

IV. SPECIAL POPULATIONS AND OTHER GROUPS

4.01 Describe your program strategies for special populations. [Sec.122(c)(7)]

The Program Director for Special Populations at the state level will provide technical assistance to eligible recipients to identify and implement effective strategies and services that promote meeting the instructional needs of special population groups and assure that they are taught to the same high standards as are other students.

Section 4.01A describes the purpose, goals, objectives, activities, and expected outcomes for special populations.

4.01A SPECIAL POPULATIONS

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this section is to establish criteria for providing services to individuals who are members of special population groups. The services provided will be necessary to promote the inclusion of these individuals into high quality vocational technical education programs and to improve their ability to succeed in these programs.

Assessment of Needs

The priorities for activities to accomplish the purpose of this section were developed by a task force for Special Populations. The task force included state staff members; teachers, counselors and administrators from secondary and post-secondary programs; and representatives from business and industry. The task force analyzed the information gathered from the statewide self-assessment. The Needs Assessment for Vocational Education was completed by secondary and postsecondary institutions in 1999.

The term "special populations" includes --

- (A) individuals with disabilities;
 - (B) individuals from economically disadvantaged families, including foster children;
 - (C) individuals preparing for nontraditional training and employment;
 - (D) single parents, including single pregnant women;
 - (E) displaced homemakers; and
 - (F) individuals with other barriers to educational achievement, including individuals with limited English proficiency.
- (Official Guide to the Perkins Act of 1998, pp. 90-91)

After reviewing the self-assessment for secondary and postsecondary programs, the task force identified three priorities of equal importance. Goal 1 addresses the need for members of special populations to have equal access to programs and activities. Goal 2 addresses the need for non-discrimination of special populations who have gained access to programs and activities. Goal 3 addresses the need to develop and implement strategies designed to meet or exceed state adjusted levels of performance and serve members of special populations for further training and for high skill, high wage careers. The Special Population section provides direction for local institutions as they work to meet the core indicators of performance.

1. The program strategies for special populations will provide information, assist local districts in skill-building for educators, and give direction for the development and implementation of appropriate activities.
2. Equal access in an integral function of the state plan for special populations.

Information dissemination, collaborative efforts with business and industry representatives, and an expanded series of pathways into post-secondary training opportunities will promote success in this area.

3. Status as a member of a special population will not impact one's entry into and participation in vocational education activities and programs. Policies will be developed and educational environments will be established that are clearly nondiscriminatory.
4. Vocational education programs will be developed, implemented, and evaluated to provide special populations with equitable opportunities for success. Parents, business and industry and community members will be encouraged to promote academic achievement and inclusive learning environments.
5. Attempts will be made to meet the needs of students requiring alternative education programs within existing academic and vocational programs. When necessary, students will be provided with alternative course work, and other learning environments.

GOAL No: #1 Ensure that members of special populations will be provided with equal access to activities.

Sec.	Post-Sec. and Adult	Objective	Activity	2001	2002	2003	2004	Outcome
X	X.	1. To communicate the transition requirements for members of special populations.	1.1 Provide written information concerning the Perkins Act and issues of equal access. 1.2 Provide ongoing staff development to teachers and counselors working with students with special needs.	X X	X X	X X	X X	Teachers better prepared to address needs of special populations students.
X	X	2. To evaluate the effectiveness of access to programming.	2.1 Conduct follow-up interviews with past students, asking questions concerning access to programs, further assistance needed, and/or employment in their course of study area. 2.2 Examine data concerning numbers of special population students.	X X	X X	X X	X X	Available data to evaluate program effectiveness and make curriculum decisions.
X	X	3. To utilize local Advisory Committee to assist in curriculum development.	3.1 Invite representatives from the business, industry and labor community to serve in an advisory capacity to local programs. 3.2 Coordinate with other education and training initiatives.	X	X	X	X	Increased on-the-job training opportunities and curriculum modifications. Increase collaborations.
X	X	4. To broaden the acceptable avenues of post-secondary training opportunities.	4.1 Identify non-traditional training programs. 4.2 Develop collaborative relationships with business, industries and other training facilities, such as WIA, Vocational Rehabilitation, Goodwill, etc.	X X	X X	X X	X X	Increased participation in non-traditional training opportunities.

GOAL No: #1 Ensure that members of special populations will be provided with equal access to activities.

Sec.	Post-Sec. and Adult	Objective	Activity	2001	2002	2003	2004	Outcome
X	X	5. To broaden and strengthen curriculum options for students.	5.1 Development of drawing boards that outline curriculum courses needed to enter specific occupational fields. All identified special population students will develop an individualized drawing board that identifies a course of study to pursue post-secondary goals.	X	X	X	X	Comprehensive plan of action for students.
X	X	6. To provide supplemental instruction and academic/ job placement support to special populations students, through increased awareness of issues and implementation strategies.	6.1 Promote equal access to occupations by providing services for special populations students that include exposure to role models and work-based learning experiences.	X	X	X	X	Increased enrollment for members of special populations in programs that offer high wage, skills.

GOAL No: #2 Individuals who are members of special populations will not be discriminated against on the basis of their status as members of special populations.

Sec.	Post-Sec. and Adult	Objective	Activity	2001	2002	2003	2004	Outcome
X	X	1. Participation in activities will not be denied to an individual based on ability to pay, gender, needed accommodations/modifications to curriculum and language barriers.	1.1 Provide incentives through sponsorships or work-based learning programs. 1.2 Provide accommodations and modifications as needed and appropriate.	X	X	X	X	Equitable participation of all members of special populations to programs of choice.
X	X	2. Evaluate programs and practices to determine effectiveness of non-discrimination policies.	2.1 Interview students concerning programs and practices. 2.2 On-site observations 2.3 Examine data of enrollment, retention and completion of programs.		X	X	X	Programs that practice non-discrimination for all students, including members of special populations.

GOAL No: #3 Programs are designed to enable the special populations to meet or exceed State adjusted levels of performance, and will prepare special populations with further training for high skill, high wage careers.

Sec.	Post-Sec. and Adult	Objective	Activity	2001	2002	2003	2004	Outcome
X	X	1. Provide career counseling/ information to eligible recipients.	1.1 Support lease or purchase of materials. 1.2 Support training of all educators in providing career counseling. 1.3 Meet the counseling and information needs unique for individuals in each of the special populations. 1.4 Provide student access to Career Fairs, Employer Panels, career/related seminars.	X	X	X	X	All students have a plan for appropriate placement in a job or continuing in post-secondary education.
X	X	2. Provide preservice and inservice training for all educators and counselors to work effectively with special populations.		X	X	X	X	All students have access to instruction which increases employability options in high wage/high placement careers. Educators and counselors have skills to teach and work with diverse student populations and communities. Financial resources, facilities and staffing are allocated to promote academic achievement and inclusive learning environments.

GOAL No: #3 Programs are designed to enable the special populations to meet or exceed State adjusted levels of performance, and will prepare special populations with further training for high skill, high wage careers.

Sec.	Post-Sec. and Adult	Objective	Activity	2001	2002	2003	2004	Outcome
X	X	3. Increase coordination among programs for special populations.	3.1 Regularly scheduled meetings of staff who work with special populations. 3.2 Provide handbooks that report/outline activities. 3.3 Form partnerships between education and all facets of community to enhance transitions and ensure that all students find appropriate educational and employment opportunities.	X	X	X	X	Same as Outcome #2.
X	X	4. Involve parents, community members, and business/industry to promote academic achievement and inclusive learning environments.	4.1 Form advisory boards to assist with program/curriculum development and evaluation; include parents or members of special populations as advisory board members. 4.2 Invite community and business leaders to attend classes and tour facilities; serve as field trip hosts; become involved in work-based learning programs.	X	X	X	X	Linkages occur among parents, community members, and business/industry to enhance opportunities for special needs populations. All groups work together as partners to promote academic achievement and inclusive learning environments.

GOAL No: #3 Programs are designed to enable the special populations to meet or exceed State adjusted levels of performance, and will prepare special populations with further training for high skill, high wage careers.

Sec.	Post-Sec. and Adult	Objective	Activity	2001	2002	2003	2004	Outcome
X	X	5. Increase awareness of nontraditional high skill, high wage employment opportunities.	5.1 Support participation by students in awareness activities such as workshops, career days, seminars, camps, shadowing, mentoring. 5.2 Integrate awareness activities in curriculum of each subject area. 5.3 Support training of educators in integrating awareness activities. 5.4 Support activities that focus on the unique needs of individuals from each of the special populations.	X	X	X	X	All students have access to information which increases employability options in high wage/high placement careers.
X	X	6. Make necessary curriculum adaptations which allow members of special populations to succeed in course work leading to high wage/high skill career areas.	6.1 Support development of curriculum including contextual learning including applied academics. 6.2 Support purchase of equipment needed for contextual learning. 6.3 Support teachers training to ensure successful contextual learning activities.	X	X	X	X	All students have access to information, equipment/technology which increases employability options in high wage/high placement careers.
X	X	7. Evaluate effectiveness of programming to assure that members of special populations meet/succeed in established levels of performance and are prepared for further learning and for high skill, high wage careers.	7.1 Use a variety of strategies to evaluate student success and program effectiveness for members of special populations. 7.2 Provide accommodations in assessments based on student need.	X	X	X	X	Available data is used to evaluate program effectiveness and make curriculum decisions. Fair and impartial assessment practices are incorporated into classrooms and evaluation activities. Data on student achievement show that all groups benefit from educational practices and policies.

- 4.02 Describe how individuals who are members of special populations will be provided with equal access to activities under the Act. [Sec.122(c)(8)(A)]

Eligible recipients must outline, in their application, the services to be provided to special populations. This outline must include:

- Describe efforts to review vocational and technical education programs and subsequent strategies that have been adopted to overcome barriers that contribute to lowered rates of access or success in programs for each of the special populations.
- Identify local programs, services, or activities that are designed to enable the special populations to meet the core indicators of performance.
- Describe how individuals who are members of special populations will not be discriminated against on the basis of their status as members of special population. Identify applicable policies and procedures.
- Describe how opportunities for nontraditional training and employment will be provided.
- Describe how gender bias will be addressed in vocational and technical education programs.

- 4.03 Describe how individuals who are members of special populations will not be discriminated against on the basis of their status as members of special populations. [Sec.122(c)(8)(B)]

Vocational and technical education programs and activities will be provided in compliance with The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Eligible recipients will also assure that they are in compliance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and the Age Discrimination Act of 1975.

State vocational education staff will conduct Civil Rights on-site visits and monitor compliance with OCR policies. Technical assistance is also provided to eligible recipients as they develop their local applications.

- 4.04 Describe how individuals who are members of special populations will be provided with programs designed to enable the special populations to meet or exceed State adjusted levels of performance, and how special populations will be prepared for further learning and for high skill, high wage careers. [Sec.122(c)(8)(C)]

Eligible recipients will ensure that strategies and services for members of special populations will lead them to meet high levels of performance and to pursue further learning or enter high wage occupations. This will be accomplished through activities described in the local application and through the implementation of the goals in Section 4.01A.

- 4.05 Describe how the needs of students in alternative education programs will be adequately addressed, if appropriate. [Sec.122(c)(13)]

Eligible recipients will not deny students in alternative learning environments access to vocational and technical education programs. Eligible recipients further assure that students in alternative settings will successfully progress toward meeting the negotiated levels of performance.

All vocational and technical education programs at the secondary and postsecondary level have the ability to offer modified curriculum opportunities that will best meet the needs of these students.

Technical assistance is provided to eligible recipients in providing appropriate alternative learning environments.

4.06 Describe how funds will be used to promote preparation for nontraditional training and employment. [Sec.122(c)(17)]

State Leadership funds will be set-aside for the purpose of providing services that prepare individuals for nontraditional training and employment. These funds will be distributed by a Request for Proposal process. The RFP and the *Proposal Writing Guide* to facilitate this process is included as Appendix C.

All local applications submitted to utilize funding made available in Sections 131 and 132 will describe the activities to be carried out that will promote preparation for nontraditional training and employment. The local application is included as Appendix A.

4.07 Describe how funds will be used to serve individuals in State institutions. [Sec.122(c)(18)]

State Leadership funds will be set-aside for the purposes of providing services to individuals in State institutions. These funds will be awarded to the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services, Protection and Safety Division.

The Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services, Protection and Safety Division will submit an application describing the use of these funds. The minimum requirements for the application will be:

The application process is included as Appendix D.