



## Perkins Career and Technical Education Primer

### What's New

On July 31, 2018, President Trump signed the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Act (Perkins V) into law. The law reauthorizes and updates the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (Perkins IV) to ensure career and technical education (CTE) programs meet the demands of the twenty-first-century economy. The new law includes several changes and additions relevant for educators, postsecondary institutions, employers, workforce development boards, community-based organizations, and others who serve historically underserved students in both secondary and postsecondary education.

Perkins V includes several modifications that align specific provisions, reporting requirements, and definitions of the law with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and, where appropriate, the Every Student Succeeds Act and the Higher Education Act. The new law better aligns and integrates school districts, institutions of higher education, and employers to prepare more young people for high-skill, high-wage careers.

Below are specific changes from Perkins IV that have direct implications on state accountability systems and CTE delivery models.

### Changes to Accountability

Perkins IV required the U.S. Secretary of Education and states to agree on performance levels for each accountability indicator under the law. Perkins V eliminates this provision. However, if states want to adjust their performance levels after the first two years of implementing their state Perkins V plans, they must set performance levels that are higher than the actual performance of the two most recent program years (except in unusual circumstances). Also new, Perkins V requires states to institute a public comment process to gather feedback on their performance levels, which was not required under Perkins IV.

For the first time, improving the performance of historically underserved students is prioritized in Perkins V. Specifically,

the law requires states and districts “continually [to] make meaningful progress toward improving the performance” of students of color, students from low-income households, English learners, and students with disabilities.

Perkins V explicitly limits accountability to students who meet the criteria to be considered “CTE concentrators” under the law. For middle and high school students, this includes students who have completed at least two courses in a single “CTE program or program of study.”

States must include at least one indicator of program quality in their accountability system to measure the performance of secondary school CTE concentrators, such as a measure of high school graduates who earn a recognized postsecondary credential or postsecondary credits in a relevant CTE program or participate in a work-based learning experience.

New to the law, Perkins V requires states and districts to disaggregate data for each performance indicator by CTE program or program of study. In cases where this is impractical, data may be disaggregated by career cluster.

### New Definitions

Perkins V adds and defines several new terms in the reauthorized law, including the following:

- CTE concentrator,
- CTE participant,
- qualified intermediary,
- professional development,
- program of study, and
- work-based learning.

To view these definitions in the law, visit <https://www.congress.gov/115/bills/hr2353/BILLS-115hr2353enr.pdf>.

## Systems Alignment

Perkins V calls for collaboration among middle and high schools, higher education institutions, employers, and other partners to provide an integrated approach to delivering robust CTE programs through statewide sector or industry partnerships. In drafting its plan for implementing Perkins V, a state must describe how it will “support effective and meaningful collaboration between secondary schools, postsecondary institutions, and employers to provide students with expertise in, and understanding of, all aspects of an industry ....”

Additionally, states may use state leadership funds available under Perkins V to establish these statewide partnerships to create and expand opportunities for high school students to earn a recognized postsecondary credential or credit toward a recognized postsecondary credential by participating in dual- or concurrent-enrollment programs or early college high school. States also may leverage these partnerships to integrate work-based learning into CTE programs and programs of study.

## Integrated Professional Development

Perkins V explicitly permits states to deliver joint professional development to core academic and CTE teachers. While Perkins IV allowed states to deliver this type of joint professional development “as appropriate” and “to the extent practicable,” it did not intentionally prioritize the practice in its language the way Perkins V does.



The Alliance for Excellent Education (All4Ed) is a Washington, DC–based national policy, practice, and advocacy organization dedicated to ensuring that all students, particularly those underperforming and those historically underserved, graduate from high school ready for success in college, work, and citizenship. [all4ed.org](http://all4ed.org)

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