

NEBRASKA VOCATIONAL-TECHNICAL EDUCATION

What is Vocational-Technical Education?

Vocational-Technical Education programs prepare individuals at the secondary, postsecondary and adult education level for entry, advanced, technical, and managerial positions in business and industry. Programs of secondary vocational-technical education include: agriculture education, business education, career guidance, diversified occupations, family and consumer sciences education, health occupations, industrial technology education, marketing education, tech prep, and trade and industrial education. Each program offers a sequence of courses that are competency-based and uses applied learning that contributes to the academic knowledge, higher-order reasoning, problem-solving skills, work attitudes, general employability skills, technical skills, and occupation-specific skills of an individual. Programs of postsecondary vocational education include Community College opportunities in agriculture occupations, automotive and diesel occupations, business and office occupations, communications technology, construction occupations, electronic/electrical occupations, health occupations, manufacturing fabrications occupations, service occupations, and transportation occupations. Vocational education also enhances the quality of life of Nebraska citizens by teaching students how to balance work and family.

Vocational-Technical Education Mission/Vision:

The mission/vision of vocational education in Nebraska is to develop career-oriented lifelong education that prepares all individuals for meaningful roles in the workforce, family, and community.

Legislation:

Signed into law on October 31, 1998, Perkins III restructures programs previously authorized by the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act, setting out a new vision of vocational-technical education for the 21st century. Improving student achievement and preparation for postsecondary education, further learning, and careers are the central goals of this new vision. Perkins III promotes reform and innovation in vocational-technical education to help ensure that all students acquire the skills and knowledge they need to meet challenging State academic standards and industry-recognized skill standards, and to prepare for postsecondary education, further learning, and a wide range of career opportunities.

The new Law focuses the Federal investment in vocational-technical education on high-quality programs that integrate academic and vocational education; promote student attainment of challenging academic and vocational-technical standards; provide students with strong experience in, and understanding of all aspects of an industry; address the needs of individuals who are members of special populations; involve parents and employers; and provide strong linkages between secondary and postsecondary education.

Programs must also develop, improve, or expand the use of technology in vocational-technical education by providing training in the use of technology to educational personnel, preparing students for careers in the high technology and telecommunications fields, and by working with businesses in high technology industries to offer internships and mentoring programs for students.

To enhance the quality of instruction in vocational-technical education, Perkins III offers comprehensive professional development opportunities for vocational teachers, counselors, and

administrators. These opportunities may include workplace internships that provide teachers with business experience, training in effective teaching skills, programs that help teachers and other personnel stay current with all aspects of an industry, and other activities.

To promote continuous program improvement, Perkins III creates a State performance accountability system. Under this system, the Secretary of Education and each State agree on annual levels of performance for the core indicators specified in the law:

- Student attainment of challenging State-established academic standard, and vocational-technical skill proficiencies.
- Student attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, a proficiency credential in conjunction with a secondary school diploma, or a postsecondary degree or credential.
- Placement in, retention, and completion of, postsecondary education or advanced training, placement in military service, or placement or retention in employment.
- Student participation in, and completion of, vocational-technical education programs that lead to nontraditional training and employment.

States also use these Core indicators to evaluate the performance of eligible recipients.

The Act reauthorizes the Tech-Prep Education State grant program, an important catalyst to secondary school reform and postsecondary education improvement efforts. Tech-Prep programs prepare students for careers in high-skill fields or further education by integrating academic and vocational-technical learning in a sequential course of study that includes a minimum of two years of secondary education and two years of postsecondary education or an apprenticeship program. States must give special consideration in awarding funds to Tech-Prep programs that provide education and training for employment in industries, in which there are significant workforce shortages, including the information technology industry.

Perkins III promotes the use of work-based learning and new technologies in Tech-Prep programs and encourages partnerships with business, labor organizations, and institutions of higher education that award baccalaureate degrees.

How is Vocational Education Administered?

The Nebraska State Board for Vocational Education administers the federal law and appropriations through the Nebraska Department of Education. Nebraska receives its federal allocation according to a legislative formula based on the populations in certain age groups and per capital income.

The distribution of funds within Nebraska is directed to eligible recipients in accordance with the approved State Plan for Vocational-Technical Education. These funds are to be used for improving vocational-technical education programs and services to youth and adults.

Funding and Facts:

Vocational Education is partially funded from federal funds, which are distributed by formula to secondary schools, Consortiums, and Community Colleges. State and local funding derived from sales and property taxes contribute significantly to elementary, secondary, and postsecondary education, which helps to offset the high cost of vocational education programs. Community Colleges also receive tuition and fees from students. This funding is used for activities such as: equipment acquisition, professional development of instructors, integration of academic and vocational education instruction, and implementing new programs in response to new and emerging occupations.

Annual Funding:	\$7,537,205 (FY 2000 Basic Grant-\$6,816,893 and Tech Prep-\$720,313)	
Source:	Federal Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Act of 1998	
Target Audiences:	Secondary, Postsecondary, and Adult Students	
Number Served:	Secondary	101,700 (FY 1998)
	Postsecondary	41,700 (FY 1998)

Why is Vocational-Technical Education Significant?

Nebraska competes in a global economy. The purpose of the Perkins Act is to prepare a workforce with the academic and vocational skills needed to compete successfully in a world market.

Vocational-technical education allows students to explore career options and develop the skills they will need both in school and in the workplace.

Vocational-technical education's combination of classroom instruction, hands-on laboratory work, and on-the-job training meets students' different learning styles so that all may learn.

Vocational-technical education prepares participants for both postsecondary education and employment.

Vocational-technical education prepares individuals with leadership skills to assume successful roles in society through Career and Technical Student Organizations such as: DECA, FBLA, FFA, FCCLA, HOSA, SkillsUSA-VICA, and YFEA.

Vocational-technical education prepares individuals for the bulk of America's jobs. In 1996, only about 20% of America's jobs required a four-year college degree. But many jobs required some education beyond high school, often at the community college level.

How is Vocational-Technical Education Changing?

Vocational-technical education now incorporates both school-based and work-based learning.

Business and industry partnerships are key to successful programs.

For most occupations, postsecondary education is essential.

Vocational-technical education uses and applies high technology.

Vocational-technical education uses cyberspace as a resource.