Grants Management System and Perkins Application Instructions

Hardware/Software Requirements

The grants management system will be functional on PCs and on MacIntosh computers using Internet Explorer or Netscape Navigator browsers. It supports Windows 98, NT, 2000 or XP on the PC. Within the MacIntosh system, it works with OS9 and OSX. A version of Netscape 6.1 or higher or Internet Explorer 5.5 or higher is required. The system will not function within AOL or other browsers. It is highly recommended that Netscape be used if using a MacIntosh computer. If using a PC, use Internet Explorer. Both browsers are available for free downloading.

TIP: Internet Explorer 6.0 has an option that may cause problems with the system if not set appropriately. The following steps will allow you to check this: Tools → Internet Options → Temporary Internet Files Section → Settings → Check for new versions of stored pages → Automatically. If the setting is not "Automatically," the system will not save data entered.

Overview of the Grants Management System

System Rule

- A check in a box means "yes," a blank box means "no."
- SAVE: Use the Save Page button at the end of each page. Whenever a page is SAVED, the system brings the user back to the top of that page. If something needs to be changed on that page, an error message will appear at the top of the page.
- DO NOT use the "BACK" button on the browser to move among the tabs. Click on the next tab or use the pull-down menu of applications.
- Users can move among tabs and programs without having to SAVE the information entered on one page. This is why it is so important to SAVE what has been entered. Selecting another Tab without clicking Save Page (and resolving any errors) will result in loss of the data entered.
- Data that has been SAVED can be changed at any time until the application is submitted.

Page Design

- At the top of each page is the name of applicant and a unique number assigned to each applicant. The first two digits are the year of the application, followed by the program number, ESU area, county, district, nonpublic (if applicable) and building numbers.
- A pull-down menu on the right-hand side contains all the grant programs included in the application. The Perkins Basic Grant and Perkins Postsecondary are the two options. Only grants that continue an allocation are necessary to complete.
- Beneath the pull-down menu is an option to print a page without the graphics (Printer Friendly). If you desire to print a web page within the GMS, it is recommended to first click the Printer Friendly link, and then use your browsers File → Print option.
- A link (identified by the underline) to instructions for that page is also on the right hand side of most pages.
- Across the screen is a TAB strip designed to look like the tabs from a file folder. The number and names of tabs vary based on which program you are on. Each tab represents a different web page that should be reviewed and completed by the applicant. Some pages, like Overview, are strictly informational, and require no data entry.

Assistance to Applicants

- A green-colored "Contact Us" link at the bottom of each page provides a list of program director's names, email and phone numbers. If program questions or technical problems arise, use this link to determine whom to contact.

Security

- The grants management system has several security features. It has been designed to work with the NDE Portal to assure that there is only one authorized representative to submit the application per district or ESU. Through the Portal, the authorized representative can approve staff requests to complete parts of the application, **but only the authorized representative can agree to the assurances and submit it to NDE.**

History

- The grants management system will record the activity for each application. This includes the date submitted and who submitted it, the approval date, amendment dates, etc. The system will keep applications from year to year and, in future years, all previous actions (applications and amendments) will be available for review.

Built-in Validations and Accuracy

- The system has several ways to ensure that when an application is submitted, it is as accurate and complete as possible. For example, an error message will appear in red at the top of the screen if a number is entered when a word is required. Validation errors must be corrected before the data can be saved. When the correct entry is made, the error message disappears and the data is saved.

- The system has been designed to ensure that applications are complete before submission. The last step in the process of completing the Perkins Consolidated Application is on a tab called "Submit". Prior to the authorized representative clicking the "submit" button, the system requires a **Consistency Check** to be successfully submitted. The consistency check examines the entire application, as opposed to a single web page of the application. If any page contains required responses that were skipped or if any available funds were not budgeted, an error message is displayed. Applicants may want to do this check before submitting. The "submit" button is only available after the consistency check has successfully passed. Further, when the consistency check does pass, the application is "Locked." This prevents modifications to the application that could nullify the consistency check. If the applicant desires to change the application, after a successful consistency check (but before submission), they must click the "Unlock" button that is also located on the Submit page. By unlocking the application at this time, the record of a successful consistency check is erased, necessitating the consistency check be run again prior to submission.

This is a consolidated application for all funds a district, consortium, or institution has received and cannot be submitted until all components are completed and the consistency check is run.

Communication

- The system will automatically send email messages to the authorized representative, as defined in the NDE Portal, whenever there is an approval or an application is returned for changes. The system will notify the staff person in the Department when an application or amendment has been submitted. The messages will be sent to the email address as provided by the agency in the Portal.

Lock Application

- During the time the applicant is completing an application, the application can be placed in a "lock" status. This means that information cannot be added or changed while in lock status. Only the user who placed the application in lock status or the authorized representative for that agency can unlock the application.

NDE Review and Approval of Applications

- Each Perkins Application will be reviewed and approved by one of the assigned NCE Monitoring staff and a Leadership Council member will give the final approval of all applications.

- When an application is being reviewed for approval, the reviewer will use the Reviewer's Checklist. This Checklist is available to all applicants as a reference during the process of completing their application. Any applicable item on the checklist that is not acceptable will cause the application to be returned to the district, ESU, or institution for changes. The Checklist will identify the needed changes and contain the comments of the reviewer as to what is needed. The Checklist can be accessed by clicking the Review Checklist button on the Application Select page. The Checklist will open in a separate browser. This enables the NDE reviewers to easily toggle between the application they are reviewing and the review checklist that they must complete before approving an application. During the review and approval process, the Department staff will not be able to change anything on the application.

- When the application has received final approval, the system will notify the authorized representative. A Grant Award Notification will be sent to the applicant for each program approved in the application.

Consortium Projects

- Any agency that serves as the fiscal agent for a Perkins consortium project must submit an application.

- The system will contain the allocations from all member districts that have declared their intent to participate through the online Intent to Participate Tool site. The consortium directors will need to verify the member districts to ensure accuracy. A list of member districts is found by opening the Allocations page and clicking on the green-colored ESU County/District Code of Fiscal Agent" link. The number serves as a link to the allocations. Any errors must be reported immediately to the Department by contacting Teri Sloup at 402-471-4809 or teri.sloup@nebraska.gov.

GETTING STARTED:

- The first step is to register for the NDE Portal. This occurs by going to https://portal.education.ne.gov and registering your personal account. If you already have registered, your single sign on will work. A complete set of Grants Management Instructions can be found in the GMS system under the green INSTRUCTIONS link or a pdf can be accessed at: http://www.education.ne.gov/gms/Grant%20Management%20Guidance.pdf

  The NDE Help Desk can also be contacted for questions by calling toll free at **888-285-0556** or at the local number 402-471-3151. You can also send an email to the NDE Help Desk at nde.helpdesk@nebraska.gov

- The administrator of record in the portal will also need to log in and will be provided activation codes for the Perkins Basic Grants. These codes will be necessary to gain access and start a Perkins Basic Grant application. There will be two activation codes provided to the administrator. The first code is for the administrator, provides complete access to all aspects of the application, and allows for the approval and acceptance of assurances. The second code can be used by whoever is responsible for the application input and processing. As many people as appropriate to work on the application can use this code.

- Once the activation codes are received, the process for applying for a grant begins with logging into the NDE Portal, selecting the GMS from the Portal tab strip at the top of the page. This will bring up the Perkins Applications as one of the options. Selecting the *Perkins Application* opens up a window to enter the activation code provided by the administrator and creates access to the application. This step only occurs once, as the application will be connected to your login ID and password from that point forward.

- After registering and approval through the NDE Portal, the applicant will select GMS from the Portal tab strip (at the top of webpage). This will bring up the Perkins Application as one of the options. Selecting the Perkins Basic/PostSec link opens up the Grants Management System in a separate window.

Application Select

- The first step is selecting the application or starting a new application. The system is designed to maintain a history of applications and amendments through the years. To create a new application select the "create new application" button. If wanting to edit and review previously created applications, select the appropriate application and then choose "Open Application." The button actions not valid will be disabled (or grayed out). For example, an amendment cannot be created until after an application has been approved. Therefore, selecting an application whose status is "Submitted for Review" will result in the Create Amendment button still disabled.

Organization Select

- If an administrator is responsible for more than one district, ESU, or institution, the Organization Select screen appears first. This screen will list all of the districts approved for that person.

Perkins Application–4720

Overview–Tab

The Overview provides the background information for the application and all of the programs included. The Perkins Application is built around the goals identified by the current Perkins legislation and state plan. *There is no action needed on this page.*

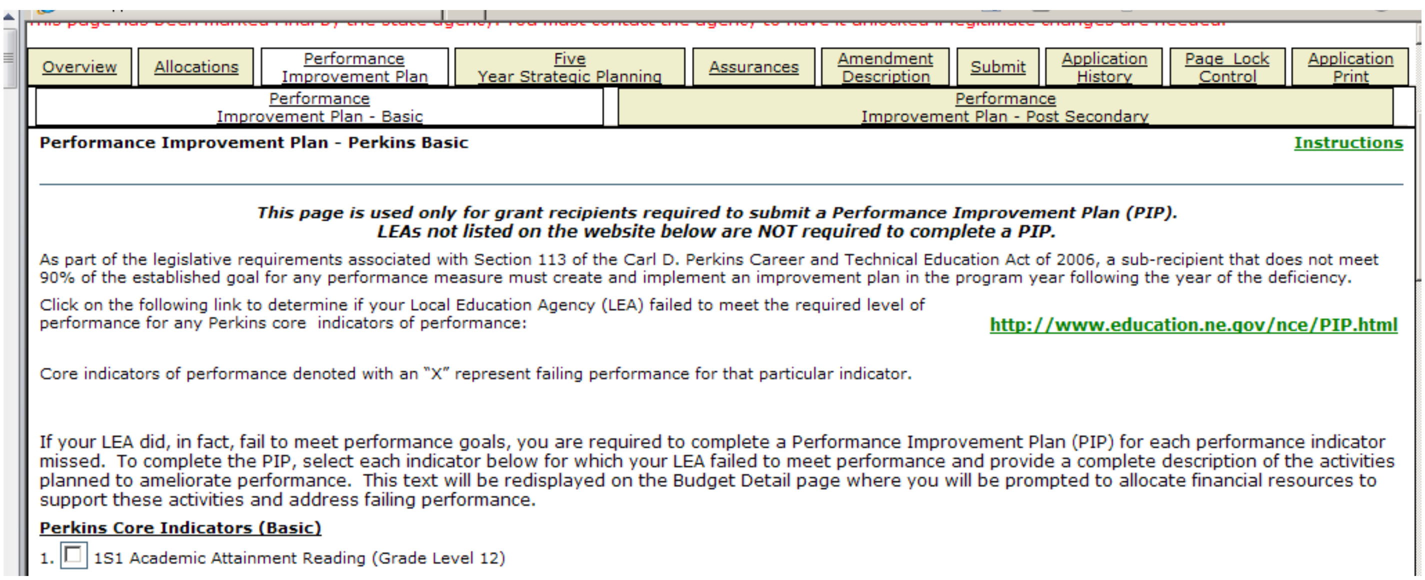
Allocations–Tab

The system will contain the allocations from all member districts that have declared their intent through the online Intent to Participate Tool site. The consortium directors will need to verify the member districts to ensure accuracy. A list of member districts is found by clicking on the "ESU County/District Code of Fiscal Agent" link in the middle section of the Allocations page. The number is highlighted in Green and serves as a link to the allocations. Any errors must be reported immediately to the Department by contacting Teri Sloup at teri.sloup@nebraska.gov.

NEW ***Performance Improvement Plan –Used only for grant recipients required to submit.***

Click on the following link to determine if your Local Education Agency (LEA) failed to meet the required level of performance for any Perkins core indicators of performance:

http://www.education.ne.gov/nce/PIP.html



Overview | Allocations | Performance Improvement Plan | Five Year Strategic Planning | Assurances | Amendment Description | Submit | Application History | Page Lock Control | Application Print

Performance Improvement Plan - Basic | Performance Improvement Plan - Post Secondary

Performance Improvement Plan - Perkins Basic — Instructions

This page is used only for grant recipients required to submit a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP).
LEAs not listed on the website below are NOT required to complete a PIP.

As part of the legislative requirements associated with Section 113 of the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006, a sub-recipient that does not meet 90% of the established goal for any performance measure must create and implement an improvement plan in the program year following the year of the deficiency.

Click on the following link to determine if your Local Education Agency (LEA) failed to meet the required level of performance for any Perkins core indicators of performance: **http://www.education.ne.gov/nce/PIP.html**

Core indicators of performance denoted with an "X" represent failing performance for that particular indicator.

If your LEA did, in fact, fail to meet performance goals, you are required to complete a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) for each performance indicator missed. To complete the PIP, select each indicator below for which your LEA failed to meet performance and provide a complete description of the activities planned to ameliorate performance. This text will be redisplayed on the Budget Detail page where you will be prompted to allocate financial resources to support these activities and address failing performance.

Perkins Core Indicators (Basic)

1. ☐ 1S1 Academic Attainment Reading (Grade Level 12)

As part of the legislative requirements associated with Section 113 of the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006, a sub-recipient that does not meet 90% of the established goal for any performance measures must create and implement an improvement plan in the program year *following* the year of the deficiency.

The Performance Improvement Plan must include a detailed description of its plans to increase performance including, but not limited to, the proposed activities, possible redirection of resources, funds, or projects to increase achievement in the performance area. The improvement plan must be submitted to NDE within 60 days of the official notification regarding the accountability status.

To complete the P I P, select each indicator for which your LEA failed to meet performance and provide a complete description of the activities planned to ameliorate performance. This text will be redisplayed on the Budget Detail page where you will be prompted to allocate financial resources to support these activities and address failing performance.

A separate tab: **Performance Improvement Plan–Post Secondary** has been created for applications under the Post Secondary Education Agency.

Five-Year Strategic Plan−Tab

This page opens up six additional tabs—the **Background Tab** has nine fields where applicants describe their strategic plan, how the data influences their priorities and various descriptions of program planning. The 5-year plan tabs open individually for completion on a year-to-year basis.

The shaded box under the Project Year contains the response from the *previous* year. Users may copy from the previous year and paste into the non-shaded box for the *current* year plan. Only responses in the non-shaded box will be considered for review. Any new responses, adjustments or additions for the current year must be made in the non-shaded box under each plan. Complete or edit all forms.

The implementation of the Nebraska Career Education model and Perkins IV requires emphasis in areas designed to result in program improvement and increased student achievement. A list of target areas that are supported by the priorities/goals for the year can be checked and submitted.

Assurances−Tab

All of the assurances for the program year are now in the system. At the end of the assurances is the "Organization Agrees" button. This button will only be displayed to the authorized representative. Once the organization agrees to the assurances, it does not need to repeat this step for amendments or changes later in the year.

The Assurances Tab should be completed only after all other parts of the Perkins Consolidated Application are final.

Amendment Description−Tab

An amendment cannot be created until *after* an application has been approved. Selecting an application with a status of "Submitted for Review" will result in the Create Amendment button being disabled.

Creating Amendments Step-by-Step

- Click the radio button next to the last approved application. Click on the "Create Amendment" button. This will open the application.
- Click on the Amendment Description tab to open a description text box where all changes are listed for NDE's review. Save Page when finished.
- The pages needing changes should be unlocked by going to the Page Lock Control tab and selecting the necessary pages. Be sure to Save Page when finished selecting.
- Open unlocked pages, make changes, (be sure to save the page) and rerun the consistency check. Click Submit to return to NDE for review.
- If the Consistency Check has been run, but additional changes are needed, the application may need to be again unlocked. This can be done on the Submit tab.
- If the LEA needs more specific instructions, the NDE Help Desk can be reached by calling toll free at 888-284-0556 or the local number of 402-471-3151. An e-mail can also be submitted to nde.helpdesk@nebraska.gov

Submit−Tab

This is the last step in the process and is used only when all the applicable program specific pages are complete for each program. The Submit button validates the application and automatically sends it to the Department of Education. The process of submitting an application includes a validation or consistency check to ensure that all required questions have a response and that all available funds have been budgeted. However, since applicants may want to do this check before submitting, this page also contains a button called a "Consistency Check". Any inconsistency generates a warning message notifying the applicant to complete the missing information. The Consistency Check button can be used as many times as desired before submission. It will still be run one more time when the application is submitted.

The submit page will be different for a person designated for data entry. The data entry person will have a "submit" button but it will send the completed application to the authorized representative. Only the authorized representative can submit the application to NDE for review and approval.

If an attempt is made to submit an application before the agency has agreed to the assurances, an error message will direct the applicant to the assurances.

Application History−Tab

Once the authorized representative submits the application, the application is sent to the Nebraska Department of Education for review and approval. The information about the progress, where the application is in the process, including amendments submitted, changes, and/or approvals is all tracked on the Application History page. A time/date stamp is provided when each event occurred in the history of the application.

Page Lock−Tab

Page Lock Control functionality is used to manage the locking and unlocking of individual GMS Web Data pages within the GMS online applications. Applicants are able to unlock some GMS data pages. This capability is available to the LEA staff while the application is in LEA control−for example, when the application has been returned by NDE to the LEA for needed changes. The LEA users have the ability to unlock pages that have been LOCKED by NDE; however they cannot unlock pages that are marked FINAL.

Perkins Application–4700–Secondary

Overview–Tab

The overview provides the background information for the application and all of the programs included. The Perkins Application is built around the goals identified by the current Perkins legislation and state plan. *There is no action needed on this page*.

Program Information–Tab–

Contact and Advisory Committee–Sub Tabs

This page opens up *two additional tabs*—the **Contact Information** and **Advisory Committee.** **Contact Information** asks for the name and contact information of staff that will be completing the various components of the application. The first and last name of the authorized representative is required. If the same person will complete all components of the application, it is not necessary to repeat that information. This page also asks for the name of the Financial Contact for each project as this information will assist in communicating information about the financial components and payment processes of the grant. This information is optional, but helpful.

Advisory Committee: this information provides opportunity for entering in the names and roles of the various committee members. In many cases, a person may serve more than one role. Please select the most prominent role or enter in the name of the person in additional entries with the different roles identified.

Describe strategies used to ensure participation by parents, students, academic and NCE teachers, administrators, school counselors, business, industry and labor representatives, representatives of special populations are involved in the development, implementation, and evaluation of NCE programs assisted with Perkins funds and how these individuals are effectively informed about and assisted in understanding the requirements of Perkins IV.

Goals and Needs–Tab

Justification and Activities–Sub Tabs

This is the "heart" and most critical part of the application. The Perkins Application is designed to ensure that Perkins funds support activities tied to goals and identified needs and are, as much as possible, connected to the performance data. Please review this entire section before beginning to complete this part of the application. It is important to understand how the information flows throughout the application. Clicking Goals and Needs opens up two sub tabs that address the various components of the application.

Justification: Perkins requires that funds are used to support identified needs and the role of the Justification section to assist in clarifying the process identifying those needs. This section is designed to analyze past performance data and describe how the use of this data influences the plan for activities for the upcoming grant year. The review and evaluation of the data (including prior year data) should provide the foundation for the rationale for selecting priorities for the use of Perkins IV funds.

Activities: This is where the specific activities or uses of funds of the grant process are identified. Provide detailed information regarding the career education, activities and strategies and selected target goals. If there are specific expenditure items, provide detail for those in the narrative. *The activities entered on this page are automatically transferred to the budget detail page*.

Capital Outlay/Equipment–Tab

Inventoried and Depreciated–Sub Tabs

Two tables open for listing equipment. Equipment is any instrument, machine, apparatus or set of articles that meets NDE's established guidance. Applicants are required to itemize proposed equipment purchases that have an item cost of $5,000 or more. No construction or permanent structural improvements are allowed in any project.

Inventoried Equipment Object Code 400

Equipment items costing at least $1,500 per unit must be inventoried although it is prudent to inventory any equipment that meets the definition above. Recently, auditors have added to the definition of what equipment needs to be inventoried.

Depreciated Equipment Object code 500

Only equipment that has a unit cost of $5000 or more can be budgeted in the Object Code 500 on the Budget Detail page. This change in guidance is necessary to align the Grants management System (GMS) with the NDE's Users Manual.

Budget–Tab

Budget Detail and Budget Summary–Sub Tabs

This tab first opens the **Budget Detail**. This is where the specific activities entered on the previous pages are budgeted. The categories across the top of the budget page represent the highest level of budget categories. The drop down menu on the left hand side represents the required and/or approvable areas for uses of funds. Additional lines can be added to completely budget an activity for different uses of funds within an activity.

Budget Summary: The final tab is that of Budget Summary. This is a compilation of the funds provided on the budget detail pages. No data entry is necessary.

Indirect Costs

The system will provide the indirect cost rate for each district or ESU on the budget pages if selected as an option. The applicant must decide, for each program, whether to use indirect costs or not. If chosen, the system will figure the amount of indirect costs. ***Note:*** *if the budget includes equipment (capital outlay), this amount will be subtracted from the amount allowable for indirect costs as required by law.*

Object Category 100 Salaries

Administrative expenditures are limited to 5% of the total budget and can be spent for meeting general requirements of administering the grant (records retention, financial management). Documentation of individual staff time must be kept at the local level, and detailed on the itemized printout submitted to NDE when claiming for reimbursement.

Grant funds can be used to pay staff for grant-related activities **if** the time spent is documented and justification is made for determining the rate of compensation. Under no circumstance is supplanting allowable. Stipends and substitutes are paid at the local district's established rate.

Object Category 200-Benefits

These may include social security, retirement, health insurance, worker's compensation, tax-sheltered annuities, life insurance.

Object Category 300-Purchased Services

Purchased services are allowable expenses, within reason, used to meet the intent of the program, and documented at the local level. Examples may include:

- Postage
- Printing
- Consultant Services
- Presenter services
- Registration, conference fees

Object Category 400-Supplies and Materials

Supplies and materials are allowable expenditures, within reason, used to meet the intent of the program, and documented at the local level. Examples may include:

- Workshop or meeting expense (food is eligible only when secondary to meetings, workshops, or events that provide an activity with an educational purpose; (i.e. the meal is not the purpose of the meeting))
- Office supplies used specifically for Perkins purposes
- Books or curriculum purchased for developing new curriculum not previously offered. Supplanting occurs when the school is replacing textbooks of an existing program.
- Software when implementing resources to supplement curriculum, or update technological resources available in the program.
- Equipment purchases that are less than $5,000 per individual unit cost.

Promotional items-Non-allowable

Prizes, rewards, and/or entertainment (recreational activities) are non-allowable expenditures as per federal guidelines. Promotional items and memorabilia, including souvenirs, after school or after event activities, and clothing are generally considered to be non-allowable expenditures because they do not serve a direct educational purpose. For example, t-shirts to students for attending a function is perceived as a reward.

Object Category 500-Capital Outlay

The Department established consistent guidance defining and budgeting for equipment purchases for all state and federal grants. Applicants are required to itemize proposed equipment purchases that have an item cost $5,000 or more. No construction or permanent structural improvements are allowed in any project.

Object Category 600-Travel/Other

Instate travel is allowable. Out of state travel is allowable if the grantee is unable to receive comparable information (a comparable service or conference) within the state. If the budget includes expenses for out of state travel, include justification under performance measures/planned activities. Examples of allowable expenses may include:

- Board and lodging
- Mileage (paid at the local district's established rate)
- Airfare (if appropriate)

Page Lock–Tab

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