

Clarifications on Use of Perkins Funds

Based on Federal monitoring conducted March, 2013



Use of Funds for “all school reforms or professional development”

Funds under the Act must be expended only for career technical education programs, services and activities as defined by the Act. If CTE instructors participate in broader professional development that serves the entire school, Perkins funds can only be used for the actual cost of the CTE instructors participation. Participation in professional development activities is limited to CTE instructors. Broad activities that school administrators participate in are not eligible for Perkins reimbursement.

Perkins Improvement Plans

Any LEA that fails to meet at least 90% of the state adjusted performance level for any of the core indicators of performance must develop and implement a program improvement plan for each indicator for which the LEA failed to meet the 90% threshold. The improvement plan must, at a minimum, include the following items:

- The indicator of performance that LEA failed to meet the 90% threshold.
- The categories of students for which there were quantifiable disparities or gaps in performance compared to all students or any other category of students.
- The action steps which will be implemented, beginning in the current program year, to improve the LEA's performance on the indicator of performance and for the categories of students for which disparities or gaps of performance were identified.
- The staff members responsible for each action step.
- The timeline for each action step.

The Perkins Improvement Plans must contain detailed steps to be taken. We can no longer accept that LEAs are working to improve data quality. We do need to see a commitment to spending Perkins funds to assist LEAs in meeting performance indicators.

LEA responsibilities:

- Identify areas of low performance including categories of students not meeting performance levels
- Provide professional development for CTE instructors on teaching strategies to help students meet performance levels.
- Collaborate with district-wide efforts to improve student performance.

Additional Consortium responsibilities:

- The consortium has the responsibility to work both with all schools in the consortium and to provide special assistance to individual schools with the largest gap in performance.
- The consortium has the responsibility to work with the school districts data personnel to make certain data is accurate and complete – this is especially true if school districts do not report or report incomplete data.
- The consortium has the right and responsibility to withhold funds from school districts that do not report data.

Remedial/Developmental Education

Perkins IV does not define the term “remedial course” as it is used in the definition of career technical education. However, the Department would consider a course to be remedial if it were designed to provide instruction in reading, writing, and mathematics for students who have not acquired the basic academic skills necessary to success in general or in career and technical education courses.

Perkins funds may **NOT** be used to support remedial courses. Any course funded (this includes materials, professional development for instructors, etc.) under Perkins IV must meet all parts of the definition of career and technical education including that the course provide coherent and rigorous content aligned with challenging academic standards and technical skill proficiency as required by section 3(5)(A)(i) and (ii) of Perkins IV. A remedial course would not meet the requirements to provide rigorous content or technical skill.

Perkins funds may be used to provide assistance to students who are struggling in CAREER TECHNICAL courses to provide mentoring and support services. Perkins funds may not supplant local effort.

Supplanting

A presumption would arise that supplanting has occurred if a LEA used Perkins IV funds to provide services that the LEA (1) was required to make available under other Federal, State or local laws, except as permitted by section 324(c) of Perkins IV; (2) provided with non-Federal funds in the prior year; or (3) provided with non-Federal funds for non-career technical education students but charged to Perkins IV funds for career and technical education students.

Funding for Direct Assistance to Students

It is the long-standing interpretation of the USDE that Congress intended to give States and LEAs the flexibility to provide direct assistance to special populations under certain, limited circumstances. An LEA may provide direct assistance, including dependent care, tuition, transportation, books and supplies to individuals, if the following conditions are met:

- Recipients of the assistance are individuals who are members of special populations who are participating in career technical education courses and pursuing a program of study in career technical education.
- Assistance is provided to an individual only to the extent that it is needed to address barriers to the individual’s successful participation in career technical education.
- Direct financial assistance to individuals is part of a broader, more general effort to address the needs of individuals who are members of special populations.
- Direct assistance is one element of a larger set of strategies designed to address the needs of special populations, including those prepare for non-traditional fields. Direct assistance to individual who are members of special population does not, by itself, constitute a “program for special populations” that meets the requirements of section 124(b)(8) or 135(c)(4) of Perkins IV, nor does direct assistance to individuals preparing for non-traditional fields, by itself, constitute training and employment activities in non-traditional fields under section 124(b)(5) or 135(c)(17) of Perkins IV.

Funds must supplement, and not supplant assistance that is otherwise available from non-Federal sources.