used to continuously assess and refine improvement strategies.
- The Bureau will track progress toward performance targets and adjust support based on real-time data.
- Annual public reporting on disaggregated outcomes will ensure transparency and accountability in closing achievement gaps.

Iowa will ensure that all Perkins V recipients have the necessary resources and support to improve student success in CTE programs by implementing a structured accountability framework, targeted interventions, and continuous improvement strategies.

References

[Iowa Perkins V Accountability Compliance Language from Iowa State Plan](#)

[Perkins V Performance Improvement Plan](#) (if a performance indicator is missed by the local recipient)

For disaggregated results, they navigate to the iowastudentoutcomes.com Perkins V dashboards.

Budget Form

State Name: Iowa

Fiscal Year (FY): FY 2026

Line Number	Budget Item	Percent of Funds	Amount of Funds
1	Total Perkins V Allocation	Not applicable	\$14,511,466.00
2	State Administration	4.97%	\$721,779.00
3	State Leadership	10.00%	\$1,451,146.60
4	• Individuals in State Institutions	• 0.80%	• \$116,091.73
4a	○ Correctional Institutions (DOC)	Not required	○ \$95,000.00
4b	○ Juvenile Justice Facilities (state training school)	Not required	○ \$21,091.73
4c	○ Institutions that Serve Individuals with Disabilities	Not required	○ NA
4d	○ Other State Institutions	Not required	○ NA
5	• Non-traditional Training and Employment	• 5.17%	• \$75,000.00
6	• Special Populations Recruitment	• 0.34%	• \$5,000.00
7	Local Formula Distribution	85.03%	\$12,338,540.40
8	• Reserve	• 7.00%	• \$863,697.83
9	○ Secondary Recipients	○ 91.60%	○ \$791,197.83
10	○ Postsecondary Recipients	○ 8.40%	○ \$72,500.00 ¹
11	• Allocation to Eligible Recipients	• 93.00% (79.07% of total)	• \$11,474,842.57
12	○ Secondary Recipients	○ 43.10%	○ \$4,946,223.46 ²
13	○ Postsecondary Recipients	○ 56.90%	○ \$6,528,619.11 ³
14	State Match (from non-federal funds)	Not applicable	\$721,779.00

¹ Internal accounting for FY 2019 through FY 2026 has budgeted \$72,500 in "Postsecondary Reserve" and the remaining in "Secondary Reserve" and reported as such in financial status reports (FSRs) for the Federal Perkins Consolidated Annual Report (CAR).

² Represents \$46.06 per secondary CTE participant (based on FY 2024 non-duplicated enrollment data)

³ Represents \$1,001.01 per postsecondary CTE participant (based on FY 2024 non-duplicated enrollment data)

Fiscal Year (FY): FY 2027, FY 2028, and FY 2029 (Based on FY 2026 allocation)

Line Number	Budget Item	Percent of Funds	Amount of Funds
1	Total Perkins V Allocation	Not applicable	\$14,511,466.00
2	State Administration	4.97%	\$721,779.00
3	State Leadership	10.00%	\$1,451,146.60
4	• Individuals in State Institutions	0.80%	• \$116,091.73
4a	○ Correctional Institutions (DOC)	Not required	○ \$95,000.00
4b	○ Juvenile Justice Facilities (state training school)	Not required	○ \$21,091.73
4c	○ Institutions that Serve Individuals with Disabilities	Not required	○ NA
4d	○ Other State Institutions	Not required	○ NA
5	• Non-traditional Training and Employment	• 5.17%	• \$75,000.00
6	• Special Populations Recruitment	• 0.34%	• \$5,000.00
7	Local Formula Distribution	85.03%	\$12,338,540.40
8	• Reserve	• 7.00%	• \$863,697.83
9	○ Secondary Recipients	Not required	○ NA
10	○ Postsecondary Recipients	Not required	○ NA
11	• Allocation to Eligible Recipients	• 93.00% (79.07% of total)	• \$11,474,842.57
12	○ Secondary Recipients	○ 60.00%	○ \$6,884,905.54 ⁴
13	○ Postsecondary Recipients	○ 40.00%	○ \$4,589,937.03 ⁵
14	State Match (from non-federal funds)	Not applicable	\$721,779.00

⁴ Represents \$64.11 per secondary CTE participant (based on FY 2024 non-duplicated enrollment data)⁵ Represents \$703.76 per postsecondary CTE participant (based on FY 2024 non-duplicated enrollment data)

State Determined Performance Levels

**Table 3: Section 113(b) Core Indicators of Performance
Secondary Level**

Indicator Descriptions	Indicator Codes	Indicator Names
The percentage of CTE concentrators who graduate high school, as measured by the four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate (defined in section 8101 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965).	1S1	Four-Year Graduation Rate
(At the State's discretion) The percentage of CTE concentrators who graduate high school, as measured by extended-year adjusted cohort graduation rate defined in such section 8101.	1S2	Extended Graduation Rate
CTE concentrator proficiency in the challenging State academic standards adopted by the State under section 1111(b)(1) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as measured by the academic assessments in reading/language arts as described in section 1111(b)(2) of such Act.	2S1	Academic Proficiency in Reading/Language Arts
CTE concentrator proficiency in the challenging State academic standards adopted by the State under section 1111(b)(1) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as measured by the academic assessments in mathematics as described in section 1111(b)(2) of such Act.	2S2	Academic Proficiency in Mathematics
CTE concentrator proficiency in the challenging State academic standards adopted by the State under section 1111(b)(1) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as measured by the academic assessments in science as described in section 1111(b)(2) of such Act.	2S3	Academic Proficiency in Science
The percentage of CTE concentrators who, in the second quarter after exiting from secondary education, are in postsecondary education or advanced training, military service or a service program that receives assistance under title I of the National and Community Service Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12511 et seq.), are volunteers as described in section 5(a) of the Peace Corps Act (22 U.S.C. 2504(a)), or are employed.	3S1	Post-Program Placement
The percentage of CTE concentrators in career and technical education programs and programs of study that lead to non-traditional fields.	4S1	
<i>The eligible agency must include at least one program quality indicator—5S1, 5S2, or 5S3—and may include any other quality measure(s) that are statewide, valid, reliable, and comparable across the State.</i>		
The percentage of CTE concentrators graduating from high school having attained a recognized postsecondary credential.	5S1	Program Quality – Attained Recognized Postsecondary Credential
The percentage of CTE concentrators graduating from high school having participated in work-based learning.	5S3	Program Quality – Participated in Work-Based Learning

**Table 3: Section 113(b) Core Indicators of Performance
Postsecondary Level**

Indicator Descriptions	Indicator Codes	Indicator Names
The percentage of CTE concentrators who, during the second quarter after program completion, remain enrolled in postsecondary education, are in advanced training, military service, or a service program that receives assistance under title I of the National and Community Service Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12511 et seq.), are volunteers as described in section 5(a) of the Peace Corps Act (22 U.S.C. 2504(a)), or are placed or retained in employment.	1P1	Post-Program Placement
The percentage of CTE concentrators who receive a recognized postsecondary credential during participation in or within 1 year of program completion.	2P1	Earned Recognized Postsecondary Credential
The percentage of CTE concentrators in career and technical education programs and programs of study that lead to non-traditional fields.	3P1	Non-traditional Program Concentration

B: State Determined Performance Levels (SDPL) Form Secondary Level

State Name: Iowa

Indicator	Baseline Level	PY 2024 – 2025 (24-25 plan)	2023 & 2024 IA Average	Growth Rate	PY 2025 - 26	PY 2026- 27	PY 2027 - 28	PY 2028- 2029
1S1: Four-Year Graduation Rate	92.58%	94.00%	94.86%	+ 1.00%	95.00%	96.00%	97.00%	98.00%
1S2: Extended Graduation Rate (optional; N/A)	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
2S1: Academic Proficiency in Reading Language Arts	65.75%	69.38%	69.36%	+ 1.00%	70.38%	71.38%	72.38%	73.88%
2S2: Academic Proficiency in Mathematics	61.75%	66.19%	68.57%	+ 1.00%	69.57%	70.57%	71.57%	72.57%
2S3: Academic Proficiency in Science	58.00%	65.86%	64.35%	+ 1.00%	66.86%	67.86%	68.86%	69.86%
3S1: Post-Program Placement	89.09%	90.03%	89.96%	+ 1.00%	91.03%	92.03%	93.03%	94.03%
4S1: Non-traditional Program Concentration	14.60%	27.19%	25.36%	+ 0.10%	27.20%	27.30%	27.40%	27.50%
5S1: Program Quality – Attained Recognized Postsecondary Credential	10.00%	4.00%	NA	+ 5.00%	15.00%	20.00%	25.00%	30.00%
5S3: Program Quality – Participated in Work- Based Learning	6.00%	26.73%	31.62%	+ 3.00%	45.00%	48.00%	51.00%	54.00%

B: State Determined Performance Levels (SDPL) Form Postsecondary Level

State Name: Iowa

Indicator	Baseline Level	PY 2024 – 2025 (24-25 plan)	2023 & 2024 IA Average	Growth Rate	PY 2025 - 26	PY 2026- 27	PY 2027 - 28	PY 2028- 2029
1P1: Post-Program Placement	70.00%	78.49%	78.29%	+ 1.00%	79.49%	80.49%	81.49%	82.49%
2P1: Earned Recognized Postsecondary Credential	50.32%	61.41%	61.17%	+ 1.00%	62.41%	63.41%	64.41%	65.41%
3P1: Non-traditional Program Concentration	9.75%	17.30%	16.07%	+ 0.10%	17.40%	17.50%	17.60%	17.70%