



# NEBRASKA PERKINS V STATE PLAN

Strengthening Career & Technical Education for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Act  
2020 - 2024

OFFICE OF CAREER, TECHNICAL, AND ADULT EDUCATION

NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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[Final]

# SECTION I: INTRODUCTION

## INTRODUCTION

The Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) is established by the Constitution of the State of Nebraska and is governed by an elected State Board of Education. The Nebraska State Board of Education is designated as the sole state agency responsible for the administration of career and technical education (CTE) at the secondary and postsecondary levels. The State Board, through the Commissioner of Education, appoints an administrator for CTE (State Director for CTE) to serve as a part of the Department's Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education. The CTE administrator and designated career and cross-field staff are responsible for providing leadership, professional development, and technical assistance for CTE in Nebraska, and the overall administration of The Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Act (Perkins V). The Nebraska State Board of Education does not delegate any of its responsibilities to any other state agency.

### Guiding Assumptions

Perkins V maintains much of the program improvement emphasis of Perkins IV, but requires Nebraska CTE to focus on additional areas as well. The following guiding assumptions are instrumental in moving Perkins V forward:

- Federal Perkins V funding for Nebraska CTE is not an entitlement at either the state or local level.
- The use of Perkins V funds must be focused on school improvement and increased student achievement outcomes.
- CTE and academic core content must be integrated in a comprehensive way connecting the core academics in CTE courses.
- Students must participate in systemic career development at all levels of education.
- The skills needed for success in postsecondary education and careers are one and the same.
- CTE must be strategically positioned within the broader vision, mission, and goals for education in the state of Nebraska.

### Areas of Emphasis

Perkins V requires Nebraska and local recipients to put emphasis in areas designed to result in program improvement and increased student achievement. These areas include:

- Driving program improvement through programs of study.
- Requiring data-driven decision making on local spending through the new comprehensive local needs assessment (reVISION), involving significant stakeholder consultation and a focus on disaggregated data.
- Using the increased statewide Perkins reserve fund to spur local innovation and implementation of programs of study.
- Supporting career exploration in the middle grades (grades 5-8).
- Enhancing program quality, including a new secondary program quality performance indicator.
- Increasing the focus on serving special populations, including an expanded definition and required uses of statewide Perkins leadership funds.

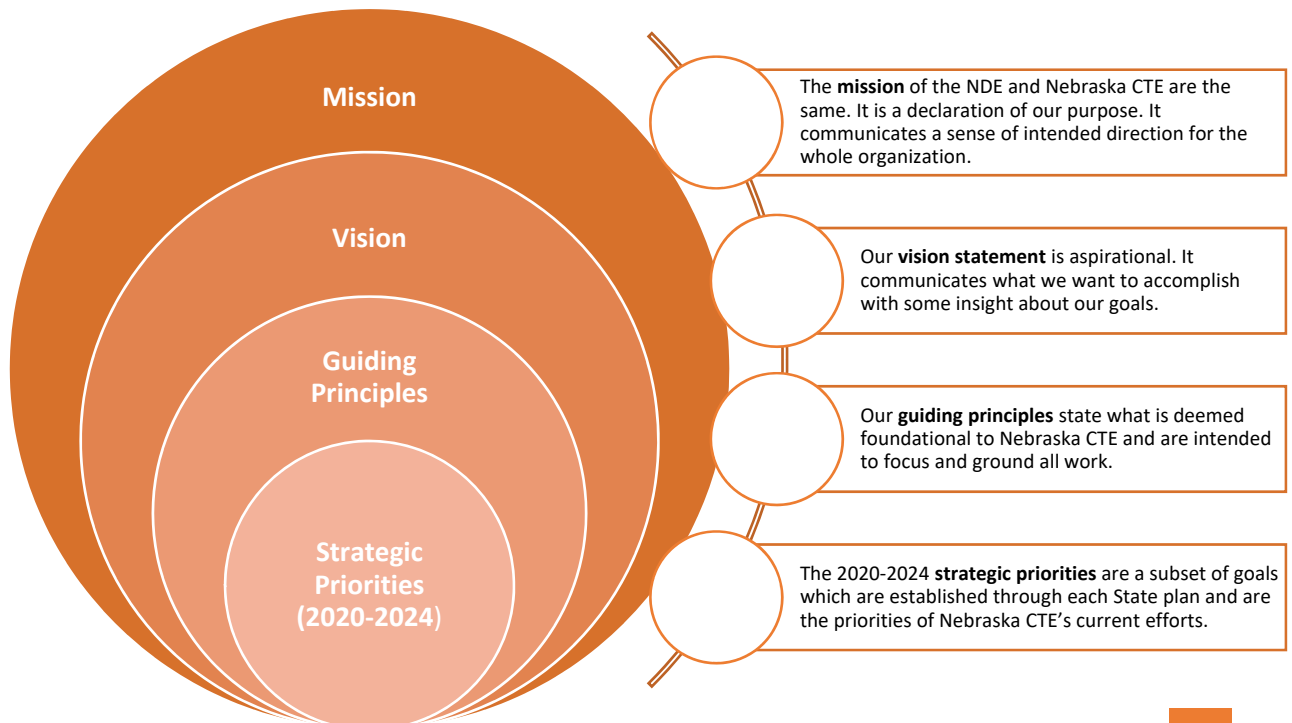
## Moving the Vision Forward: Strengthening Nebraska’s High-Quality CTE System

From a beginning in the early 1900’s that focused on training young men to return to the farm, CTE has been an important part of education in Nebraska. For over a century, as part of comprehensive high schools and postsecondary institutions, CTE has provided students with necessary academic, technical, and career readiness skills for postsecondary education and employment. But Nebraska and our world continue to evolve. Moving from a reliance on the steam engine to the everyday use of the search engine, rapid changes in artificial intelligence, automation, globalization, shifting demographics, growing student loan debt, and increased emphasis on educational accountability have provided the impetus for strengthening the design and delivery of CTE in Nebraska.

Over the past several years and in preparation for developing a new State plan, the NDE and Nebraska CTE have engaged numerous stakeholders from across the state representing K-12, postsecondary, business and industry, workforce and economic development, parents, students, and those representing special populations to develop a conceptual framework and theory of action for moving its high-quality CTE system forward. This framework, including a mission and vision statement, guiding principles, and a list of strategic priorities, sets the stage for the work to be completed.

Nebraska CTE should be viewed systematically by taking a broad perspective in evaluating its contributions to the state’s economic future, rather than focusing on discrete secondary or postsecondary programs or specific funding streams. The State plan for Perkins V provides support to implement this updated framework for Nebraska CTE.

### Nebraska CTE Framework



## **MISSION**

To lead and support the preparation of all Nebraskans for learning, earning, and living.

## **VISION**

Nebraska Career & Technical Education will deliver coordinated, relevant learning opportunities that engage each student in high-quality, rigorous education. These opportunities will be enhanced by partnerships with business and industry, workforce, and economic development leaders, allowing learners to turn their passion, talents, and strengths into successful careers and fulfilling lives.

## **GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

Primary to this vision are four guiding principles. These principles are recognized to provide focus to the work of Nebraska CTE and intended to result in outcomes aligned to the mission and vision. They are foundational to all efforts:

### **1) Equitable.**

Nebraska CTE champions all schools, colleges, and communities in developing and maintaining a culture that supports learning opportunities for all students, across all backgrounds and circumstances, so that they receive meaningful access to and opportunities for success in high-quality CTE programs and personalized career development. Educational equity allows learners to discover and explore their passions and make meaningful connections within the context of their postsecondary interests.

### **2) Relevant.**

Nebraska's CTE system is driven by future economic and workforce demands and created in partnership with the community and engaged stakeholders. All learning is facilitated by knowledgeable experts.

### **3) Innovative.**

Nebraska CTE will be bold in its approach to creating new solutions for addressing educational and workforce challenges. Co-curricular and expanded learning experiences (e.g. work-based learning, entrepreneurship education, and career and technical student organizations) allow learners to apply, demonstrate, and refine their connected academic, technical, and career readiness skills.

### **4) Coordinated.**

Nebraska CTE works alongside state and local agency, education, and community partners to be proactive, responsive, and adaptive to state and local workforce needs and increase the visibility and coherence of services provided.

## **STRATEGIC PRIORITIES**

In response to the Perkins V areas of emphasis and extensive stakeholder engagement, Nebraska CTE has established the following eight strategic priorities to realize its vision. The goal of these priorities is to build onto and catapult Nebraska's high-quality CTE system forward and respond to workforce needs, labor market information, and economic development priorities.

### **1. Aligned CTE Programs**

- The careers we prepare learners for are constantly emerging and changing. CTE programs afford learners the opportunity to explore career options, identify their

interests, and develop the knowledge and skills that prepare them to transition to postsecondary education and into entry-level careers. These programs must be well aligned to the next opportunities learners will encounter and keep pace with the constant evolution found in the marketplace.

- Alignment between Nebraska’s secondary and postsecondary CTE systems means that they are: (1) intentional and seamless, with no duplication of content; (2) accessible to each student, including those with interests in dual-credit and workplace experiences, and (3) incentivized for key economic and employer needs.

## 2. **Systemic Career Development**

- Career development is the process by which individuals get to know their strengths and interests, learn how different jobs connect with those interests, explore careers in current labor markets, and build career planning and management skills to achieve their goals<sup>1</sup>. There are multiple pathways to rewarding careers, and the components to effective career development include self-awareness, career exploration, and career planning and management.
- Career development programs equip learners with the skills needed to take ownership in navigating their own career pathways. Career development is positive student development – if students see the relevance and meaning in school, it results in improved interest and academic performance. Students become more motivated, self-directed learners when they understand the relationship between academics, education planning, and achieving their own career goals.
- Career development must be systemic – intentionally infused throughout all levels and areas of K-12 and postsecondary education. Every adult within an educational setting has a role in students’ career development progress.

## 3. **Student Achievement**

- Nebraska CTE provides an educational environment that can integrate core academic and technical preparation for contextualized learning that increases engagement and supports improved academic, technical, and career readiness achievement for all students. Nebraska CTE is responsible for analyzing student performance data to assess its effectiveness in achieving statewide progress in CTE, which is measured by core indicators of performance for both secondary and postsecondary education, and providing support for eliminating inequities in student access to and success in high-quality CTE programs of study. Student mastery of technical and career readiness skills are often demonstrated through CTSO competitive events.
- The Nebraska State Board of Education approves content area standards for all content areas including CTE. Nebraska CTE drives rigorous content area standards implementation through programs of study.

## 4. **Data Use**

- Nebraska CTE will assist educators in making a more formal shift from collecting data to using data to ensure local CTE programs create success for students and employers.
- The quality and effectiveness of Nebraska CTE is dependent on the ability to constantly evaluate and improve. Through the reVISION process, all local recipients are required to analyze disaggregated student performance data to identify performance

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<sup>1</sup> National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability

disparities across student groups, detect root causes, and direct resources towards addressing both.

#### 5. **Work-Based Learning**

- Work-based learning strategies connect learners with employers to prepare them for success in an ever-changing workplace. Work-based learning is a planned program of sustained and meaningful experiences related to the career interests of a learner that enable him or her to acquire knowledge and skills in a real or simulated work setting. It requires strong partnerships between schools, postsecondary institutions, and local employers.
- Work-based learning is learning through work, not learning about work.
- Nebraska will evaluate the quality of secondary CTE programs, in part, by the percentage of CTE concentrators who participate in high-quality work-based learning experiences. An effective means to monitor, evaluate, and promote these experiences is foundational.

#### 6. **Sustained Professional Development**

- Effective Nebraska CTE programs require highly prepared instructors, administrators, staff, and support personnel who are supported by sustained, high-quality, and relevant professional learning opportunities. Nebraska CTE professional development includes effective training at both the pre- and in-service levels and the pursuit of advanced credentials and degrees. It additionally supports those who have utilized an alternative pathway to certification and encourages the recruitment of new and diverse CTE teachers, especially in shortage areas.

#### 7. **Instructor Recruitment and Retention**

- To deliver effective and relevant CTE programming, there must be an adequate supply of qualified instructors who are knowledgeable in pedagogy and technical areas as well as in academic competencies and workplace requirements essential to their CTE program areas. Innovative and bold strategies must be employed to recruit and retain CTE teachers, especially in those areas with teacher shortages.
- Retaining CTE educators requires deploying innovative strategies and may differ by school, institution, region, or content area.

#### 8. **Middle School CTE**

- Middle grades (5<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup>) CTE adds relevance to students' learning experiences by exposing them to real-world options and connecting academics to career and postsecondary possibilities. It equips students with transferrable skills needed as they transition to high school and beyond, and serves as a key dropout prevention strategy mitigating challenges such as disengagement and lack of preparation.
- Nebraska middle school CTE programming must be aligned with the overarching CTE system, encourage hands-on career exploration opportunities, and available to each student<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> Advance CTE: <http://careertech.org>

## ROLES

In order to support these strategic priorities, Nebraska CTE staff at the NDE will utilize a suite of approaches that reflect the nuances of the work and the many stakeholders, systems, and partners that intersect to support the entire Nebraska CTE system. These roles include:

Champion	<p>Nebraska CTE will actively lead the NDE's strategic vision, goals, and policy direction to support learning, earning, and living by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Engaging key stakeholders and partners on emerging needs in the educational landscape and corresponding CTE policy advocacy approach</li><li>• Exercising policy leadership and proactively engaging and partnering with the Unicameral and Governor on priority issues related to CTE</li><li>• Advocating for necessary resources to meet needs and/or address other issues to execute the vision</li></ul>
Regulator	<p>Nebraska CTE will leverage policy authority to ensure delivery of high-quality, equitable education and services, beyond compliance with state and federal regulations by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Assuring access to fair, equitable, and high-quality CTE and services</li><li>• Monitoring schools, districts, and community colleges (for Perkins grant purposes) to ensure adherence to regulations and setting expectations beyond compliance for accountability and growth in learning</li><li>• Promoting best practices for leadership and using data and resources to ensure effective continuous improvement</li></ul>
Capacity Builder	<p>Nebraska CTE will direct technical assistance and professional development opportunities and promote the sharing of best practices by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Providing technical assistance and professional development opportunities for educators, staff, and community providers</li><li>• Actively engaging with priority and needs improvement schools as well as continuing to support the improvement of all schools</li><li>• Identifying schools and districts across the state with effective CTE practices to gather data on successful practices</li><li>• Acting as a facilitator to connect schools to highlight key learnings, share lessons learned, and communicate best practices</li><li>• Developing, maintaining, and leveraging strong working relationships with education, community, and business partners to extend and enhance capacity across the state</li></ul>
Connector	<p>Nebraska CTE will help bridge the divide between learning, earning, and living, connecting schools, families, businesses, and communities by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Connecting, convening, and partnering with schools, businesses, out-of-school programs, postsecondary education, state agencies, and community providers to create a more comprehensive approach to CTE and service delivery</li><li>• Supporting other agencies and organizations in active engagement and relationship building amongst individuals, parents, and families</li></ul>



- Change Agent      Nebraska CTE will explore and support promising new innovations by:
- Researching, promoting, incentivizing, and providing support for promising new initiatives and innovations in CTE across the state and nation (e.g., promising activities in rural areas, blended learning, personalized learning, adult basic education, career academies, work-based learning, and middle-grades CTE)
  - Providing ongoing training, support, and resources to drive the adoption of new practices and to assure implementation

## reVISION

Since 2012, the NDE’s reVISION process has been instrumental in improving and strengthening CTE in Nebraska. This process provides Nebraska schools with the opportunity to analyze and transform their current CTE systems in order to improve their ability to educate a qualified workforce that meets industry needs within an ever-changing economy.

To satisfy the new Perkins V requirement for the development and implementation of a comprehensive local needs assessment, reVISION, given its success and reach, has been updated and expanded to meet the new required elements of the Act.

As Nebraska CTE transitions from Perkins IV to Perkins V, reVISION will be used as the foundation for local CTE implementation – it will drive the local application development (for stand-alone districts, consortia, and community colleges) and future spending decisions. It is a chance for all schools and colleges to take an in-depth look at their entire local and regional CTE system and identify areas where targeted improvements can lead to increased opportunities for student success. reVISION, if implemented thoughtfully, will also be a powerful opportunity for local educators to engage stakeholders in a common understanding and vision for the future of CTE in their community.<sup>3</sup>

Each district and community college in Nebraska desiring to operate as an approved CTE program and receive Perkins funds is **required** to actively participate in the reVISION process. Nebraska CTE and the NDE see themselves as partners with local recipients in implementing this new requirement under Perkins V. State CTE staff will provide ongoing leadership and supports to aid in successfully fulfilling this impactful process.

## Flexibility

At the time this plan is being submitted, educators around the world are working through unprecedented challenges in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Nebraska is submitting this plan with the full knowledge that certain flexibilities in implementing the provisions within the law will be needed.

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<sup>3</sup> Maximizing Perkins V’s Comprehensive Needs Assessment & Local Application to Drive CTE Program Quality and Equity. Association for Career and Technical Education. Updated October 31, 2018.

## SECTION II: NARRATIVE DESCRIPTIONS

### NARRATIVE DESCRIPTIONS

#### A. Plan Development and Consultation

1. **Describe how the State plan was developed in consultation with the stakeholders and in accordance with the procedures in section 122(c)(2) of Perkins V.**

In accordance with section 122(c)(2) of Perkins V and the guidelines for the submission of State plans, the NDE conducted a comprehensive and thorough process to elicit meaningful public and stakeholder input on the development of the State plan. This input, in turn, informed and directed the development of Nebraska's Perkins V strategic priorities, and ultimately, all components within the State plan.

The following State plan development activities were conducted in accordance with the framework of consultations required by section 122(c)(1) and section 122(c)(2) of the Act. They included several sessions of structured and unstructured input from groups and individuals encompassing representation from all required stakeholders.

Structured Input:

1. A series of 13 regional face-to-face **meetings** designed to seek input on the status of secondary and postsecondary Nebraska CTE, Perkins implementation, and the future direction for CTE from diverse stakeholders were conducted throughout 2018-2019 (including educational service units, State agency partners including Nebraska's workforce development board and WIOA plan partners, Nebraska Departments of Economic Development, Agriculture, and Transportation, community colleges, representatives of special populations, CTE instructors and staff, internal NDE staff, superintendents, CTE teachers, the Nebraska Partner Council, community partners, and Tribal colleges).
2. **Public hearings** were conducted, after appropriate and sufficient notice, for the purpose of affording all segments of the public and interested organizations and groups (including employers, labor organizations, parents, students, and community organizations) an opportunity to present their views and make recommendations regarding the State plan. See Appendix A.
3. Statewide **CTE input survey** (digital): a public statewide input survey was distributed to Perkins contacts and a notice was placed on the NDE's main homepage. This provided respondents with an opportunity to reflect on the strengths and weaknesses of the current CTE system and identify areas for improvement. Over 1,230 individuals completed the survey, representing all required stakeholder groups.
4. Nebraska State Board of Education **Listening Sessions** were conducted to facilitate a review of stakeholder engagement and public input on the Perkins V State plan and identify themes to guide the development of the plan. Board members held listening sessions in their respective region.
5. CTE Secondary/Postsecondary **Alignment Study**: In 2018-2019 the NDE, with grant funding from Partnerships for Innovation, commissioned a project to advance alignment between the secondary and postsecondary levels of the State's CTE system. The ultimate goal was to improve the system so that each student has meaningful educational experiences that allow him or her to smoothly transition from secondary to postsecondary education and, eventually,

into the workforce. This multi-year project involved seven structured and multiple unstructured meetings (statewide and by career cluster area) with all relevant partners to identify existing relationships among secondary and postsecondary programs, identify gaps and priorities in each career field, and develop an alignment framework. This work was accomplished through face-to-face meetings with key stakeholders at both the secondary and postsecondary levels. See Appendix B.

6. An opportunity for **public comments** on the State plan was provided to allow stakeholders the opportunity to review the Perkins V State plan in its entirety along with the State Determined Levels of Performance proposed for the Perkins accountability indicators. The notice was published on the NDE's homepage and sent to all Perkins contacts. This opportunity, for both the State plan and State Determined Levels of Performance, was afforded for 60 days (December 9, 2019 – February 9, 2020). Social media and local news outlets were also utilized to solicit public input. All comments were considered in the development and revision of the Plan. See Appendix C.

#### Unstructured Input:

- WIOA State plan strategy meetings
- Blueprint Nebraska convening
- Governor's Economic Development Summit
- Nebraska Workforce Development Board meetings
- Nebraska CTE, Department of Economic Development, and Department of Labor planning meetings
- Nebraska Career Education conference sessions
- CTSO State Advisor retreat
- State CTE staff planning meetings
- Nebraska Partner Council Meetings
- Association for Career and Technical Education of Nebraska (ACTEN) meetings
- Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment pilot group meetings
- NE Manufacturing Council meetings
- Advance CTE Regional planning meeting
- Educational Service Unit (ESU) Perkins Cadre meetings
- Internal NDE cross-team and cross-division meetings
- One-on-one outreach

The Governor's Office was also consulted with respect to the State plan development through a one-on-one, face-to-face meeting as well as representatives from his staff attending stakeholder engagement meetings. A final draft of the plan for review and support was delivered to the Governor on Tuesday, March 3, 2020. A request was made to hear back by April 2, 2020.

#### Common themes which emerged from feedback received from required stakeholders included:

- Expansion of work-based learning opportunities
- Focus on developing programs of study in new and emerging occupations and areas of labor shortages
- Providing flexibility in program implementation and reinforcing local decision making, especially in rural and sparsely populated areas
- Ensuring equity and access for all students, especially those from special populations
- Creation of a systemic career development/guidance program beginning in elementary school and continuing through postsecondary education
- Improving engagement of business and industry in CTE programs
- Creating a plan to focus on the recruitment and retention of CTE instructors
- Expanding aligned CTE dual-credit opportunities

Along with other sources of input, this feedback was instrumental in prioritizing Nebraska CTE’s four-year activities, goals, and areas of emphasis and was utilized throughout the development of the State plan.

**Plan for ongoing consultation and feedback:**

Throughout the four-years of this State plan, stakeholder feedback and input will continue to be solicited. This will be accomplished primarily through the Nebraska CTE Advisory Council and the Nebraska Partner Council (see section B(1)(c) of this plan) and ongoing and intentional collaboration and communication with business and industry, CTE administrators, teachers/faculty, and staff. Additionally, at the time local recipients update their reVISION process (2022), the State CTE office will similarly revisit the elements within the State plan, including reaching back out to stakeholders for input and updates. This information, along with an internal review of the NDE strategic priorities and initiatives, will then be used to update and strengthen Nebraska CTE programming.

- 2. Consistent with section 122(e)(1) of Perkins V, each eligible agency must develop the portion of the State plan relating to the amount and uses of any funds proposed to be reserved for adult career and technical education, postsecondary career and technical education, and secondary career and technical education after consultation with the State agencies identified in section 122(e)(1)(A)-(C) of the Act. If a State agency, other than the eligible agency, finds a portion of the final State plan objectionable, the eligible agency must provide a copy of such objections and a description of its response in the final plan submitted to the Secretary. (Section 122(e)(2) of Perkins V).**

In accordance with section 122 (e)(1)(A)-(C) of the Act, State agencies were involved in the development of the State plan. If any State agency or other entity found a portion of the final State plan objectionable, they were able to file an objection with the NDE which would then respond to all objections. Submission information was posted on the Nebraska CTE’s State plan website<sup>4</sup>. Below was the timeline for objections and responses:

<b>Date</b>	<b>Action</b>
December 9, 2019	Perkins V multi-year State plan available on NDE website
December 9, 2019	Perkins V State Determined Levels of Performance available on NDE website for public review and comment
February 4 <sup>th</sup> and 20 <sup>th</sup> , 2020	Public Hearings on Perkins V State plan
February 20, 2020	Any objections to the content of the Perkins V State plan filed with NDE by this date
February 28, 2020	NDE responses are sent to objectors and any necessary changes made to the Plan

The NDE received no objections from another State agency or other entity on the State plan or a portion of the plan.

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.education.ne.gov/nce/perkins-v-state-plan/>

### **3. Describe opportunities for the public to comment in person and in writing on the State plan. (Section 122(d)(14) of Perkins V).**

There were four main ways the public had the opportunity to comment in person and in writing on the State plan. Namely:

1. Notice of the State plan being published and of the public hearings were emailed to local school districts, community colleges, State agency and community partners, and business and industry as well as publications of legal notices. Social media and local news outlets were also utilized to solicit feedback. During the live public hearing meetings, Nebraska CTE staff solicited feedback from attendees. See Appendix A.
2. The State plan was posted on the NDE website with a link to an electronic form to submit written feedback. The CTE State Director's email address was also clearly identified on the Nebraska CTE State plan website as an additional means to submit any written comments.
3. State Board of Education Listening Sessions – The Nebraska State Board of Education conducted Listening Sessions to facilitate a review of stakeholder engagement and public input on the Perkins V State plan and identify themes to guide the development of the plan. Public comments were encouraged. Board members held listening sessions in their respective region.
4. Stakeholder Engagement – over the course of the State plan's development, multiple opportunities were afforded to the public as well as engaged stakeholders for discussing the State's vision for CTE. These included local advisory committee meetings, WIOA state planning meetings, fall teacher workshops, and one-on-one meetings. See section A(1) of this Plan for a complete list of engagement activities.

Together, all feedback and written comments were considered and used in the development and refinement of Nebraska CTE's strategic priorities for 2020-2024 as well as the overarching alignment to the State's workforce development system. For instance, secondary/postsecondary alignment meetings helped identify areas of strength and those in need of strengthening relative to programs of study and student transitions. The many stakeholder meetings reinforced the need for systemic career development and work-based learning opportunities. And through the public input survey, work-based learning was identified above all other activities as the one that will make the most impact in Nebraska. This finding was true across stakeholder groups.

## **B. Program Administration and Implementation**

### **1. State's Vision for Education and Workforce Development**

- a. Provide a summary of State-supported workforce development activities (including education and training) in the State, including the degree to which the State's career and technical education programs and programs of study are aligned with and address the education and skill needs of the employers in the State identified by the State workforce development board. (Section 122(d)(1) of Perkins V).**

Nebraska's workforce development activities are primarily coordinated through the Nebraska

Department of Labor (NDOL). The NDOL serves as the governing body responsible for the oversight of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA) funds and programs. Regular coordination meetings are held between the NDOL and NDE staff to focus on partnership building as well as ensuring alignment and non-duplication among programs.

During the Perkins V State plan development, Nebraska's WIOA State Plan was also being updated. At the time of its last revision (covering 2016-2019), its primary goals, which were developed in partnership with Nebraska CTE, were to:

1. Enhance collaboration between plan partners and other key workforce development stakeholders to:
  - a. Ensure jobseekers and employers are provided coordinated and seamless services;
  - b. Reduce duplication of efforts; and
  - c. Maximize the resources among the state's workforce development system partners.
2. Increase workforce participation by:
  - a. Expanding access to assessment, education, training, and employment services and other workforce development activities; and
  - b. Preparing jobseekers, including individuals in Nebraska who are experiencing barriers to employment and other populations, for occupations that provide family-sustaining wages.
3. Enhance employer engagement through industry sector partnership initiatives, guided by workforce and industry data to support the identification of:
  - a. Future industry needs;
  - b. Opportunities for collaboration among industry sector employers; and
  - c. Potential workforce disruptions.
4. Promoting economic self-sufficiency among Nebraska's jobseekers and reducing welfare dependency by increasing postsecondary credential attainment, employment, retention, and earnings to:
  - a. Meet the skill requirements of employers, and
  - b. Enhance productivity and competitiveness of Nebraska.

Additionally, several strategies (state-supported workforce development activities) were developed in partnership to achieve the above goals related to CTE:

- Industry sector partnerships
- Public sector partnerships
- Career Pathways Advancement Project (CPAP)
- Promoting career pathways, including career readiness
- Focusing on high-demand industry sectors and occupations during the provision of career services
- Increasing co-enrollment of program participants and coordinating funding across partner programs
- Expanding work-based learning opportunities, including apprenticeships, and
- Implementing joint partner initiatives

Programming and priorities of Nebraska CTE strategically align with and address the education and skill needs of the employers in the State as identified by the State workforce development board. Nebraska CTE's strategic priorities within this State plan directly align to and address the State's workforce development efforts. Specifically: aligned CTE programs, systemic career development,

using data to inform programmatic decision making, and increasing work-based learning opportunities. All CTE programs of study, by design, are developed only for identified H3 (high-skill, high-wage, high-demand) occupations. The NDOL maintains <http://h3.ne.gov> to provide real-time H3 information for educators, learners, and jobseekers, as well as other state agencies.

Nebraska operationally defines H3 in alignment with the Nebraska Department of Labor and other workforce development efforts around the state (including those under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act). This includes using the term “high-demand” when referring to “in-demand” occupations and necessitating all three conditions be met.

Throughout Nebraska, high-skill, high-wage, and high-demand jobs are defined as:

- Occupations are high wage when at least half of their wage measures are at or above the regional average for all occupations.
- Occupations that require some college, no degree, or a higher level of educational attainment are high-skill, as well as occupations that require a high school diploma or equivalent plus long-term on-the-job training, an apprenticeship, or internship/residency.
- The number of annual openings, net change in employment, and growth rate determine whether an occupation is high-demand.

An occupation must be high-wage, high-skill and high-demand to be an H3 occupation.

The NDE will continue to promote and align programming with those occupations which will lead to a family-sustaining wage. This does not limit what programs may be offered locally, as there are other process in place and those to be updated to provide local flexibility, including the approval of a local program of study. See section B(2)(b) for more information on local programs of study.

**b. Describe the State's strategic vision and set of goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce (including special populations) and for meeting the skilled workforce needs of employers, including in existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations as identified by the State, and how the State's career and technical education programs will help to meet these goals. (Section 122(d)(2) of Perkins V).**

Nebraska has conducted a number of formal and informal studies across the state to identify its most pressing needs related to workforce development and education and identify short- and long-term goals. Two of the most recent studies were reviewed in detail to ensure Nebraska CTE's updated vision and strategic priorities for the Perkins V State plan directly align with and addressed these needs.

- **Nebraska's Next Economy: Analysis and Recommendations**<sup>5</sup> - this report published in 2016 highlighted the workforce challenges Nebraska faces, including: general shortage in all regions given the State's very low unemployment rate; acute shortage of IT and other STEM graduates in high pay, fast growing occupations; acute shortage of workers with qualifications in the building trades; failure to integrate underserved and non-English speaking populations into the pipeline; above average time to degree in the University

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<sup>5</sup> [http://opportunity.nebraska.gov/files/govsummit/Nebrasgas\\_Next\\_Economy\\_Analysis\\_and\\_Recommendations\\_web.pdf](http://opportunity.nebraska.gov/files/govsummit/Nebrasgas_Next_Economy_Analysis_and_Recommendations_web.pdf)

system; and loss of teachers through the credentialing pipeline.

- **Blueprint Nebraska**<sup>6</sup> - this report from the summer of 2019 highlighted the strong education system as a driver for Nebraska's labor market success, including being tied for #9 lowest unemployment rate in the country at 2.9%, one of the U.S.'s highest labor market participation rates at 69.6%, being #6 among state education systems, and #4 for high school graduation rates. The report set out a vision for 2030 which, relevant to Nebraska CTE, included powering the State's economy with people by scaling public-private partnerships that deliver internships, apprenticeships, and customized workforce solutions and revolutionizing all educational segments from early childhood to career.

Together with extensive cross-agency collaboration and in alignment with the NDE's Strategic Vision and Direction, a Framework for Nebraska CTE was developed. These efforts were meant to ensure a strong alignment between Nebraska's CTE system and other State workforce development efforts to address the education and skill needs of employers.

Nebraska's CTE Framework consists of the NDE's mission, a vision for CTE, guiding principles, and a set of 2020-2024 strategic priorities. This Framework was developed to help articulate the State's overall plan to prepare an educated and skilled workforce, with a specific focus on special populations and meeting the skill needs of employers. The components within this Framework are detailed below:

### **MISSION**

To lead and support the preparation of all Nebraskans for learning, earning, and living.

### **VISION**

Nebraska Career & Technical Education will deliver coordinated, relevant learning opportunities that engage each student in high-quality, rigorous education. These opportunities will be enhanced by partnerships with business and industry, workforce, and economic development leaders, allowing learners to turn their passion, talents, and strengths into successful careers and fulfilling lives.

### **GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

Primary to this vision are four guiding principles. These principles are recognized to provide focus to the work of Nebraska CTE and intended to result in outcomes aligned to the mission and vision. They are foundational to all efforts:

#### 1) **Equitable.**

Nebraska CTE champions all schools, colleges, and communities in developing and maintaining a culture that supports learning opportunities for all students, across all backgrounds and circumstances, so that they receive meaningful access to and opportunities for success in high-quality CTE programs and personalized career development. Educational equity allows learners to discover and explore their passions and make meaningful connections within the context of their postsecondary interests.

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<sup>6</sup> <https://blueprint-nebraska.org/>



2) **Relevant.**

Nebraska's CTE system is driven by future economic and workforce demands and created in partnership with the community and engaged stakeholders. All learning is facilitated by knowledgeable experts.

3) **Innovative.**

Nebraska CTE will be bold in its approach to creating new solutions for addressing educational and workforce challenges. Co-curricular and expanded learning experiences (e.g. work-based learning, entrepreneurship education, and career and technical student organizations) allow learners to apply, demonstrate, and refine their connected academic, technical, and career readiness skills.

4) **Coordinated.**

Nebraska CTE works alongside state and local agency, education, and community partners to be proactive, responsive, and adaptive to state and local workforce needs and increase the visibility and coherence of services provided.

## **STRATEGIC PRIORITIES**

In response to the Perkins V areas of emphasis and extensive stakeholder engagement, Nebraska CTE has established the following eight strategic priorities to realize its vision. The goal of these priorities is to build onto and catapult Nebraska's high-quality CTE system forward and respond to workforce needs, labor market information, and economic development priorities.

- **Aligned CTE Programs**

- The careers we prepare learners for are constantly emerging and changing. CTE programs afford learners the opportunity to explore career options, identify their interests, and develop the knowledge and skills that prepare them to transition to postsecondary education and into entry-level careers. These programs must be well aligned to the next opportunities learners will encounter and keep pace with the constant evolution found in the marketplace.
- Alignment between Nebraska's secondary and postsecondary CTE systems means that they are: (1) intentional and seamless, with no duplication of content; (2) accessible to each student, including those with interests in dual-credit and workplace experiences, and (3) incentivized for key economic and employer needs.

- **Systemic Career Development**

- Career development is the process by which individuals get to know their strengths and interests, learn how different jobs connect with those interests, explore careers in current labor markets, and build career planning and management skills to achieve their goals<sup>7</sup>. There are multiple pathways to rewarding careers, and the components to effective career development include self-awareness, career exploration, and career planning and management.
- Career development programs equip learners with the skills needed to take ownership in navigating their own career pathways. Career development is positive student development – if students see the relevance and meaning in school, it results in improved interest and academic performance. Students become more motivated, self-directed

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<sup>7</sup> National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability

learners when they understand the relationship between academics, education planning, and achieving their own career goals.

- Career development must be systemic – intentionally infused throughout all levels and areas of K-12 and postsecondary education. Every adult within an educational setting has a role in students’ career development progress.
- **Student Achievement**
  - Nebraska CTE provides an educational environment that can integrate core academic and technical preparation for contextualized learning that increases engagement and supports improved academic, technical, and career readiness achievement for all students. Nebraska CTE is responsible for analyzing student performance data to assess its effectiveness in achieving statewide progress in CTE, which is measured by core indicators of performance for both secondary and postsecondary education, and providing support for eliminating inequities in student access to and success in high-quality CTE programs of study. Student mastery of technical and career readiness skills are often demonstrated thorough CTSO competitive events.
  - The Nebraska State Board of Education approves content area standards for all content areas including CTE. Nebraska CTE drives rigorous content area standards implementation through programs of study.
- **Data Use**
  - Nebraska CTE will assist educators in making a more formal shift from collecting data to using data to ensure local CTE programs create success for students and employers.
  - The quality and effectiveness of Nebraska CTE is dependent on the ability to constantly evaluate and improve. Through the reVISION process, all local recipients are required to analyze disaggregated student performance data to identify performance disparities across student groups, detect root causes, and direct resources towards addressing both.
- **Work-Based Learning**
  - Work-based learning strategies connect learners with employers to prepare them for success in an ever-changing workplace. Work-based learning is a planned program of sustained and meaningful experiences related to the career interests of a learner that enable him or her to acquire knowledge and skills in a real or simulated work setting. It requires strong partnerships between schools, postsecondary institutions, and local employers.
  - Work-based learning is learning through work, not learning about work.
  - Nebraska will evaluate the quality of secondary CTE programs, in part, by the percentage of CTE concentrators who participate in high-quality work-based learning experiences. An effective means to monitor, evaluate, and promote these experiences is foundational.
- **Sustained Professional Development**
  - Effective Nebraska CTE programs require highly prepared instructors, administrators, staff, and support personnel who are supported by sustained, high-quality, and relevant professional learning opportunities. Nebraska CTE professional development includes effective training at both the pre- and in-service levels and the pursuit of advanced credentials and degrees. It additionally supports those who have utilized an alternative pathway to certification and encourages the recruitment of new and diverse CTE teachers, especially in shortage areas.

- **Instructor Recruitment and Retention**

- To deliver effective and relevant CTE programming, there must be an adequate supply of qualified instructors who are knowledgeable in pedagogy and technical areas as well as in academic competencies and workplace requirements essential to their CTE program areas. Innovative and bold strategies must be employed to recruit and retain CTE teachers, especially in those areas with teacher shortages.
- Retaining CTE educators requires deploying innovative strategies and may differ by school, institution, region, or content area.

- **Middle School CTE**

- Middle grades (5<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup>) CTE adds relevance to students' learning experiences by exposing them to real-world options and connecting academics to career and postsecondary possibilities. It equips students with transferrable skills needed as they transition to high school and beyond, and serves as a key dropout prevention strategy mitigating challenges such as disengagement and lack of preparation.
- Nebraska middle school CTE programming must be aligned with the overarching CTE system, encourage hands-on career exploration opportunities, and available to each student<sup>8</sup>.

Nebraska CTE programs will help meet these priorities through the implementation of high-quality state model programs of study, postsecondary programs, and locally developed programs of study. Additionally, dedicated Nebraska CTE staff within the NDE will leverage each of their roles (see Introduction) to ensure each student, especially those from special populations, has the opportunity to participate and find success in CTE programs and be prepared for further education and the workforce.

- c. **Describe the State's strategy for any joint planning, alignment, coordination, and leveraging of funds between the State's career and technical education programs and programs of study with the State's workforce development system, to achieve the strategic vision and goals described in section 122(d)(2) of Perkins V, including the core programs defined in section 3 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C. 3102) and the elements related to system alignment under section 102(b)(2)(B) of such Act (29 U.S.C. 3112(b)(2)(B)); and for programs carried out under this title with other Federal programs, which may include programs funded under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 and the Higher Education Act of 1965. (Section 122(d)(3) of Perkins V).**

As a required WIOA partner, Nebraska CTE is actively engaged in the State's workforce development efforts. One of the primary mechanisms used for this joint planning, alignment, and coordination of CTE programs and the State's workforce development system to achieve the vision and goals described in section 122(d)(2) of Perkins V is through the Nebraska Partner Council. The Nebraska Partner Council is a council of state agencies and statewide programs established voluntarily in order to better serve the citizens of Nebraska and establish a public sector partnership. It is used as a strategy that provides a formal structure of communication which works to improve the workforce

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<sup>8</sup> Advance CTE: <http://careertech.org>

system partner program coordination and implementation, planning processes, and leveraging of resources. The Partner Council meets quarterly and identifies statewide workforce system development initiatives that create and enhance solutions for employers and job seekers at regional and local levels.

The Partner Council is organized for the purpose of convening and strengthening cross-agency, state-level partnerships that focus on:

- Increasing access to and opportunities for the individuals served to receive the employment, education, training, and support services necessary to succeed in the labor market;
- Enhancing Nebraska’s workforce system by increasing flexibility to tailor services to meet employer and job-seeker needs through the implementation of strategies outlined in the WIOA State plan, which includes, but is not limited to:
  - Continuous improvement of Nebraska’s workforce system;
  - Meeting the needs of Nebraska’s employers;
  - Coordination of funding streams;
  - Targeted distribution of available funding streams;
  - Coordination with planning regions and local workforce development areas designed in accordance with the WIOA in order to further strengthen workforce system alignment and coordination across Nebraska;
  - Working closely with each planning region to assess and refine the delivery of services;
  - Promoting knowledge transfer across WIOA partner programs to help facilitate referrals;
  - Targeted outreach to disadvantaged populations; and
  - Continued development and dissemination of online resources
- Supporting the alignment of the workforce, education, and economic development systems in support of a comprehensive, accessible, and high-quality workforce development system at state, regional, and local levels; and
- Improving the system’s quality and labor-market relevance.

The Partner Council works collaboratively to address some of Nebraska’s most challenging workforce issues which require regular communication and planning among workforce system partner programs, make recommendations to the Nebraska Workforce Development Board, as requested, in relation to the goals and strategies set forth in the WIOA State plan, and communicate to its member agencies and member programs timely and valuable information gathered from the NDOL Office of Labor Market Information and the Nebraska Workforce Development Board.

Currently, the partners that make up the Nebraska Partner Council include:

- Job Corps
- Nebraska Community College Association
- Nebraska Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired
- Nebraska Department of Economic Development
- Nebraska Department of Education, including
  - Adult Education
  - Career and Technical Education
  - Nebraska Vocational Rehabilitation
- Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services, including
  - Community Services Block Grant Program
  - Senior Community Services Employment Program

- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program
- Nebraska Department of Labor, including:
  - Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Programs
  - Jobs for Veterans State Grants Program
  - Office of Labor Market Information
  - Trade Adjustment Assistance Program
  - Unemployment Insurance Program
  - Wagner-Peyser Employment Services Program
- Nebraska Indian Center
- Proteus – Nebraska Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker Program

During the development of the Perkins V State plan, the State Director for Nebraska CTE served as Chair of the Nebraska Partner Council.

Other strong partnerships already established and those to be established will ensure effective joint planning, alignment, coordination, and leveraging of funds between programs. As identified in Nebraska’s Vision for CTE, alignment and coordination are among its four guiding principles.

Within the NDE, there are three Divisions which make up all related Offices. This organization facilitates and encourages collaboration within and between Offices. Currently, the Student and Client Success and Services Division encompasses the Offices of Career, Technical, and Adult Education, Special Education, Vocational Rehabilitation, and ESSA/Federal Programs. Administrators and staff from these Offices meet monthly at a minimum, allowing for robust discussions on programmatic alignment between Perkins, the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the Higher Education Act (HEA), and Adult Education.

Sharing resources and aligning systems (i.e. career pathways, career advisement, transition services) have all been areas of focus. Similarly, work-based learning is an area where Nebraska CTE works closely with Special Education and Vocational Rehabilitation by relying on each other’s areas of expertise to develop aligned and mutually-supportive programs and policies. Throughout the Perkins V State plan development process, these regular interactions were instrumental in ensuring a strong focus on equitable services, reviewing any areas where services may be duplicated, and innovative ways to partner to achieve the NDE’s strategic priorities and goals.

As the Higher Education Act continues to undergo reauthorization, Nebraska CTE will maintain planning conversations with postsecondary leadership.

**d. Describe how the eligible agency will use State leadership funds made available under section 112(a) (2) of Perkins V for each of the purposes under section 124(a) of the Act. See Text Box 2 for the required uses of State leadership funds under section 124(a) of Perkins V. (Section 122(d)(7) of Perkins V)**

Nebraska CTE, in preparation for Perkins V, conducted several simultaneous analyses to identify the strategic priorities for Nebraska’s CTE system. Achieving these eight priorities (as described within Nebraska CTE’s Framework) will guide the use of the State’s leadership funds and be used to support both secondary and postsecondary programs.

Below is a description of how Nebraska will use these funds and their alignment to both the required uses of State leadership funds under section 124(a) of Perkins V and the identified strategic priorities.

Strategic Priority	Activities	Required Use of Funds
<b>Aligned CTE Programs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing state model programs of study and implementation supports that span secondary and postsecondary</li> <li>• Approving locally developed programs of study that meet the requirements established in section 122(d)(4)(B) and identified as a need through the reVISION process</li> <li>• Supporting consultation and coordination with other State agencies for the adoption and integration of recognized postsecondary credentials and work-based learning into programs of study</li> <li>• Support for the integration of employability skills into CTE programs and programs of study</li> <li>• Support for career and technical student organizations (CTSOs), especially with respect to efforts to increase the participation of students in non-traditional fields and who are members of special populations</li> <li>• Integrating and aligning programs of study with career pathways</li> <li>• Support for career academies to implement a postsecondary education and workforce-ready curriculum at the secondary education level that integrates rigorous academic, technical, and employability content through CTE programs of study</li> <li>• Developing strategies to effectively contextualize core academic content to CTE programs of study</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Improve CTE               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Preparation for non-traditional fields in current and emerging professions, programs for special populations, and other activities that expose students, including special populations, to high-wage, high-skill, and high-demand occupations</li> <li>B. Individuals in State institutions, including juvenile justice facilities, and educational institutions that serve individuals with disabilities</li> </ol> </li> </ol>
<b>Systemic Career Development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improving career guidance and academic counseling programs at the secondary and postsecondary levels that assist students in making informed academic and CTE decisions, including academic and financial aid counseling</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Improve CTE               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Preparation for non-traditional fields in current and emerging professions,</li> </ol> </li> </ol>

Strategic Priority	Activities	Required Use of Funds
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support for CTE programs for adults and out-of-school youth</li> </ul>	<p>programs for special populations, and other activities that expose students, including special populations, to high-wage, high-skill, and high-demand occupations</p> <p>B. Individuals in State institutions, including juvenile justice facilities, and educational institutions that serve individuals with disabilities</p> <p>D. Technical assistance for eligible recipients</p>
<b>Student Achievement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support for eliminating inequities in student access to high-quality CTE programs and effective instructors at the secondary and postsecondary levels</li> <li>Improving the support for the preparation for non-traditional fields in current and emerging professions, programs for special populations, and other activities that expose students, including special populations, to high-skill, high-wage, and high-demand occupations,</li> <li>Awarding incentive grants to eligible recipients for exemplary performance</li> <li>Support programs and activities that increase access, student engagement, and success in STEM fields, support for integrating arts and design skills, and support for hands-on learning, especially for those students who are members of groups underrepresented in such subject fields</li> </ul>	<p>1. Improve CTE</p> <p>A. Preparation for non-traditional fields in current and emerging professions, programs for special populations, and other activities that expose students, including special populations, to high-wage, high-skill, and high-demand occupations</p> <p>B. Individuals in State institutions, including juvenile justice facilities, and educational institutions that serve individuals with disabilities</p>

Strategic Priority	Activities	Required Use of Funds
<b>Data Use</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reporting on the effectiveness of Nebraska’s CTE programs in achieving its statewide strategic priorities and state determined levels of performance,</li> <li>Reducing disparities or performance gaps among CTE students and programs,</li> <li>Developing valid and reliable assessments of competencies and technical skills and enhancing data systems to collect and analyze data on secondary and postsecondary academic and employment outcomes</li> <li>Increasing data collection associated with recognized postsecondary credentials, work-based learning and employment outcomes</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Improve CTE</li> <li>2. Report on the effectiveness of such use of funds in achieving the goals (section 122(d)(2)) and the SDLP (section 113(b)(3)(A)) and reducing disparities or performance gaps(section 113(b)(3)(C)(ii)(II))</li> </ol>
<b>Work-based Learning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establishing statewide partnerships among local educational agencies, institutions of higher education, adult education providers, Indian Tribes and Tribal organizations, employers, and parents to facilitate work-based learning opportunities,</li> <li>Partnering with qualified intermediaries to improve training, the development of public-private partnerships, systems development, capacity-building, and scalability of the delivery of high-quality CTE, including work-based learning</li> <li>Supporting the establishment and expansion of work-based learning opportunities that are aligned to CTE programs and programs of study</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Improve CTE</li> <li>C. Recruiting, preparing, or retaining CTE teachers, faculty, specialized instructional support personnel, or paraprofessionals, such as preservice, professional development, or leadership development programs</li> </ol>
<b>Sustained, Rigorous Professional Development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Providing technical assistance to recipients for program review and to support the elimination of inequities in student access to and success in high-quality programs and effective instructors and instructional support personnel,</li> <li>Providing high-quality comprehensive professional development to teachers, faculty, specialized instructional support personnel, and paraprofessionals providing CTE instruction, support services, and specialized instructional support services that is, to the extent</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Improve CTE</li> <li>C. Recruiting, preparing, or retaining CTE teachers, faculty, specialized instructional support personnel, or paraprofessionals, such as preservice, professional development, or leadership</li> </ol>



Strategic Priority	Activities	Required Use of Funds
	<p>practical, grounded in evidence-based research and is coordinated and aligned with other professional development activities carried out by Nebraska, including multi-tiered systems of support and positive behavioral interventions and support,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase the ability of teachers, faculty, specialized instructional support personnel, and paraprofessionals providing CTE instruction to stay current with industry standards and earn industry-recognized credentials or licenses</li> <li>• Creating, evaluating, and supporting competency-based curricula</li> <li>• Making all forms of instructional content widely available, including the use of open educational resources</li> </ul>	<p>development programs</p> <p>D. Technical assistance for eligible recipients</p>
<b>Instructor Recruitment and Retention</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing and implementing programs and activities that help recruit, prepare, and retain CTE teachers, faculty, specialized instructional support personnel, or paraprofessionals</li> </ul>	<p>1. Improve CTE</p> <p>C. Recruiting, preparing, or retaining CTE teachers, faculty, specialized instructional support personnel, or paraprofessionals, such as preservice, professional development, or leadership development programs</p>
<b>Middle School CTE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporting the use of CTE programs and programs of study aligned with state, regional, or local high-wage, high-skill, and high-demand industry sectors or occupations</li> <li>• Improving career guidance and academic counseling programs that assist students in making informed academic and CTE decisions, including academic and financial aid counseling</li> </ul>	<p>1. Improve CTE</p> <p>A. Preparation for non-traditional fields in current and emerging professions, programs for special populations, and other activities that expose students,</p>

Strategic Priority	Activities	Required Use of Funds
		<p>including special populations, to high-wage, high-skill, and high-demand occupations</p> <p>B. Individuals in State institutions, including juvenile justice facilities, and educational institutions that serve individuals with disabilities</p> <p>D. Technical assistance for eligible recipients</p>

In practice, funds may be used and applied through multiple strategic priorities and the general leadership of the Nebraska CTE staff.

**2. Implementing CTE Programs and Programs of Study**

- a. Describe the career and technical education programs or programs of study that will be supported, developed, or improved at the State level, including descriptions of the programs of study to be developed at the State level and made available for adoption by eligible recipients. (Section 122(d)(4)(A) of Perkins V)**

Secondary:

Nebraska currently supports 65 secondary state model programs of study inclusive of all 16 nationally recognized career clusters. Each program of study includes an introductory, intermediate, and capstone course and collectively are organized into six career fields:

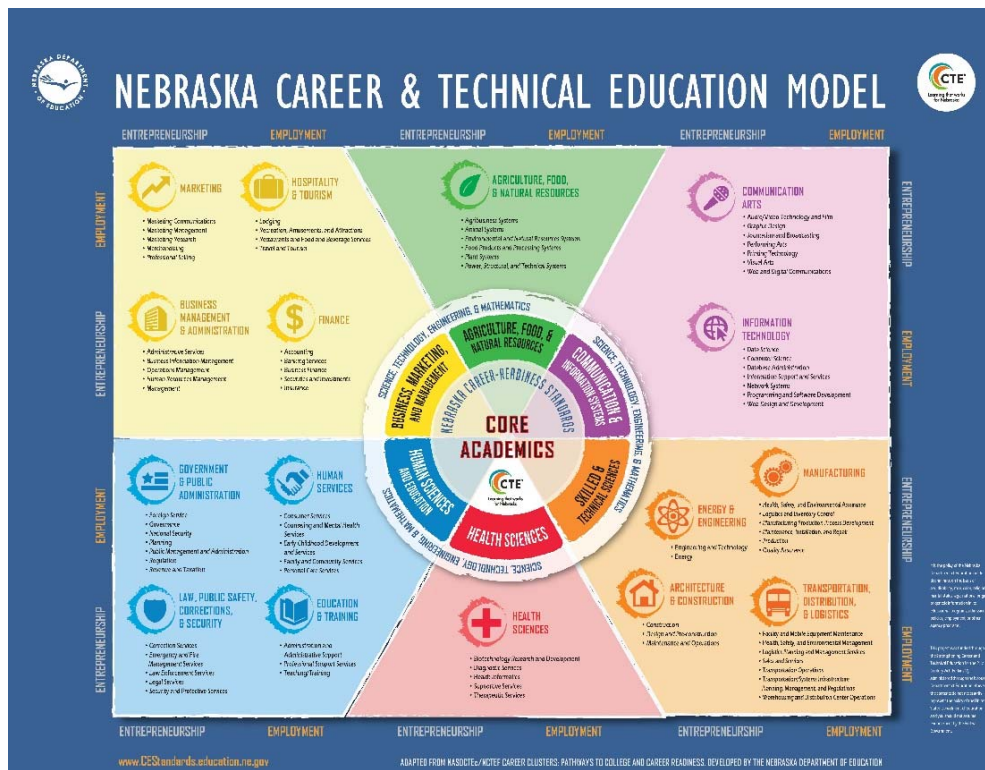
1. Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources
2. Business, Marketing, and Management
3. Communication and Information Systems
4. Health Sciences
5. Human Sciences and Education
6. Skilled and Technical Sciences

State model programs of study are developed to:

- assist secondary schools in creating meaningful sequences of courses that adequately prepare individuals for seamless transitions to postsecondary education and careers eliminating duplication of coursework;

- assist students in identifying appropriate courses for high school and postsecondary education that lead to their chosen career;
- encourage collaboration between secondary and postsecondary education through curriculum alignment;
- offer opportunities for high-quality workplace experiences aligned to students' career interests;
- promote the advancement of early postsecondary opportunities (including dual-credit courses) for all students; and
- support postsecondary education options for students to further prepare them for successful transitions to their future careers.

These programs of study are organized around Nebraska's CTE Model and can be found at: <http://cestandards.education.ne.gov>.



Nebraska CTE Model

When developed, these **state model programs of study are:** coordinated, nonduplicative sequences of academic and technical content at the secondary and postsecondary levels that incorporate challenging State academic standards, address both academic and technical knowledge and skills, including Nebraska's Career Readiness Skills, are aligned with the needs of industries in Nebraska's economy, progress in specificity, have multiple entry and exit points that incorporate credentialing, and culminate in the attainment of a recognized postsecondary credential.

These state model programs of study assure that students across Nebraska have an equitable opportunity to participate in high-quality programming, regardless of where their district is located or what school they attend.

Each secondary local recipient must adopt and offer at least one state model program of study to be eligible for Perkins V funds.

Nebraska CTE will continue to work with postsecondary education leaders and other industry stakeholders to more clearly define a credential of value (at both the secondary and postsecondary level). This work will ensure alignment between the needs of business and industry and education and be instrumental in the development of state model programs of study.

### **Program of Study Development**

Nebraska Revised Statute 79-760.01 requires the Nebraska State Board of Education to “adopt measurable academic content standards for at least the grade levels required for statewide assessment.” Those standards cover the subject areas of reading, writing, mathematics, science, and social studies. The State Board of Education develops a plan to review and update standards for those subject areas every seven years. The NDE Standards Revision Timeline for All Content Areas can be found in Appendix D. The NDE content Area Standards Reference Guide can be found at: [https://www.education.ne.gov/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/Nebraska-Standards-Reference-Guide\\_Final.pdf](https://www.education.ne.gov/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/Nebraska-Standards-Reference-Guide_Final.pdf).

Moving beyond the minimum required by statute, the NDE has developed content area standards for fine arts, physical education, health education, and world languages, as well as course-based and program of study standards for CTE. These CTE standards are organized into a sequence of courses representing a state model program of study. Although not required by law, these content area standards provide a framework for quality teaching and learning for all content areas and districts are encouraged to adopt these state-approved content standards. CTE state model programs of study and course-based standards are revised on a five-year cycle to remain responsive to the rapid advances and needs of business and industry, help students explore a variety of postsecondary options and corresponding entrance requirements to help identify their next steps, and to align to changes in postsecondary programs.

During the CTE content area standards revision process, state model programs of study are developed. These programs of study are the result of extensive collaboration and cooperation with business and industry and Nebraska postsecondary institutions. The writing teams are comprised of CTE teachers, core academic teachers, and postsecondary instructors. Their task is to utilize their expertise and input from business and industry to identify which areas programs are needed statewide, and the things students should know and be able to do as a result of completing each program of study.

The final deliverable of the standards development process is a policy document approved by the State Board of Education. These standards create a framework for teaching and learning in CTE, and reflect the uniqueness of the specific content area. Additionally, they fit within the overall expectations for all content area standards and all schools in Nebraska.

Each state model program of study is published and available on the Nebraska CTE standards website: <http://cestandards.education.ne.gov/>. By career field and career cluster, each program of study is displayed with links to the related course-based standards. Additionally, information pertaining to appropriate teaching endorsements, middle school CTE, and supplemental resources are available on this site.

### Areas of Focus

Nebraska will continue to refine and update state model programs of study to ensure alignment with Nebraska’s workforce needs and economic development priorities. There will be an intentional focus on developing programs of study that are cross-curricular, across other CTE content areas and core academic areas. Similarly, an entrepreneurship focus will be considered within most programs.

Moreover, key shifts in rigor and quality will be embedded into the program of study standards revision process as state model programs of study are revised and created.

- Five Phases of Program of Study Development**
1. Business and industry community input meetings
  2. Writing teams development of programs of study and course-based standards
  3. Public input survey with proposed standards distributed and results analyzed
  4. Standards and programs of study edited based on public input survey results
  5. Program of study standards presented to the Nebraska State Board of Education for approval

<b>Key Shifts</b>	
<b>Moving From...</b>	<b>Moving Towards...</b>
Isolated content and experiences	Interdisciplinary approaches to teaching and learning
Grades and test focused	Learning focused
Limited guidance from NDE related to instructional material selection	Leadership/support from NDE related to instructional material selection
“Having” knowledge and skills	“Applying” knowledge and skills
Testing signals importance of content and content areas	Well-rounded education for all

A portion of leadership funds, in accordance with Section 112 (a)(2) to support the development and implementation of programs of study, will also be used to support the systematic implementation of CTE content area standards.

### Program of Study Implementation

Two key categories of program of study implementation work identified as central to achieving Nebraska’s CTE’s strategic priorities are high-quality, standards-aligned instructional materials and professional learning. Nebraska will develop resources, strategies, and policies in these areas as they

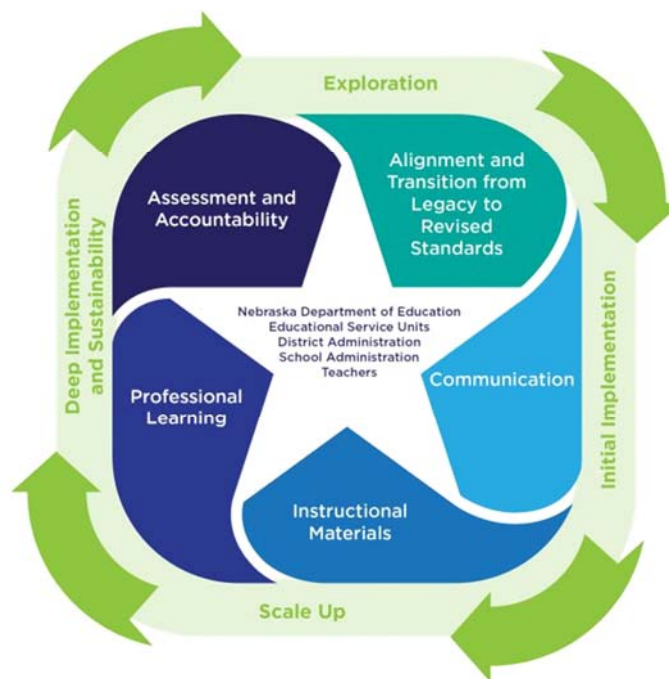
are key to implementing programs of study with fidelity and narrowing equity gaps across subpopulations.

Based on implementation science, Nebraska has created a framework for standards implementation that can be contextualized for CTE use. This framework describes four stages of standards implementation – exploration, initial implementation, scale-up, and deep implementation and sustainability. This work is completed across five categories - alignment and transition, assessment and accountability, professional learning, instructional resources, and communication. The NDE, educational service units, district/administration, school/administration, and teachers all have roles in this work to detect the strength of activities related to implementation.

Using this framework, the systematic approach to implementing CTE programs of study and their related standards will be strengthened.



## Nebraska Content Area Standards Implementation Framework



Postsecondary:

Community colleges have the flexibility to develop programs independently. These programs will be reviewed and approved by the State with a focus on both academic and CTE courses required to reach the appropriate credential, certificate, or degree as well as opportunities to articulate to four-year colleges and universities.

Nebraska’s community colleges are a part of the Nebraska Community College System, created by the Nebraska legislature in 1971, which brought together all junior colleges, state vocational/technical

colleges, and area technical schools. There are currently six community college areas in the State, each governed by a locally-elected board.

The role and mission priorities for these colleges include, along with foundational education, 1) applied technology and occupational education, 2) transfer education, 3) public service, and 4) applied research. Their aim is to be the most accessible postsecondary educational system in the State, offering affordable, high-quality education. In addition, the colleges were envisioned to be the link between business and industry and a highly-skilled workforce.

Community colleges are represented by the Nebraska Community College Association, which: 1) prepares a system strategic plan, 2) coordinates the budget request for the biennium, 3) facilitates program-needs assessment and articulation, 4) recommends and facilitates the appointment of representatives to committees, boards, commissions, task forces, and any other state-level bodies requesting or requiring participation from the community college system, and 5) facilitates responses to data and information requests for the system.

Nebraska also has a strong four-year postsecondary system. The Nebraska's Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education (CCPE), created in 1990, has direct responsibilities for:

- developing and implementing a comprehensive statewide plan to guide Nebraska's higher education system,
- approving or disapproving programs based on specific criteria,
- assembling and analyzing statewide data and publishing reports tied to the State's higher education goals,
- protecting Nebraska students who attend for-profit institutions in the state by administering the Guaranty Recovery Cash Fund, and
- administering State appropriations to Nebraska's six community colleges.

Under Perkins V, CTE postsecondary program approval will be further developed in collaboration with Nebraska's CCPE, as they are already the entity approving and disapproving academic programs. This collaborative approach will ensure alignment with secondary programs and workforce demands, the promotion of academic achievement and technical skill attainment, expanded access to CTE for special populations, and the inclusion of employability skills into programs without adding a tremendous new burden to local postsecondary Perkins recipients.

Specifically, Nebraska CTE will work with the CCPE to strengthen the role of postsecondary CTE program approval through their existing program approval process to ensure Perkins criteria are considered and that communication and approval decisions are shared. This process will be developed within the first two years of implementing this Plan and be based on the systems alignment framework as seen in Appendix B.

- b. Describe the process and criteria to be used for approving locally developed programs of study or career pathways, including how such programs address State workforce development and education needs and the criteria to assess the extent to which the local application under section 132 will—**
  - i. promote continuous improvement in academic achievement and technical skill attainment;**
  - ii. expand access to career and technical education for special populations; and**

**iii. support the inclusion of employability skills in programs of study and career pathways. (Section 122(d)(4)(B) of Perkins V)**

Nebraska develops and approves a set of secondary state model programs of study responsive to statewide workforce and economic needs. These programs of study are informed by industry professionals and created by educators to ensure the content covered is sequenced appropriately and prepares students for entry into postsecondary education and careers. Programs of study at the postsecondary level will be jointly approved by the CCPE and Nebraska CTE. Each local eligible recipient at the secondary level must offer at least one state model program of study to be eligible for Perkins V funds.

**Local Development**

If an eligible secondary grant recipient identifies a workforce need in their local region not addressed in a state model program of study, they may submit a request to have a locally developed program of study approved. The need for a local program of study must be justified by:

- describing how it will meet local and/or regional workforce needs, including economic and workforce data that justifies the local program of study, and
- how it aligns to the state's economic priorities that are not currently addressed in any existing state model program of study. Alterations or modifications to existing state model programs of study are not permitted. Results from the reVISION process will be instrumental in justifying the need for a local program of study.

The required components of a local program of study include: (1) a credit-bearing introductory course, and (2) a minimum of two credit-bearing CTE courses to develop the appropriate knowledge and skills in preparation for employment or entrepreneurship.

Additionally, applicants must submit information to the NDE that ensures the proposed local program of study meets certain quality criteria and is at the same level of rigor as existing state model programs of study. Applicants must demonstrate how the new program of study:

- meets local and/or regional workforce demands and economic priorities that are not currently addressed in any existing state model programs of study,
- relates to high-wage, high-skill, and high-demand occupational preparation and Nebraska's economic priorities,
  - The Nebraska Departments of Education, Labor, and Economic Development developed the following website: <http://h3.ne.gov/H3/> to provide information on Nebraska's High-Wage, High-Skill, and High-Demand occupations
- aligns to the efforts of appropriate Nebraska sector partnerships and other statewide workforce development efforts, and
- aligns with recommended academic and technical courses

**Approval**

Each locally developed program of study submitted for approval is reviewed by Nebraska CTE staff for its rigorous course standards and progressive, sequenced courses, secondary and postsecondary alignment, labor market demand and industry involvement, high-quality instruction, and inclusion of workplace learning experiences. Additionally, how the program of study promotes continuous



improvement in academic achievement and technical skill attainment, expands access to CTE for special populations, and how it supports the inclusion of Nebraska’s Career Readiness Skills.

To ensure the approved local program of study meets the quality indicators above and to determine how successful the program was in accomplishing its goals, an annual report must be submitted to the NDE. This report will outline and demonstrate the local recipient’s continuous improvement efforts in the academic achievement and technical skill attainment of its students, support for the inclusion of Nebraska’s Career Readiness Standards within the local program of study, activities and strategies that expand access to CTE programs so that each learners, including those from special populations, is served equitably, and uses the latest information and labor market data to maintain relevance.

The elements within secondary state model programs of study implemented locally along with approved local programs of study will be reviewed by Nebraska CTE staff annually. This will encompass desk audits of annual activities and an assessment of the extent to which the size, scope, and quality Essential Components as described in section B(2)(h) of this plan are implemented. On a rotation and intermittently, programs will also have on-site monitoring visits reviewing the same criteria.

Postsecondary institutions have the flexibility to develop programs independently. These programs will be reviewed and approved jointly by the CCPE and Nebraska CTE with a focus on both academic and CTE courses required to reach the appropriate credential, certificate, or degree as well as opportunities to articulate to four-year colleges and universities. Only programs approved through this process will be eligible for Perkins funds. Programs will be reviewed according to the schedule established by the CCPE and local community college.

**c. Describe how the eligible agency will -**

- i. Make information on approved programs of study and career pathways (including career exploration, work-based learning opportunities, early college high schools, and dual or concurrent enrollment program opportunities) and guidance and advisement resources, available to students (and parents, as appropriate), representatives of secondary and postsecondary education, and special populations, and to the extent practicable, provide that information and those resources in a language students, parents, and educators can understand;**

The NDE will make information readily accessible on state model programs of study and Nebraska CTE programs through the following strategies:

1. The public Nebraska Career and Technical Education webpage (<https://www.education.ne.gov/nce/>) will serve as the main hub for all Nebraska CTE information including:
  - Career Academies
  - Career Development (self-awareness, career exploration, planning & management)
  - Career Fields and Clusters (Nebraska CTE Model)
  - Career & Technical Student Organizations (CTSOs)
  - Data and Research

- Entrepreneurship Education
- Nebraska Career Readiness Standards
- Nontraditional CTE Students
- Perkins Management and Administration
- Professional Development Opportunities
- School Counseling
- Special Populations
- State Model Programs of Study
- Workplace Experiences (awareness, exploration, work-based learning)

This site is currently accessible in 14 languages including English, Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Norwegian, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, and Vietnamese and is in compliance with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 for website accessibility.

2. The annual Nebraska Career Education Conference where presentations will be conducted on state model programs of study, standards implementation, meeting the needs of special populations, closing equity and access gaps, technical skill development, career development, and implementing workplace experiences. Topical sessions and collaboration amongst professional teacher organizations and CTSOs also take place.
3. Nebraska's Open Educational Resources (OER) Hub is a collaboration between the Educational Service Unit Coordinating Council (ESUCC) and the NDE. This hub (<https://www.oercommons.org/hubs/nebraska>) allows for the creation and curation of quality OER that are aligned to Nebraska content area standards. These resources are public and provide teachers, including CTE teachers, with a digital course and content repository that can be accessed at any time to help inform instructional decisions.
4. School Counseling staff will provide professional development through Nebraska School Counselor Academies and other on-going professional development activities. Staff will also utilize the NDE's Career Development Toolkit (<https://www.education.ne.gov/nce/careerdevelopment/>) to provide a user-friendly, one-stop location for program planning, implementation of the Nebraska Career Development Model, Career Readiness Standards, family engagement, transitions for students, lesson plans and activities, and other relevant resources. This Toolkit is designed for use by state and local CTE, Special Education, and High Ability Learner staff. It is also designed for use by Nebraska Vocational Rehabilitation. The purpose of the website is to promote partnerships with business, industries, communities, and families to achieve systemic career development for all students.
5. Nebraska CTE staff will work with CTE teacher educators to infuse instruction on state model programs of study into their pre-service education programs for future CTE teachers, which includes the annual Teacher Educator Forum. See section B(4)(a) for more information.
6. Nebraska CTE career field specialists and cross-field specialists (staff) will work with teachers to infuse instruction on state model programs of study, standards implementation, technical skills development, and current information related to the Perkins V four-year State plan during the annual Fall Career Field Professional Development Workshops and Cross-Field Professional Development Workshops.

7. The Nebraska Workplace Experiences website (<https://www.education.ne.gov/workplace-experiences/>) will be maintained and updated with information and resources on implementation of the Nebraska Workplace Experiences Continuum. This site provides specific information on each form of a workplace experience in the three phases of the Continuum (Awareness, Exploration, Work-Based Learning). This site also provides sample forms (i.e. Adobe fillable format) that can be accessed and used by local educational agencies (school districts). Additional resources and publications are also provided on this site to enhance the skills and knowledge of local workplace experiences coordinators, businesses, teachers, school counselors, and administrators.
8. The Career Field Course Standards and Programs of Study website (<http://cestandards.education.ne.gov/>) provides state model programs of study and course-based standards for each of Nebraska's six career fields (Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources; Business, Marketing, and Management; Communication and Information Systems; Health Sciences, Human Sciences and Education/Family and Consumer Sciences; and Skilled and Technical Sciences). This website also provides relevant information and resources on CTE course codes, dual/concurrent credit, a CTE course code to cluster crosswalk, middle level courses, middle school career development, high school career development, the Nebraska Standards for Career Ready Practice, Career Cluster Resources, and the National Entrepreneurship Education standards.
9. Schools will be encouraged to include their locally implemented state model programs of study into their course catalogs and school counseling/teacher advisement systems.
10. Nebraska CTE will continue to develop high-quality, standards-aligned instructional resources and materials that can be used to help inform students and parents on Nebraska CTE, programs of study, career development, workforce demands, and, postsecondary options.

Throughout the duration of the plan, additional resources specifically focusing on postsecondary CTE (including career advising, work-based learning, articulated credit, credentials, and instructor recruitment and retention) will be developed.

**ii. facilitate collaboration among eligible recipients in the development and coordination of career and technical education programs and programs of study and career pathways that include multiple entry and exit points;**

There are a number of ways Nebraska will facilitate collaboration among eligible recipients in the development and coordination of CTE programs.

1. Through the reVISION process, eligible recipients and education partners (including parents and students) will be strategically brought together for collaboration and coordination. Nebraska CTE staff will facilitate these meetings which will include an analysis of local CTE assessment findings and labor market information.
2. Through the development of state model programs of study, eligible recipients are not only

involved in the development of CTE programs and programs of study, but work together to coordinate implementation in the most effective and efficient way to meet the needs of all students, including the unique needs of those students from special populations. Both secondary and postsecondary recipients are involved in this process, which will ensure multiple entry and exit points are considered in the program development process.

3. In addition to collaborating with both the Nebraska Community College Association and the CCPE, the NDE will engage Nebraska's Educational Service Units (ESU) as key partners in the implementation of high-quality CTE across the state. The Nebraska State Legislature created the Educational Services Units of Nebraska in 1965 to provide supplementary services to local school districts upon request. There are currently 17 ESUs in Nebraska providing some core services (i.e. staff development, technology, and instructional materials) to all public school districts in the State. The ESUs are coordinated by the ESU Coordinating Council (ESUCC), which establishes strategic priorities, provides professional development, participates in joint planning with the NDE, and engages in statewide projects and coordination.

A statewide CTE Cadre has been formed by the ESUs to bring together the ESU Perkins consortia liaisons to collaborate with the NDE and each other in the implementation of Nebraska Perkins V State plan. The NDE will engage the ESUs and the members of this Cadre to collaborate with both secondary and postsecondary partners as standards for programs of study and articulation are reviewed and updated.

4. To better target the needs of industry, including small and medium-sized enterprise, and to ensure that Perkins funds are focused on getting the most positive outcomes for all stakeholders, Nebraska will explore regional-focused planning for CTE. Secondary and postsecondary regional representatives would include workforce partners, ESUs, the Community College Association, and the CCPE in their planning groups to better align with current and emerging needs. Additional flexibility related to Nebraska's consortia structure will aid in this emphasis on collaboration among eligible recipients and meeting the needs of all students.
5. Nebraska will continue to support existing state organizations, such as the Association for Career and Technical Education of Nebraska (ACTEN), and convenings, such as the annual Nebraska Career Education and Administrators' Days conferences to encourage and facilitate enhanced collaboration and coordination among recipients.

**iii. use State, regional, or local labor market data to determine alignment of eligible recipients' programs of study to the needs of the State, regional, or local economy, including in-demand industry sectors and occupations identified by the State board, and to align career and technical education with such needs, as appropriate;**

Nebraska recognizes that up-to-date labor market information about occupations, training requirements, and wages is crucial in order to make important life decisions about career goals. The NDOL collects and disseminates information about employment levels and trends, wages and earnings, estimates of labor availability, industrial and occupational projections, business staffing patterns, career planning information, and labor force demographics in the State. The data are used to

describe a local area's economic picture which impacts social, fiscal, technological, and economic policies, employer hiring, and other business decisions, allocation of funds by policy makers, individual career choices, and educational programs.

To provide Nebraska CTE and all Nebraskans with current, valid, and reliable LMI and career information, the following resources are currently available across the state:

1. The H3 website offers quick access to Nebraska's "hot jobs." This easy-to-understand market information is updated weekly (<http://h3.ne.gov/>).
2. The NDOL website or app provides current job openings and labor market analysis facts, employment, wages, and projections (<https://neworks.nebraska.gov/>).
3. Nebraska Career Connections is an online comprehensive career information system which provides labor market information for Nebraska and nationwide. Additionally, it includes valuable tools for all phases of career awareness, exploration, planning, and management (<http://www.nebraskacareerconnections.org/>).

See section B(1)(a) of this Plan for additional information about Nebraska's operational definition for H3 occupations.

**iv. ensure equal access to approved career and technical education programs of study and activities assisted under this Act for special populations;**

Primary to Nebraska CTE's Framework are four guiding principles – the first of which is Equitable. Nebraska CTE champions all schools, colleges, and communities in developing and maintaining a culture that supports learning opportunities for all students, across all backgrounds and circumstances, so that they receive meaningful access to and opportunities for success in high-quality CTE programs and personalized career development. Educational equity allows learners to discover and explore their passions and make meaningful connections within the context of their postsecondary interests.

Through the reVISION process, all recipients (secondary and postsecondary) are required to analyze student enrollment (and performance) data disaggregated by program and subpopulation. Portions of both the reVISION process and local application require recipients to identify any disparities in participation (and performance), develop strategies to address them, and direct Perkins funds towards alleviating and eliminating any barriers. Through grant and program monitoring at the state level, Nebraska CTE staff will provide ongoing assistance when needed. Statewide leadership funds as well as the required set-asides for special populations will be leveraged to develop and implement supports in this area.

Per Section 112(a) of Perkins V, these include an amount equal to not more than two percent (2%) of the amount allotted to the State under section 111 for the fiscal year be made available to serve individuals in State institutions, such as State correctional institutions, juvenile justice facilities, and educational institutions that serve individuals with disabilities (\$14,000); not less than \$60,000 for services that prepare individuals for non-traditional fields (\$60,000); and an amount for the

recruitment of special populations to enroll in CTE programs, which shall be not less than the lesser of— (i) an amount equal to 0.1 percent; or (ii) \$50,000 (\$733.57).

Regular coordination and collaboration among Nebraska CTE, Special Education, and Vocational Rehabilitation takes place to ensure equal access to CTE programs of study and activities for special populations. Nebraska CTE also works extremely closely with the Office of Teaching, Learning, and Assessment to strengthen the core academic integration of CTE content for each student.

Additionally, the NDE's Commitments to Equity within its Equity Playbook<sup>9</sup> will be relied upon to focus the work of Nebraska CTE. Related to postsecondary CTE and career readiness, the following strategies have been identified as priorities. Perkins funds will be used, in part, to support these efforts:

- Partnering with businesses, out-of-school programs, and community organizations to create a more comprehensive approach to equity in education.
- Increasing access to computer science at all levels and employing existing, high-quality professional development programs, such as Code.org, to allow teachers to become trained/certified in computer science instruction.
- Ensuring that teachers and staff provide engaging learning experiences connected to the community and leverage civic and career-based service learning opportunities.
- Setting expectations among staff that personal learning plans and career pathway information be communicated clearly, early, and often with all students and families.
- Monitoring course options and prerequisites to determine whether low-income students and students of color are being provided a postsecondary and career-ready program of study.
- Aligning CTE with local business and industry needs and Nebraska Career Readiness Standards.

The NDE has an Equity Officer who coordinates these efforts across the agency to meet the needs of special populations. For additional information, see section 2(B)(3) of this plan.

**v. coordinate with the State board to support the local development of career pathways and articulate processes by which career pathways will be developed by local workforce development boards, as appropriate;**

Nebraska CTE, the NDOL, the Nebraska Workforce Development Board and Nebraska's local workforce development boards have a strong commitment to collaboration in ensuring CTE and labor market needs are aligned, including through programs of study and career pathways. This is evident in the statewide, cross-agency adoption of the Nebraska Career Clusters Model<sup>10</sup>.

Collaboration between Nebraska CTE and the workforce development boards is most prevalent through the reVISION process. As part of that process, school districts must develop a plan for aligning and supporting CTE systems with local, regional, and/or statewide economic priorities initiatives. And if districts desire to develop a new program of study, they must show how it meets local and/or regional workforce demands and economic priorities that are not currently addressed in any existing state model program of study.

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<sup>9</sup> [https://ndeday.education.ne.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/2019AdminDays\\_KeynoteHandout.pdf](https://ndeday.education.ne.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/2019AdminDays_KeynoteHandout.pdf)

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.education.ne.gov/nce/career-clusters/>

The NDOL and Workforce Development Boards provide support to school districts in the reVISION process, particularly in highlighting labor market needs and job trends in the state and local area. The NDOL and the local Workforce Development Boards serve as an intermediary in the reVISION process to help develop relationships between school districts and business, and support the growth of those relationships as necessary.

- vi. support effective and meaningful collaboration between secondary schools, postsecondary institutions, and employers to provide students with experience in, and understanding of, all aspects of an industry, which may include work-based learning such as internships, mentorships, simulated work environments, and other hands-on or inquiry-based learning activities; and**

Through the reVISION process, representatives from secondary, postsecondary, business and industry, parents, students, and other community stakeholders will be intentionally brought together for a facilitated meeting on their regional and local CTE systems. These meetings are facilitated by Nebraska CTE staff to ensure the six key elements of the process are reviewed effectively: (1) career development, (2) local workforce alignment, (3) size, scope, and quality and implementing CTE programs of study, (4) student performance data, (5) recruitment, retention, and training of faculty and staff, and (6) work-based learning. Progress towards improving access and equity, instead of standing alone as an independent element, has been woven through each of the other six elements. This approach will ensure that on all levels, improving the access to and success in CTE programs for each student is examined and addressed.

As one of the six elements, work-based learning will be examined in detail with probing questions to be answered locally and regionally. Through this process, areas of strength will be identified and proposed for replication, and strategies will be developed for improving areas of weakness. Ongoing collaboration among stakeholders through advisory councils and other continuous improvement efforts will ensure students are provided experiences in all aspects of an industry through their CTE programming, strengthened by these partnerships.

In partnership with other Federal programs at the NDE, Title II-A funds have been earmarked to supplement the inaugural statewide Work-based Learning Summit to take place in 2020. The programming of this Summit will be developed in partnership with postsecondary CTE and the NDE Offices of Special Education, Vocational Rehabilitation, and Teaching, Learning, and Assessment. Additionally, community partners and entities invested in this work, including business and industry, will be take part in the programming. This collaboration is intended to ensure opportunities for all students across all programs, especially those representing special populations, to participate and find success in high-quality work-based learning experiences as well as generally expanding and refining the work-based learning system in Nebraska.

Nebraska CTE will additionally develop, incentivize, and support innovative delivery models for CTE which encourage inquiry- and performance-based learning activities.

- vii. improve outcomes and reduce performance gaps for CTE concentrators, including those who are members of special**

## populations. (Section 122(d)(4)(C) of Perkins V)

A CTE concentrator in Nebraska is defined as:

Secondary CTE concentrator: A secondary student who, in grades 9 through 12, has earned credit in at least two courses in a single career cluster program at the intermediate or capstone level.

Postsecondary CTE concentrator: A postsecondary student who, in the reporting year, has earned twelve (12) credits in a *single* CTE program – OR – completed a CTE program if that program encompasses fewer than twelve (12) credits.

Nebraska CTE will assist educators in making a more formal shift from collecting data to using data to ensure local CTE programs create success for students and employers and reduce performance gaps for CTE concentrators, including those who are members of special populations. The quality and effectiveness of Nebraska CTE is dependent on the ability to constantly evaluate and improve. Through Nebraska's reVISION process, all local recipients are required to analyze disaggregated student performance data to identify performance disparities across student groups, detect root causes, and direct resources towards addressing both. These findings will be carried through to each recipient's annual application for Perkins funds. Within the application, a description of how concentrators from special populations are provided with programs that enable them to meet or exceed State determined levels of performance, and prepare them for further learning in high-skill, high-wage, and high-demand occupations will be included.

If a local recipient fails to meet State determined levels of performance or has made no meaningful progress, a Performance Improvement Plan must be submitted to articulate the steps that will be taken to address the performance deficiencies. This plan will need to include specific detail about how the recipient plans to address the performance gap along with strategies that will be implemented to address the gap, which may include the use of Perkins V funds. See section D(5) of this Plan for additional information.

**d. Describe how the eligible agency, if it opts to do so, will include the opportunity for secondary school students to participate in dual or concurrent enrollment programs, early college high school, or competency-based education. (Section 122(d)(4)(D) of Perkins V).**

Appropriate courses that may be offered for dual-credit are and will continue to be embedded within state model programs of study and encouraged in locally-developed programs of study. During the state model program of study standards revision process (see Appendix D), dual-credit and work-based learning opportunities are explicitly considered and identified for each program area for capstone-level courses.

In January of 2019, Nebraska's community colleges collaboratively established a statement of principles and standards for dual/concurrent enrollment credit. These five principles and their subsequent standards articulate the quality criteria for delivery of dual-credit, and will be reflected and aligned with state policies to the extent possible.



They include:

1. All postsecondary institutions shall ensure that dual-credit courses offered to high school students will be college-level courses. The rigor of the dual-credit courses shall be the same as the corresponding course offered at the postsecondary institution.
2. The decision to award high school credit for a college-level course being taken for dual-credit shall be the responsibility of the appropriate high school district.
3. All instructors for dual-credit courses, regardless of the mode of delivery, shall hold credentials consistent with a full-time faculty member employed to teach the college-level course for the postsecondary institution. All such selection criteria shall be consistent with the policies established by the institution for all faculty, which comply with the standards set forth by the Higher Learning Commission.
4. The quality of instruction and standards of excellence for dual-credit courses shall be consistent with other course offerings by the college.
5. The evaluation of the instructor and quality of instruction for dual-credit courses shall be comparable with the practices each college has in effect for other college courses.

Perkins V funds, the NDE will continue to refine statewide policies and practices related to dual-credit opportunities and offerings, especially with regard to their inclusion within CTE programs of study. As determined through meaningful stakeholder consultation and engagement, the current priorities are to:

- Identify the activities and practices that are currently available in the state;
- Enhance secondary/postsecondary program alignment, allowing for programs to culminate in certificate, diploma, and/or associate degree awards and result in readiness for work and further education;
- Increase secondary awareness of postsecondary entry-level skills and program offerings;
- Identify and address policy and administrative barriers that inhibit efficiency and effective use of resources to support dual-credit offerings or completion; and
- Develop a common course numbering systems at both the secondary and postsecondary levels.

**e. Describe how the eligible agency will involve parents, academic and CTE teachers, administrators, faculty, career guidance and academic counselors, local business (including small businesses), labor organizations, and representatives of Indian Tribes and Tribal organizations, as appropriate, in the planning, development, implementation, and evaluation of its CTE programs. (Section 122(d)(12) of Perkins V).**

Throughout the reVISION process at both the local and regional levels, parents, academic and CTE teachers, administrators, faculty, career guidance and academic counselors, local business (including small businesses), labor organizations, and representatives of Indian Tribes and Tribal organizations, as appropriate, are required to be engaged to help provide information on and evaluate the current state of their CTE system, areas for improvement, and opportunities for collaboration, among other elements. The same stakeholders that are required in Perkins V are required to be involved in the reVISION process. See Appendix F.

Nebraska CTE will utilize several additional strategies to ensure meaningful involvement throughout the system:

- **Program Development.** A description of stakeholder involvement in the program of study development process can be found in section B(2)(c)(ii) of this Plan.
- **Statewide Advisory Council.** Nebraska will develop and implement a statewide CTE advisory council to include CTE teachers, administrators, postsecondary faculty, career guidance and academic counselors, business and industry leaders, entrepreneurs, representatives from Indian Tribes and Tribal organizations, educational service unit representatives, parents, and students. Each economic development region and all six of Nebraska’s community colleges will have representation. Representatives from existing entities that advocate for, support, and provide counsel to Nebraska CTE (e.g. Partnerships for Innovation and the Nebraska Career Education Innovation Foundation) may serve on this Council to provide guidance and direction and help identify additional partners needed to make the work successful.

The Nebraska CTE Advisory Council will:

- Review and develop short- and long-term strategies for implementing the new Perkins V State Plan
- Make recommendations regarding the implementation and administration of the available statewide Perkins reserve funds used for innovative grant opportunities
- Interact with the NDE on strategies, community engagement, and ways to measure success
- Champion and align individual efforts with those of the Nebraska CTE system
- Serve as a vocal champion for CTE in respective spheres of influence
- Identify service gaps and provide advice on methods to close such gaps as they relate to youth and employees, workforce development, and employers on training needs
- Confer with public and private entities for the purposes of promoting and improving CTE
- Identify legislative recommendations to improve CTE
- Promote coordination among existing CTE programs

The Nebraska CTE Advisory Council will also collaborate with existing sector partnerships and advisory councils (e.g. the Nebraska Manufacturing Advisory Council and the Nebraska Entrepreneurship Taskforce) around the State to provide coherence with the overarching education and workforce development system, increase alignment and support for existing efforts, and reduce duplication. There will be a specific focus on transitions, dual-credit, and secondary/postsecondary program alignment, along with the eight strategic priorities outlined in this Plan.

- **Association for CTE of Nebraska.** Nebraska CTE will maintain and strengthen its partnership with the Association for Career and Technical Education of Nebraska (ACTEN) to aid in the informed planning, development, implementation, and evaluation of CTE. ACTEN is the professional organization for CTE educators in the State, and whose members include teachers, administrators, teacher educators, career counselors, teacher candidates, business partners and other professionals who support or advocate for career and technical education.
- **Local Advisory Committee.** All local recipients in Nebraska are encouraged to have an advisory committee that functions at the local or regional level to assist educators and partners in planning, conducting, and evaluating their program offerings, curricula, and operations. Ideally, an advisory committee would exist for each program area. Nebraska CTE

provides professional learning opportunities for advisory committees to establish best practices and to help educators and business and industry representatives strengthen their CTE programs. Each advisory committee should be made up of individuals with experience and expertise in the occupational field(s) that the program serves along with educators, school counselors and guidance professionals, students, and parents. Their role is to provide input on the design, development, implementation, evaluation, maintenance, and refinement of CTE programs. Advisory committees present an opportunity for the community to be linked to the educational system, and as such, should promote ongoing communication and collaboration among education, business, and industry, strengthen program alignment with local and regional workforce needs and economic development efforts, and promote career pathways throughout the community. Nebraska CTE suggests and encourages the active and meaningful involvement of parents, students, academic and CTE educators, administrators, faculty, career guidance and academic counselors, local businesses (including small businesses), and labor organizations in the planning, development, and implementation of CTE programs. The planning, development, implementation, and evaluation of a CTE program is carried out at the local level.

- f. Include a copy of the local application template that the eligible agency will require eligible recipients to submit pursuant to section 134(b) of Perkins V. See Text Box 4 for the statutory requirements for local applications under section 134(b) of Perkins V.**

A copy of the local Perkins application template can be found in Appendix E.

- g. Include a copy of the comprehensive local needs assessment template and/or guidelines that the eligible agency will require of eligible recipients to meet the requirements of section 134(c) of Perkins V. See Text Box 5 for the requirements for the comprehensive local needs assessment under section 134(c) of Perkins V.**

A copy of the reVISION (Nebraska’s comprehensive local needs assessment) template, including guidebook and resource manual, can be found in Appendix F.

- h. Provide the eligible agency’s definition for “size, scope, and quality” that will be used to make funds available to eligible recipients pursuant to section 135(b) of Perkins V.**

The following definitions articulate the minimum criteria that will be used to ensure that local recipients’ CTE systems and programs are of sufficient size, scope, and quality to meet the needs of all students served. They are intentionally framed around Nebraska CTE’s Guiding Principles to provide coherence to the Nebraska CTE system.

Nebraska CTE will continue to refine these Essential Components to maintain relevance and rigor. The size, scope, and quality criteria for postsecondary CTE programs in particular will be reviewed in collaboration with postsecondary leadership and the CCPE to determine the criteria that is already being considered for postsecondary program approval to align with other academic areas.

**Size** refers to the quantifiable evidence, physical parameters, and limitations of each approved program that relate to the ability of the program to address all student learning outcomes. Generally, size will be defined by items such as the required number of programs, and availability of facilities and equipment to ensure quality, equity, and access.

**Scope** provides curricular expectations of each program and/or program of study to cover the full breadth of its subject. Generally, scope involves appropriate sequencing of courses, career development, early postsecondary and work-based learning opportunities, the role of advisory committees, and the role of Career and Technical Student Organizations (CTSOs).

**Quality** refers to the strength of the overall system components, including the extent to which these components positively impact student outcomes.

EQUITABLE		
Size	Scope	Quality
<p>Each student, including those from special populations, is provided with equitable <b>access</b> to CTE programs and activities, including CTSOs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Alternative education programs include CTE</li> <li>Emphasis is given to the recruitment and retention of students into programs non-traditional for their gender</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CTE students are provided with an ongoing, organized, systemic framework for <b>career development</b> from middle grades through postsecondary;</li> <li>Career guidance and development information and support are available to all students</li> </ul> <p>Secondary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All secondary students develop and maintain a personal or individualized learning plan</li> <li>A career information system (such as Nebraska Career Connections) is available for all student and parent use</li> <li>Secondary programs utilize the Nebraska School Counseling Model and the Nebraska Career &amp; Technical Education Model <a href="https://www.education.ne.gov/nce/careerdevelopment/">(https://www.education.ne.gov/nce/careerdevelopment/)</a></li> </ul>	<p>Recipients meet or exceed <b>performance</b> targets established for state and federal Perkins accountability indicators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Accountability and enrollment data, per Section 113, are available and submitted annually</li> <li>Resources are directed towards addressing disparities in performance across subpopulations of students</li> <li>Accessibility and/or accommodations are provided to each student, including those who are members of a special population</li> </ul>

RELEVANT		
Size	Scope	Quality
<p>Local CTE systems include programming inclusive of opportunities that represent the broad range of available Nebraska CTE career fields/program areas, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources</li> <li>• Business, Marketing, and Management</li> <li>• Communication &amp; Information Systems</li> <li>• Health Sciences</li> <li>• Human Sciences and Education, and</li> <li>• Skilled and Technical Sciences</li> </ul> <p>At the secondary level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No less than one state-model program of study shall be offered, and</li> <li>• No less than one state-authorized Career &amp; Technical Student Organization (CTSO) aligned with the CTE courses and content offered in the school(s) is available for student participation.</li> </ul> <p>At the postsecondary level: No less than one program in each of Nebraska's career field areas that maintains an occupational focus and prepares students for entry level employment, advanced skill development, and/or advanced training as identified</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CTE programs are aligned to the Nebraska Career &amp; Technical Education Model (see Figure 2).</li> <li>• A comprehensive understanding of and strong experience in all aspects of an industry are provided to students, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ occupations and careers that represent the full scope of an industry;</li> <li>○ technology, workforce and community issues, and health, safety, and environmental issues related to the industry</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Emphasis is placed on developing essential workplace skills through integration of Nebraska's Career Readiness Standards throughout the local education system or institution</li> <li>• CTE programs are aligned with local/regional workforce and economic development efforts</li> <li>• Appropriate assessments, both formative and summative, are utilized to measure and encourage student achievement;</li> <li>• CTE programs include opportunities for dual-credit and/or credentialing</li> </ul> <p>Secondary: Secondary CTE course instruction addresses at least 90% of the state-approved standards</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CTE programs of study and courses are delivered by instructors who meet Nebraska's requirements to teach at the secondary and/or postsecondary level(s) Professional development is provided to school counselors, teachers/instructors, paraeducators, and administrators to enhance student learning</li> <li>• Professional development includes both technical and pedagogical knowledge and skill development opportunities</li> <li>• Contextual learning opportunities are embedded across content/program areas</li> <li>• High quality, standards-aligned instructional materials are accessible to each student</li> <li>• Industry-grade equipment and technology encourage student attainment of relevant, rigorous technical skills;</li> <li>• Facilities, equipment, and resources are of sufficient size and quality to accommodate participating students and keep them safe</li> </ul>

<p>through the reVISION process will be offered, and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No less than one state-authorized CTSO at the primary campus level, if applicable</li> </ul>		
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INNOVATIVE		
Size	Scope	Quality
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local CTE systems provide opportunities for students to participate in coursework through a wide array of delivery models, including classroom, lab, workplace, and other applied experiences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promotion of expanded learning and leadership opportunities for students through components such as workplace experiences and CTSOs</li> <li>Opportunities for students to participate in distance and/or blended CTE programs and courses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Offering meaningful workplace learning opportunities to all students, including those from special populations, that align with their CTE programs of study</li> </ul>

COORDINATED		
Size	Scope	Quality
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local CTE program offerings are informed by labor market information (LMI) to identify alignment to regional and statewide employment projections</li> <li>Essential partnerships are established that link CTE in schools and colleges with business and industry, workforce, economic development, and government agencies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Alignment between secondary and postsecondary CTE programs with evidence of joint planning. This may include but is not limited to articulation agreements, dual-credit opportunities, opportunities for the attainment of industry recognized credentials, and aligned CTE curriculum</li> <li>CTSOs are aligned with CTE curriculum</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Career pathways offer multiple entry and exit points for students</li> <li>Partnerships are developed to enhance CTE</li> <li>CTE programs and programs of study offerings are systematically reviewed by the local or regional advisory council for alignment and quality</li> <li>Secondary and postsecondary partnerships assist in student transitions</li> <li>Parents, students, and stakeholders are consulted, as appropriate, for input and evaluation of CTE programs</li> </ul>

### 3. Meeting the Needs of Special Populations

- a. Describe the eligible agency's program strategies for special populations, including a description of how individuals who are members of special populations—
  - i. will be provided with equal access to activities assisted under this Act;

The NDE considers itself a champion for educational equity and has committed to lead the way in addressing inequities of the past by focusing on opportunities to learn for all students and by adopting a relentless focus on outcomes that ensure all stakeholders deliver on the promise of equity. Leveraging our five primary roles at the NDE, Nebraska CTE staff will:

1. **Champion:** The NDE will champion educational equity by actively leading the strategic vision, goals, and policy direction to support learning, earning, and living for all students.
2. **Regulator:** The NDE will regulate educational equity by leveraging policy authority to ensure delivery of high-quality, equitable education and services, beyond compliance with state and federal regulations.
3. **Capacity Builder:** The NDE will build capacity around educational equity by directing technical assistance and professional development opportunities and by promoting the sharing of best practices.
4. **Connector:** The NDE will build connections in support of educational equity by bridging the divide between learning, earning, and living, connecting schools, families, businesses, and communities.
5. **Change Agent:** The NDE will demonstrate change agency by exploring and supporting promising new innovations that advance educational equity.

Efforts that advance educational equity help to ensure that all students have the resources they need to graduate prepared for success in postsecondary, career, and civic life. Both the ESSA and Perkins Act give greater responsibility to states and districts to advance equity at the local level. The following Equity Taxonomy<sup>11</sup> depicts the NDE's ultimate goal: that all students are engaged, inspired, and successful learners. Each level is an integral component of an equitable school experience. This comprehensive approach to equity, including instructional excellence, opportunities to learn, social-emotional engagement, and physical integration, allow each student to develop the skills and knowledge necessary to pursue his or her dreams.

Across Nebraska, schools have strategically implemented a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) framework<sup>12</sup> to promote an integrated system connecting general education and special education, along with all components of teaching and learning, into a high-quality, standards-based instruction and intervention system that is matched to a student's academic, social-emotional, and behavioral needs. MTSS is an essential component of the Continuous Improvement Process. Local school districts and ESUs are a critical part of the Nebraska MTSS network. Each school district and ESU is charged with multiple improvement efforts, have a variety of local expertise, and possess unique context.

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<sup>11</sup> <https://ndeday.education.ne.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/2019AdminDaysKeynoteHandout.pdf>

<sup>12</sup> <http://nemtss.unl.edu/>



Nebraska Department of Education's Equity Taxonomy

Along with the NDE's equity roles and commitments and in alignment with Nebraska's MTSS framework, Nebraska CTE utilizes Perkins V funds to employ a number of strategies and activities at both the state and local levels to provide equitable access to CTE activities and programs, including:

- Analyzing the performance data of members from special populations to determine gaps in access, completion, and performance and devise appropriate support strategies and activities at the State level,
- Providing a set-aside of leadership dollars focused on increasing participation in and completion of gender non-traditional students in CTE programs,
- Providing consultant services dedicated to monitoring civil rights compliance and making on-going technical assistance and professional development available to eligible recipients,
- Working with teacher education institutions to provide meaningful preparation for all teaching candidates on working with special populations and helping them achieve success in CTE,
- Providing an on-going program of professional development for Nebraska CTE instructors, counselors, administrators, and support personnel on strategies for helping students from special populations achieve success in CTE,
- Supporting the alignment of the data collection systems that serve the secondary and postsecondary CTE systems to improve data-informed decision making, including the analysis of participation and completion data of special populations in both secondary and postsecondary programs,,
- Requiring eligible recipients as part of their local application to describe:



- How their allocated funds will be used to promote the preparation of students from special populations and in non-traditional fields,
- The analysis of data that supports the activities planned to assess the effectiveness of programs and services that serve special populations,
- How the needs of special populations will be accommodated within the delivery of CTE instruction,
- How they will encourage increased access to CTSOs for students from special populations,
- How secondary and postsecondary programs will prepare members of special populations to earn diplomas, degrees, and credentials,
- How secondary and postsecondary programs are responsive to the special needs of these students, and
- The specific strategies that will be used to identify, alleviate, and ultimately eliminate barriers that prevent members of special populations from entering and succeeding in CTE programs.

**ii. will not be discriminated against on the basis of status as a member of a special population;**

Members of special populations will be placed into CTE programs in accordance with their individual needs and not on the basis of their status as members of a special population. The local Perkins application requires eligible recipients to describe specific strategies that will be used to prevent discrimination against individuals based on their status as a member of a special population.

Nebraska will continue to provide on-site monitoring of civil rights compliance in both secondary and postsecondary institutions offering CTE programs per the Methods of Administration (MOA) document. The NDE will also continue to provide technical assistance and consultant services for civil rights compliance. Capitalizing on the existing strong partnerships, Nebraska CTE will work with Nebraska Special Education and Vocational Rehabilitation to assist in the monitoring of activities to make certain special populations are not discriminated against.

**iii. will be provided with programs designed to enable individuals who are members of special populations to meet or exceed State determined levels of performance described in section 113, and prepare special populations for further learning and for high-skill, high-wage, or in-demand industry sectors or occupations;**

Through Nebraska’s reVISION process, local recipients are required to work collaboratively to assess performance data for all students across all special populations, identify performance gaps, positive or negative trends, and identify strategies for addressing any disparities in performance. These findings will be carried through to each recipient’s local application and annual application for Perkins funds. Within the application, a description of how students from special populations are provided with programs that enable them to meet or exceed State determined levels of performance, and prepare them for further learning in high-skill, high-wage, and high-demand occupations is required.

The NDE will provide trend data to recipients to assist their analysis and interpretation. These reports will not only identify three-year trends for all performance indicators disaggregated by subpopulation,

but then break down performance by career cluster. These data will enable recipients to identify gaps in student performance and make plans for addressing any disparities.

Across the state, there are persistent gaps in performance among students experiencing homelessness, those in foster care, and English learners. Specific focus on addressing these disparities will be paid over throughout the duration of this Plan.

Nebraska CTE will develop a resource hub for meeting the needs of special populations, including briefs on each special population subgroup, common barriers they face, and strategies CTE educators can employ to help address any barrier to the success of these students, including meeting or exceeding state determined levels of performance. This resource hub will be developed in partnership with the NDE Offices of Special Education, Vocational Rehabilitation, and Federal Programs (supporting students such as those experiencing homelessness or those who are incarcerated). Vocational Rehabilitation will be an instrumental partner in assisting with CTE supports at the postsecondary level. Together, comprehensive professional development will also be provided.

**iv. will be provided with appropriate accommodations**

Nebraska's local application for Perkins funds will inform eligible recipients of the GEPA Section 427<sup>13</sup> statute and requirement, and require them to annually review all of the local CTE programs to:

- determine if any of these programs, based on local circumstances, has a gender, race, national origin, color, disability, or age barrier which could prevent or impede the access or participation of any student, teacher, and/or other program beneficiary with special needs;
- identify any program(s) that has such a barrier; and
- provide a clear and succinct description of the actions that will be taken to ensure that the barrier is effectively removed.

Nebraska provides consultant services dedicated to removing any potential barrier to participation or success in Nebraska CTE programs and makes ongoing technical assistance and professional development available to eligible recipients. As mentioned previously, Nebraska CTE will continue its strong partnership with the Offices of Special Education and Vocational Rehabilitation and other State agencies to ensure students are provided with appropriate accommodations in CTE.

**v. will be provided instruction and work-based learning opportunities in integrated settings that support competitive, integrated employment. (Section 122(d)(9) of Perkins V)**

Work-based learning is included as a capstone-level course experience option in secondary state model programs of study and encouraged in postsecondary programs. The expectation from Nebraska CTE is that all students, secondary and postsecondary, will have access to these experiences, including those from special populations. The NDE will continue to provide, through Nebraska CTE and other Offices at the NDE such as Adult Education, Special Education, and Vocational Rehabilitation, professional development activities for CTE educators, paraprofessionals, counselors, administrators and special education teachers related to curriculum modifications, equipment

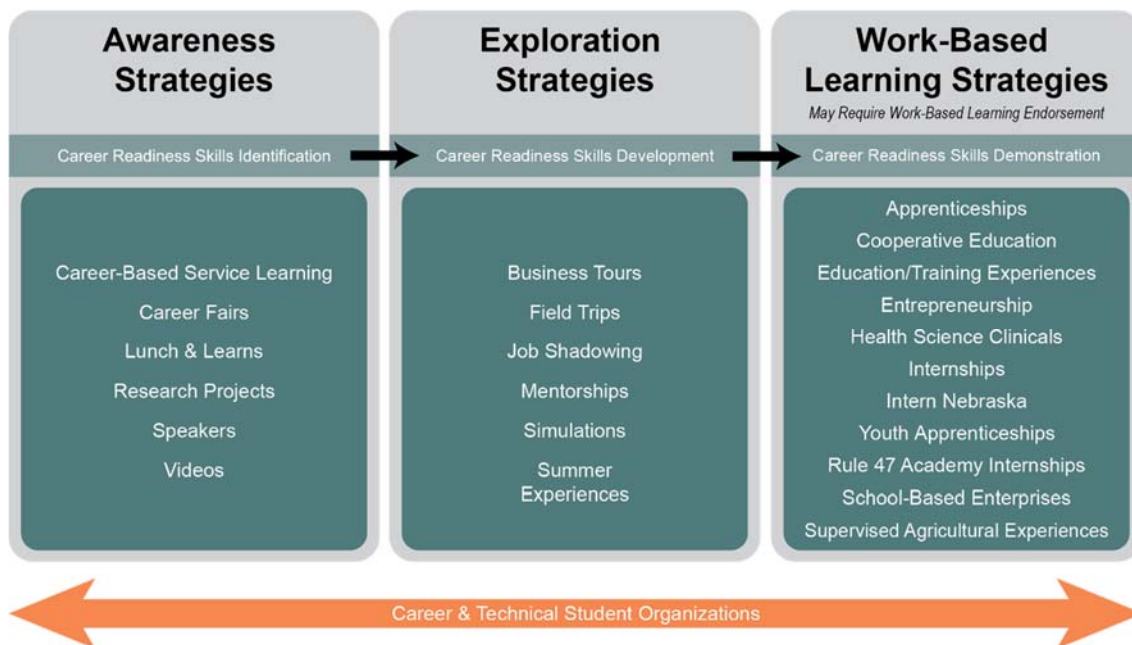
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<sup>13</sup> <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2016/10/31/2016-26123/agency-information-collection-activities-comment-request-gepa-section-427-guidance-for-all-grant>

modifications, classroom modifications, supportive personnel, and instructional aids and devices. Similarly, local education agencies and community colleges should provide any necessary training and support, including support for transportation, childcare, or other access-related challenges.

Nebraska’s Workplace Experiences Continuum illustrates how workplace experiences become more focused as a student progresses through their education. Students gain a better understanding of their talents, strengths, and interests; learn what postsecondary education is necessary for their career of choice; and practice the career readiness skills vital for entering the career of their choice.

### Nebraska Workplace Experiences Continuum



Work-based learning is an educational strategy that provides students a setting where they can enhance their learning, explore career options, and demonstrate their academic, technical, and career readiness skills in authentic work settings. Work-based learning experiences are not extra-curricular, but rather expanded learning opportunities central to students’ personal and professional development. These experiences should be integrated into the curricular offerings and assessed accordingly. Only those activities that allow students to learn “through” work, rather than learn “about” work, will be considered work-based learning. These experiences encompass only the third and most rigorous phase of the above continuum.

Partnerships with other agencies and organizations, including Nebraska Vocational Rehabilitation, Nebraska’s ESUs, worksites, businesses, families, and community organizations can help create opportunities for students, including those from special populations, to develop transferrable skills to prepare for postsecondary education and employment. Work-based learning experiences with appropriate school- and site-based supervision provide opportunities for individuals to assess their interests, abilities, and strengths outside of the classroom. Participation in these job related tasks also provide a chance for learners to explore how to communicate disability-related work support and

accommodations, if necessary.

Transition-related services and work-based learning program information offered throughout Nebraska, including resources, will be available on Nebraska CTE's website and promoted through on-site and other technical assistance mechanisms. Nebraska postsecondary institutions play a critical role in this area as well and will be included in joint-planning activities.

#### **4. Preparing Teachers and Faculty**

- a. Describe how the eligible agency will support the recruitment and preparation of teachers, including special education teachers, faculty, school principals, administrators, specialized instructional support personnel, and paraprofessionals to provide career and technical education instruction, leadership, and support, including professional development that provides the knowledge and skills needed to work with and improve instruction for special populations. (Section 122(d)(6) of Perkins V)**

As highlighted as one of Nebraska CTE's Strategic Priorities, instructor recruitment and retention is a primary focus of the NDE. To deliver effective and relevant CTE programming, there must be an adequate supply of qualified instructors who are knowledgeable in their technical areas as well as in academic competencies and workplace requirements essential to their CTE program areas. Innovative and bold strategies will be employed to prepare, recruit, and retain CTE educators, especially in those areas with critical teacher shortages. Additionally, specific training and focus for core academic teachers on connecting their content with CTE, special education teachers to deliver CTE instruction, faculty, school principals, administrators, specialized instructional support personnel, and paraprofessionals will be provided. A specific focus on diversifying Nebraska CTE's teachers will also be pursued.

#### **Educator Preparation:**

As detailed in Nebraska's ESSA plan<sup>14</sup>, the NDE supports and prioritizes the attraction, preparation, development, and retention of excellent educators. This focus is also evident in the Nebraska Strategic Vision and Direction<sup>15</sup> and AQuESTT<sup>16</sup>, Nebraska's accountability system. Both address the importance of a systematic approach to ensuring an effective educator workforce. Nebraska is fortunate to have a great majority of its CTE instructors appropriately endorsed in their area of instruction. This trend continues because of the strong partnership between the Nebraska CTE staff and teacher education institutions and faculty.

The NDE requires the completion of an approved teacher education preparation program to receive an Initial, Standard, or Professional level teaching certificate and is the entity responsible for overseeing and managing the teacher certification process for teachers, principals, and other school leaders in the State. Alternative pathways to certification are detailed below.

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<sup>14</sup> <https://www.education.ne.gov/essa/>

<sup>15</sup> <https://nebraskaeducationvision.com/>

<sup>16</sup> <https://aquestt.com/>

There are 16 approved educator preparation programs in Nebraska. These programs undergo multiple program approval processes and most have attained national accreditation.

Nebraska CTE will continue to partner with other NDE Offices to host the annual Teacher Educator Forum, which is designed to promote meaningful conversations about the pre- and in-service needs of Nebraska educators. Perkins and ESSA Title II-A funds have both been utilized for this Forum. CTE teacher educators from all Nebraska institutions that prepare CTE instructors attend. Special sessions are held to focus on the specific needs of CTE.

### **Educator Recruitment & Professional Development**

Each year the NDE conducts a teacher vacancy survey<sup>17</sup> to determine the areas for which teacher shortages exist and what districts/systems did to address those shortages. Regularly, CTE represents multiple areas where teacher shortages exist. For the Fall of 2018, these included: Agriculture Education; Business, Marketing or Information Technology; Family and Consumer Sciences; and Industrial Technology/Skilled and Technical Sciences, in addition to School Counselors. The number one reason given for these shortages was that there were no applicants.

To help mitigate these vacancies and assist in the recruitment of Nebraska educators, the NDE has established several alternate paths to teacher certification.

- The Transitional Certification Program (or Transition to Teaching program) was created through a partnership between the NDE and the University of Nebraska at Kearney. This program allows mid-career professionals and recent college graduates with a baccalaureate degree who wish to become Nebraska teachers a faster path to do so. Similar alternative routes to certification are available at most Nebraska institutions with approved educator preparation programs. Requirements for this certification include:
  - the applicant must have a baccalaureate degree that includes at least 75% of the course requirements for preparation in a secondary field or subject endorsement area;
  - a written request for the issuance of the certificate from the superintendent or governing body of the school system in which the applicant intends to teach, accompanied by documentation that the school system has not found a fully qualified teacher for the position;
  - an assessment of transcripts completed by a certification officer in a standard institution of higher education and a plan developed for completion of an approved initial teacher certification program;
  - a written plan from the school system for mentoring and supervision of the applicant;
  - completion of a pre-teaching seminar that includes information and skill development in the areas of diversity, classroom management, curriculum planning, and instructional strategies prior to assuming responsibility for the classroom; and
  - a written agreement with a Nebraska teacher education program to complete at least one supervisory visit each semester to the school system of the applicant.
- The Nebraska Career Education Teaching Permit is available for individuals hired to teach by a Nebraska school district in a CTE area where no teaching education program exists, where the instructional content of the course exceeds teacher preparation coursework, or for which a school system submits documentation that it has not found a qualified teacher for a specific course in the CTE field.

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<sup>17</sup> <https://cdn.education.ne.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/2018TeacherVacancyReport.pdf>

## Professional Development

Nebraska recognizes that educators with Career Education Teaching Permits may need additional support to ensure effective instruction. As such, Nebraska CTE will utilize Perkins State leadership funds to provide in-service and pre-service professional development to encourage instructional success for those new to the field or teaching with a Career Education Teaching Permit. These experiences include the Nebraska CTE Beginning Teacher Institute, Nebraska CTE Jump Start, specialized sessions at the annual Nebraska Career Education Conference, and Career Readiness and Exploration Curriculum teacher training. The Beginning Teacher Institute is designed for CTE teachers who have completed their first through third year of CTE instruction. The core purposes are to explore and define each teacher's own CTE program, learn how to facilitate classroom and laboratory experiences, and internalize and practice classroom management strategies. The CTE Jump Start program is designed to assist those who are utilizing the Career Education Teaching Permit or another alternative pathway to teacher certification in learning the most essential elements of CTE instruction.

Additional professional development opportunities are promoted to all educators, including CTE teachers, administrators, and faculty at the secondary and postsecondary levels, school counselors, and special education teachers. These include the annual Nebraska Career Education Conference, fall content area teacher workshops, and a new statewide work-based learning summit to ensure both educators and business and industry may effectively partner to increase the availability and quality of experiences provided to CTE students.

Priorities:

Nebraska CTE is committed to recruiting and retaining diverse, high-quality CTE instructors, administrators, and school counselors at the secondary and postsecondary levels. Specific strategies to be prioritized include:

- Growing the Education & Training CTE career cluster pathways;
- Supporting retention efforts through sustained and ongoing new teacher in-service programs which include mentorship opportunities;
- Emphasizing the recruitment of non-traditional and underrepresented individuals for Nebraska CTE teaching;
- Utilize Career and Technical Student Organizations as a tool for recruitment, specifically Nebraska Educators Rising;
- Develop and provide existing teachers tools and resources that address their diverse needs, including specific training on supporting students who are members of a special population;
- Support existing content area efforts to recruit CTE educators into their field, such as the National Teach Ag campaign for recruiting Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources instructors;
- Partner with Nebraska Community Colleges to expand 2+2 options for students to start their postsecondary coursework at community colleges and finish at a 4-year teacher preparation college; and
- Increasing the diversity of CTE instructors

## C. Fiscal Responsibility

1. Describe the criteria and process for how the eligible agency will approve eligible recipients for funds under this Act, including how—
  - a. each eligible recipient will promote academic achievement;
  - b. each eligible recipient will promote skill attainment, including skill attainment that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential; and
  - c. each eligible recipient will ensure the local needs assessment under section 134 takes into consideration local economic and education needs, including, where appropriate, in-demand industry sectors and occupations. (Section 122(d)(5) of Perkins V)

Nebraska’s process for local application approval (both secondary and postsecondary) includes the signing of a set of assurances that Nebraska CTE’s Essential Components of size, scope, and quality are implemented (see section B(2)(h) of this Plan) and the submission of an annual application through the NDE’s grants management system. Within the application, key areas will be included to aid in and ensure the effective planning of CTE program delivery. Specifically, these include how the recipient will promote academic achievement, promote skill attainment, including skill attainment that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential, and how they will ensure their implementation of the reVISION process takes into consideration local economic and education needs (including H3 occupations).

Each local grant recipient must meet the size, scope, and quality Essential Components requirement to be eligible for Perkins funds. A review of the Essential Components is designed to determine if the local recipient’s CTE system and programs are of sufficient size, scope, and quality to be effective, and, that the recipient is promoting academic achievement and skill attainment leading to a recognized postsecondary credential. Framed around Nebraska CTE’s Guiding Principles, the size, scope, and quality Essential Components required for secondary and postsecondary participation in Perkins funding are defined in Section B(2)(h) of this Plan.

Acknowledgement that the Essential Components are in place, being met, or actively being developed will ensure that all local grant recipients meet the requirements of program size, scope, and quality to receive Perkins funds.

Within the local application, recipients will articulate their overall vision for their CTE system and describe the outcomes of their reVISION process. Based on these outcomes and a review of Perkins performance indicator outcomes, they will describe the aligned activities that will be funded during the fiscal year to support the continuous improvement of their CTE system. Activities must address the required uses of local funds as specified in Section 135 and further clarified in Nebraska CTE guidance documents and state policy.

### **Program Approval:**

Each local recipient will be assigned a Nebraska CTE grant monitor who will review and assess the application’s completeness, strength, and appropriateness of use of funds based on a set of quality criteria. These grant monitors will provide necessary assistance in year-round program planning and will request revisions to the application if needed. Once all criteria have been met, the grant monitor

and State CTE Director will approve the local program. This process has been put in place to ensure all local recipients maintain a strong focus on activities that promote academic achievement, skill attainment, recognized postsecondary credential attainment, and alignment to local and statewide workforce demands and economic priorities. The ongoing follow-up and monitoring by the Nebraska CTE staff ensures recipients promote academic and technical skill attainment consistently. If a program (secondary or postsecondary) at any point fails to maintain the Essential Components necessary to ensure programs are of sufficient size, scope, and quality, a re-approval process will be established and implemented.

As a requirement for eligibility, each secondary local recipient is required to offer at least one state model program of study. State model programs of study intentionally incorporate rigorous content area standards that embed contextualized core academic coursework, integration of career readiness skills, early postsecondary opportunities (i.e. dual-credit, attainment of a recognized postsecondary credential), and work-based learning experiences, where appropriate.

Postsecondary program approval will be conducted in collaboration with the CCPE as described in section B(2)(a).

Through the reVISION process, Nebraska will require all local eligible recipients to utilize labor market information and workforce data to identify high-skill, high-wage, high-demand occupations and occupational projections (such as through Nebraska's H3 website: <http://h3.ne.gov/H3/>). These data will be used as a rationale for Perkins expenditures and programming. Additionally, the annual Perkins application must demonstrate significant input from the local CTE advisory committee and business and industry representatives. Secondary and postsecondary eligible recipients in the same economic development and/or service region will be required to collaborate during the reVISION and local application planning processes to ensure alignment between secondary and postsecondary CTE programs, effective and efficient use of resources, and mitigation of potential duplication of efforts.

The local Perkins application (covering four years: 2020-2024) will require local recipients and eligible institutions to address all items listed under Section 134 (b). The local application will require the implementation of at least one program of study at the secondary level, including emphasis on the integration of core academic, career, and technical education. It will also describe how CTE activities will be carried out with respect to meeting State and local levels of performance in accordance with Section 113 of Perkins V. After the four-year local application is submitted, local grant recipients will submit an annual application for approval for the use of Perkins funds to achieve the goals and objectives established in the four-year application.

The annual application for Perkins funds will include an improvement plan for activities to address core indicators of performance that were not within 90% of the state determined level of performance, a description of how funds will be used to address those items in the improvement plan, and a detailed budget summary.

- 2. Describe how funds received by the eligible agency through the allotment made under section 111 of the Act will be distributed—**
  - a. among career and technical education at the secondary level, or career and technical education at the postsecondary and adult level, or both, including**



**how such distribution will most effectively provide students with the skills needed to succeed in the workplace; and**

Funds made available under Section 111 of the Act will be allocated to both eligible secondary and postsecondary CTE programs. Based on an evaluation of the distribution under Perkins IV, program growth areas, use of funds annually, labor market needs, enrollment totals, concentrator and completion data, Perkins performance indicator data, equity gaps, funding source availability, and other factors that contribute to effective programming under the Act (i.e. reVISION), Nebraska will afford 60% to secondary CTE and 40% to postsecondary CTE.

The Perkins allotment to Nebraska serves eligible secondary school districts or a consortia of districts and eligible community colleges or a consortia of community colleges.

**b. among any consortia that may be formed among secondary schools and eligible institutions, and how funds will be distributed among the members of the consortia, including the rationale for such distribution and how it will most effectively provide students with the skills needed to succeed in the workplace. (Section 122(d)(8) of Perkins V)**

Any secondary eligible recipient that did not qualify for an individual allocation greater than or equal to \$15,000 will be required to join a consortium in order to receive Perkins V funds. Any postsecondary recipient that did not qualify for a minimum allocation greater than or equal to \$50,000 will be required to join a consortium in order to receive Perkins V funds. Consortia serve as structures to provide services to all participating local eligible recipients. Within the consortia, funds will be distributed using project criteria that assures students are provided with the skills needed to succeed in postsecondary education and the workforce, and that programs are of sufficient size, scope, and quality to meet the needs of all students.

**Waivers and Exemptions:**

Secondary: Per section 131(c)(2) of Perkins, requests for an exemption from consortia membership will be limited. The requirement will be waived only in instances where the requesting district is able to demonstrate, through detailed documentation, it is:

- Located in a rural, sparsely populated area; and
- Unable to enter into a consortium for purposes of providing activities under Perkins

Postsecondary: Per section 132(c)(1) of Perkins V, there are no waivers or exemptions for the minimum allocation for postsecondary institutions or postsecondary consortiums.

For Perkins V funding purposes, funds allocated to a consortium (formed to meet the requirements of Section 135) will be based on the amount that would otherwise be distributed to the local educational agency.

Members of the consortium will jointly determine the method for identifying consortium activities and funding priorities based on each participating member's reVISION process, recommendations from any local or regional advisory committee, and funds available. The consortium determines a fiscal agent, such as an ESU or a district/college that is a member of the consortium. Members of the consortium must reach consensus upon the mutually-beneficial programs and purposes that Perkins

funds will support. Members will describe the purposes and programs, aligned with the outcomes of the reVISION process, in the local Perkins application. Funds may not be reallocated to individual members of the consortium for purposes or programs benefiting only one member of the consortium.

Because a consortium submits one four-year local application on behalf of all member schools, agencies, or entities, it is strongly recommended that local educational agencies remain in their consortia for the same time period. If a member school, agency, or entity decides to leave a consortium or terminate a cooperative agreement, they must appeal to the NDE.

For competitive awards from Perkins, any eligible recipient who completed the reVISION process and is interested in applying may do so, regardless of their participation within a consortium.

**3. For the upcoming program year, provide the specific dollar allocations made available by the eligible agency for career and technical education programs and programs of study under section 131(a)-(e) of the Act and describe how these allocations are distributed to local educational agencies, areas career and technical education schools and educational service agencies within the State. (Section 131(g) of Perkins V)**

According to section 131(a)(1) of the Act, the distribution of funds to secondary school programs will be based on the following:

- Thirty percent based on the number of individuals aged 5 through 17 who reside in the school district served by the local educational agency for the preceding fiscal year, compared to the total number of such individuals who reside in the school districts served by all local educational agencies in the State for the preceding fiscal year (estimated at approximately \$1,015,533.24 for 2020-2021);
- Seventy percent based on the relative number of individuals aged 5 through 17 who reside in the school district served by local educational agency and are from families below the poverty level for the preceding fiscal year, compared to the total number of such individuals who reside in the school districts served by all the local educational agencies in the State for the preceding fiscal year (estimated at approximately \$2,369,577.56).

All secondary funds will be allocated to either comprehensive high schools or consortia of eligible recipients. The total projected allocation to secondary CTE programs is \$3,180,035.92.

The NDE will use the data provided to the Secretary by the Bureau of the Census for the purposes of determining eligibility under Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965.

**4. For the upcoming program year, provide the specific dollar allocations made available by the eligible agency for career and technical education programs and programs of study under section 132(a) of the Act and describe how these allocations are distributed to eligible institutions and consortia of eligible institutions within the State.**

According to section 132(a) of the Act, the distribution of funds to eligible postsecondary institutions will bear the same relationship to the portion of funds made available under section 112(a)(1) as the

sum of the number of individuals who are Federal Pell Grant recipients and recipients of assistance from the Bureau of Indian Affairs who are enrolled in approved CTE programs in the preceding fiscal year compared to the number of such recipients enrolled in approved CTE programs within the State for such year.

All postsecondary funds will be allocated to either eligible postsecondary institutions or a consortia of eligible institutions. The total projected allocation to postsecondary CTE programs is \$2,120,023.95.

Eligible postsecondary institutions are required to submit data on the number of individuals who are Federal Pell Grant recipients and recipients of assistance from the Bureau of Indian Affairs who are enrolled in approved CTE programs to the NDE annually.

- 5. Describe how the eligible agency will adjust the data used to make the allocations to reflect any changes in school district boundaries that may have occurred since the population and/or enrollment data was collected, and include local education agencies without geographical boundaries, such as charter schools and secondary schools funded by the Bureau of Indian Education. (Section 131(a)(3) of Perkins V)**

The NDE will adjust the data used to make allocations to reflect changes in school district boundaries operating approved CTE programs by using the criteria established by the NDE for use with the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965.

- 6. If the eligible agency will submit an application for a waiver to the secondary allocation formula described in section 131(a)—**
  - a. include a proposal for such an alternative formula; and**

The NDE will not be submitting an application for a waiver to the secondary allocation formula as described in section 131(a).

- b. describe how the waiver demonstrates that a proposed alternative formula more effectively targets funds on the basis of poverty (as defined by the Office of Management and Budget and revised annually in accordance with section 673(2) of the Community Services Block Grant Act (42 U.S.C. 9902(2)) to local educational agencies with the State. (Section 131(b) of Perkins V)**

**Also indicate if this is a waiver request for which you received approval under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (Perkins IV).**

Not applicable.

**7. If the eligible agency will submit an application for a waiver to the postsecondary allocation formula described in section 132(a)—**

- a. include a proposal for such an alternative formula; and**

The NDE will not be submitting an application for a waiver to the postsecondary allocation formula as described in section 132(a).

- b. describe how the formula does not result in a distribution of funds to the eligible institutions or consortia with the State that have the highest numbers of economically disadvantaged individuals and that an alternative formula will result in such a distribution. (Section 132(b) of Perkins V)**

**Also indicate if this is a waiver request for which you received approval under the prior Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (Perkins IV).**

Not applicable.

**8. If the eligible agency will award reserve funds to eligible recipients under section 112(c) of Perkins V, describe the process and criteria for awarding those funds.**

Funds reserved under Section 112(c) of the Act will be distributed through competitive grants as well as formula-based programs to secondary and postsecondary eligible recipients in support of activities that align with the guiding principles and strategic priorities of Nebraska CTE. Additionally, activities in support of innovation, development of resources, and efforts that serve as best practice models, provide services to regions or statewide entities, support program of study quality, improve equity and access, and create opportunities for synergy and networking will be emphasized. The collaboration among entities to reduce the duplication of resources and efforts in Nebraska to support the implementation of the Nebraska CTE system are a priority in the awarding of funds to eligible agencies.

**9. Provide the State's fiscal effort per student, or aggregate expenditures for the State, that will establish the baseline for the Secretary's annual determination on whether the State has maintained its fiscal effort, and indicate whether the baseline is a continuing level or new level. If the baseline is new, please provide the fiscal effort per student, or aggregate expenditures for the State, for the preceding fiscal year. (Section 211(b)(1)(D) of Perkins V)**

Nebraska's aggregate expenditures that will establish a baseline for the Secretary's annual determination on whether the State has maintained its fiscal effort is \$787,606.68. This baseline is a continuing level.

## **D. Accountability for Results**

**1. Identify and include at least one (1) of the following indicators of career and**

**technical education program quality—**

- a. **the percentage of CTE concentrators (see Text Box 6 for the statutory definition of a CTE concentrator under section 3(12) of Perkins V) graduating from high school having attained a recognized postsecondary credential;**
- b. **the percentage of CTE concentrators graduating high school having attained postsecondary credits in relevant career and technical education programs and programs of study earned through a dual or concurrent enrollment program or another credit transfer agreement; and/or**
- c. **the percentage of CTE concentrators graduating from high school having participated in work-based learning. (Section 113(b)(2)(A)(iv)(I) of Perkins V)**

**Include any other measure(s) of student success in career and technical education that are statewide, valid, and reliable, and comparable across the State. (Section 113(b)(2)(A)(iv)(II) of Perkins V). Please note that inclusion of “other” program quality measure(s) is optional for States.**

**Provide the eligible agency’s measurement definition with a numerator and denominator for each of the quality indicator(s) the eligible agency selects to use.**

Nebraska will examine the percentage of CTE concentrators graduating from high school having participated in work-based learning as its CTE program quality indicator.

This indicator was selected based on aligned agency priorities and overwhelming consensus from stakeholder engagement efforts. Work-based learning was identified as a priority for Nebraska CTE across all stakeholder groups, and identified as both an impactful focus area and an area in great need of improvement to ensure Nebraska CTE meets the needs of all learners. When directly asked which of the three potential program quality indicators Nebraska CTE should select, 45% of respondents selected work-based learning, with the next most common response being the attainment of CTE postsecondary credit 22%. Holding secondary recipients accountable for the work-based learning opportunities provided supports improving the quality of all CTE programs by ensuring all students, including those from special populations, have an equitable opportunity to participate in these experiences.

The measurement definition for this indicator (5S3) states:

**Numerator:** Number of CTE concentrators who, in the reporting year, graduated from high school having participated in work-based learning.

**Denominator:** Number of CTE concentrators who graduated from high school during the reporting year.

*\*Work-based learning does not include workplace experience strategies that are simply awareness or exploratory in nature. See <https://www.education.ne.gov/workplace-experiences/continuum/> for additional information.*

2. Provide on the form in Section V.B, for each year covered by the State plan beginning in FY 2020, State determined performance levels for each of the secondary and postsecondary core indicators, with the levels of performance being the same for all CTE concentrators in the State. (Section 113(b)(3)(A)(i)(I) of Perkins V).

Nebraska’s State determined levels of performance will also act as the performance targets for local levels of performance. No negotiations for individual levels of performance with local recipients will occur.

Definitions for each indicator can be found in Section V of this Plan.

<b>Perkins V State Determined Levels of Performance</b>					
<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Reporting Year</b>				
	<b>Baseline (FY19)</b>	<b>2021 (FY 20)</b>	<b>2022 (FY 21)</b>	<b>2023 (FY 22)</b>	<b>2024 (FY 23)</b>
<b>SECONDARY</b>					
1S1: Graduation Rate	<b>93.57%</b>	94.23%	94.89%	95.55%	96.21%
2S1: Proficiency in reading/language arts	<b>52.97%</b>	53.15%	53.33%	53.51%	53.69%
2S2: Proficiency in mathematics	<b>50.72%</b>	52.21%	53.69%	55.18%	56.66%
2S3: Proficiency in science	<b>55.57%</b>	56.81%	58.04%	59.28%	60.51%
3S1: Post-program placement	<b>79.05%</b>	80.20%	81.35%	82.50%	83.65%
4S1: Non-traditional concentration	<b>19.70%</b>	21.27%	22.85%	24.42%	25.90%
5S3: Participation in work-based learning	<b>5.31%</b>	6.70%	8.09%	9.47%	10.86%
<b>POSTSECONDARY</b>					
1P1: Postsecondary retention & placement	<b>76.08%</b>	77.27%	78.47%	79.66%	80.85%
2P1: Recognized postsecondary credential	<b>39.45%</b>	39.90%	40.36%	40.81%	41.26%
3P1: Non-traditional concentration	<b>19.54%</b>	20.27%	20.99%	21.72%	22.44%

- 3. Describe the procedure the eligible agency adopted for determining State determined levels of performance described in section 113 of Perkins V, which at a minimum shall include—**
- a. a description of the process for public comment under section 113(b)(3)(B) of Perkins V as part of the development of the State determined levels of performance (see Text Box 7 for the statutory requirements for consultation on State determined performance levels under section 113(b)(3)(B) of Perkins V);**

The State determined levels of performance were determined based on a longitudinal analysis of past performance in addition to meaningful stakeholder engagement. Additionally, the proposed measurement definitions and levels of performance were posted on the NDE's website for public comment for 60 days. Nebraska CTE notified education leaders from community colleges, secondary administrators, and teachers to seek input. Additional input was solicited from stakeholders through normal channels of communication and during the public hearings. Social media and local news outlets were also utilized to solicit input.

- b. an explanation for the State determined levels of performance that meet each of the statutory requirements in Text Box 8; and**
- c. a description of how the State determined levels of performance set by the eligible agency align with the levels, goals and objectives other Federal and State laws, (Section 122(d)(10) of Perkins V).**

**As part of the procedures for determining State determined levels of performance, describe the process that will be used to establish a baseline for those levels.**

Nebraska's baseline and State determined levels of performance were computed using a 95% confidence interval of the autoregressive integrated moving average (ARIMA), and, based only on the new definition of a CTE Concentrator per Perkins V (see section B(2)(b)(7) of this Plan). A historical trend analysis of the Perkins performance indicators and projections can be found in Appendix G. The NDE's estimated baselines mark the beginning of progress towards improvement in the State during the four-year plan in Perkins V. Where applicable, Nebraska's ESSA plan was reviewed to ensure that secondary metrics aligned with the NDE's goals related to graduation rate and related assessments. As we have inconsistently collected data related to work-based learning and there is no current statewide system to track these experiences, additional reporting mechanisms and increased participation have been identified as priorities for Nebraska CTE and the NDE and will be addressed throughout the duration of this Plan (including improving and expanding data systems). The targets set by other states were reviewed in detail for comparability purposes. Nebraska's targets align with states similar in size, structure, and administration.

It should be noted that between 2012-2016 and 2016-present, different statewide assessments for reading/language arts, mathematics, and science were used. As such, there is a noticeable performance decline between the 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 assessment years most likely due to the measurement approach.

- 4. Provide a written response to the comments regarding State determined performance levels received during the public comment period pursuant to section 113(b)(3)(B) of Perkins V. (Section 113(b)(3)(B)(iii) of Perkins V).**

**As part of the written response, include a description of any the changes made to the State determined performance levels as a result of stakeholder feedback.**


Responses to public comments are provided in Appendix C of this State plan.

- 5. Describe how the eligible agency will address disparities or gaps in performance as described in section 113(b)(3)(C)(ii)(II) of Perkins V in each of the plan years, and if no meaningful progress has been achieved prior to the third program year, a description of the additional actions the eligible agency will take to eliminate these disparities or gaps. (Section 122(d)(11) of Perkins V)**

The NDE will address disparities or gaps in performance in each of the Plan years by:

- Reviewing student participation and performance data across the state by program, district, community college, and special population;
- Research, identify, and implement evidence-based strategies to support and provide technical assistance to eligible recipients to help close such gaps;
- Through the reVISION (and other NDE) processes and evaluations, local educational agencies are required to analyze performance data, identify effective strategies, and develop a plan to improve CTE students' performance. These data are reviewed in aggregate and disaggregated by race, gender, migrant status, and special population groups, and, across each CTE program area;
- Performance Improvement Plans will be required for recipients who failed to meet at least 90% of the state determined levels of performance for any of the core indicators of performance for all CTE concentrators. The recipient must develop and implement a program improvement plan that includes an analysis of the performance disparities or gaps and actions that will be taken to address such gaps in consultation with local stakeholders, during the first program year succeeding the program year for which the recipient failed to meet any of the levels of performance for any of the core indicators of performance.
  - If an eligible recipient has gaps or deficiencies in performance and no meaningful progress has been achieved prior to the third program year, the NDE will require that a percentage of local Perkins funds be used towards remediation based on consultation with Nebraska CTE staff. The eligible recipient will be required to submit an action plan to the NDE within 30 days of the consultation identifying the disparities or gaps in performance and the specific actions that will be taken. Nebraska CTE staff will review the action plan and the parties will come to a final consensus on a plan of action. One-third (or 33%) of the eligible recipients grant funds in the succeeding fiscal year must be spent on enacting the action plan approved by the NDE. The action plan will be reviewed annually and will remain in place until the disparities or gaps in performance have been resolved. Action plans should additionally reflect needs identified throughout the reVISION process that are consistent with the requirements of the Act.
  - The NDE may, after notice and opportunity for a hearing, withhold from the eligible recipient all, or a portion, of the eligible recipient's allotment under this title if the eligible recipient fails to implement an improvement plan with respect to any specific





core indicator of performance that was identified in a program improvement plan or fails to meet at least 90 percent of the local level of performance for such core indicator for two consecutive years after the eligible recipient has been identified for improvement.

- Promoting examples of effective program improvement strategies include reinforcing English/language arts, mathematics, and science instruction in CTE curricula, increasing instructional planning time for academic and CTE teachers, and additional training for meeting the needs of students from special populations.

## SECTION III: ASSURANCES, CERTIFICATIONS, AND OTHER FORMS

### A. Statutory Assurances

✓ The eligible agency assures that:

- It made the State plan publicly available for public comment for a period of not less than 30 days, by electronic means and in an easily accessible format, prior to submission to the Secretary for approval and such public comments were taken into account in the development of this State plan. (Section 122(a)(4) of Perkins V)
- It will use the funds to promote preparation for high-skill, high-wage, or in-demand industry sectors or occupations and non-traditional fields, as identified by the State. (Section 122(d)(13)(C) of Perkins V)
- It will provide local educational agencies, area career and technical education schools, and eligible institutions in the State with technical assistance, including technical assistance on how to close gaps in student participation and performance in career and technical education programs. (Section 122(d)(13)(E) of Perkins V)
- It will comply with the requirements of this Act and the provisions of the State plan, including the provision of a financial audit of funds received under this Act, which may be included as part of an audit of other Federal or State programs. (Section 122(d)(13)(A) of Perkins V)
- None of the funds expended under this Act will be used to acquire equipment (including computer software) in any instance in which such acquisition results in a direct financial benefit to any organization representing the interests of the acquiring entity or the employees of the acquiring entity, or any affiliate of such an organization. (Section 122(d)(13)(B) of Perkins V)
- It will use the funds provided under this Act to implement career and technical education programs and programs of study for individuals in State correctional institutions, including juvenile justice facilities. (Section 122 (d)(13)(D) of Perkins V)

## B. EDGAR Certifications

- ✓ By submitting a Perkins V State plan, consistent with 34 CFR 76.104, the eligible agency certifies that:
  1. It is eligible to submit the Perkins State plan.
  2. It has authority under State law to perform the functions of the State under the Perkins program(s).
  3. It legally may carry out each provision of the plan.
  4. All provisions of the plan are consistent with State law.
  5. A State officer, specified by title in Item C on the Cover Page, has authority under State law to receive, hold, and disburse Federal funds made available under the plan.
  6. The State officer who submits the plan, specified by title in Item C on the Cover Page, has authority to submit the plan.
  7. The entity has adopted or otherwise formally approved the plan.
  8. The plan is the basis for State operation and administration of the Perkins program

## C. Other Forms

- ✓ The eligible agency certifies and assures compliance with the following enclosed forms:
  1. Assurances for Non-Construction Programs (SF 424B) Form (OMB Control No. 0348-0040) - <https://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/sf424b.pdf>
  2. Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF LLL) (OMB Control No. 4040-0013): [https://apply07.grants.gov/apply/forms/sample/SFLLL\\_1\\_2-V1.2.pdf](https://apply07.grants.gov/apply/forms/sample/SFLLL_1_2-V1.2.pdf)
  3. Certification Regarding Lobbying (ED 80-0013 Form): <https://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/ed80-013.pdf>
  4. 4. General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) 427 Form (OMB Control No. 1894-0005): <https://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/gepa427.pdf>

## SECTION IV: BUDGET

### B. Budget Form

State Name: Nebraska

Fiscal Year (FY): 2020

Line Number	Budget Item	Percent of Funds	Amount of Funds
1	<b>Total Perkins V Allocation</b>	Not applicable	\$7,335,723.00
2	<b>State Administration</b>	5%	\$366,786.15
3	<b>State Leadership</b>	10%	\$733,572.30
4	✓ Individuals in State Institutions	1.9%	\$13,937.87
4a	– Correctional Institutions	Not required	--
4b	– Juvenile Justice Facilities	Not required	--
4c	– Institutions that Serve Individuals with Disabilities	Not required	--
5	✓ Non-traditional Training and Employment	Not required	\$60,000
6	✓ Special Populations Recruitment	.1%	\$733.57
7	<b>Local Formula Distribution</b>	85%	\$6,235,364.55
8	✓ Reserve	15%	\$935,304.68
9	– Secondary Recipients	Not required	--
10	– Postsecondary Recipients	Not required	--
11	✓ Allocation to Eligible Recipients	70%	\$5,300,059.87
12	– Secondary Recipients	60%	\$3,180,035.92
13	– Postsecondary Recipients	40%	\$2,120,023.95
14	State Match ( <i>from non-federal funds</i> )	Not applicable	\$787,606.68

## SECTION V: STATE DETERMINED LEVELS OF PERFORMANCE

Secondary Performance Indicator Definitions		
<p><b>Academic Year:</b> 2019-2020  <b>Perkins Reporting Year:</b> 2020-2021  <b>Enrollment/Performance Data Used:</b> 2019-2020  <b>Placement Data Used:</b> 2018-2019</p>		
<p><b>Secondary Student Definitions:</b></p> <p>Concentrator: A secondary student who, in grades 9-12, has earned credit in at least two courses in a single career cluster program at the intermediate or capstone level.</p>		
INDICATOR	INDICATOR DEFINITION	ENROLLED OR EXIT COHORT
<p><b>(1S1)</b>  <b>Four-Year Graduation Rate</b></p>	<p><b>Numerator:</b> The number of CTE concentrators who graduated from high school, as measured by the four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate.</p> <p><b>Denominator:</b> Number of CTE concentrators who, in the reporting year, were included in the State’s computation of its adjusted four-year cohort graduation rate as defined in the State’s Consolidated Accountability Plan.</p>	<p>Exiting Students</p>
<p><b>(2S1)</b>  <b>Academic Proficiency in Reading / Language Arts</b></p>	<p><b>Numerator:</b> Number of CTE concentrators who achieved reading/language arts proficiency on the statewide high school reading/language arts assessment (ACT or NSCAS-Alt) and who, in the reporting year, graduated high school.</p> <p><b>Denominator:</b> Number of CTE concentrators who took the statewide high school assessments in reading/language arts (ACT or NSCAS-Alt) whose scores were included in the State’s ESEA accountability reporting and who, in the reporting year, graduated high school.</p>	<p>Exiting Students</p>
<p><b>(2S2)</b>  <b>Academic Proficiency in Mathematics</b></p>	<p><b>Numerator:</b> Number of CTE concentrators who achieved mathematics proficiency on the statewide high school reading/language arts assessment (ACT or NSCAS-Alt) and who, in the reporting year, graduated high school.</p> <p><b>Denominator:</b> Number of CTE concentrators who took the statewide high school assessment in mathematics (ACT or NSCAS-</p>	<p>Exiting Students</p>

	Alt) whose scores were included in the State’s ESEA accountability reporting, and who, in the reporting year, graduated from high school.	
<b>(2S3) Academic Proficiency in Science</b>	<p><b>Numerator:</b> Number of CTE concentrators who achieved science proficiency on the statewide high school science assessment (ACT or NSCAS-Alt) and who, in the reporting year, graduated high school.</p> <p><b>Denominator:</b> Number of CTE concentrators who took the statewide high school assessment in science (ACT or NSCAS-Alt) whose scores were included in the State’s ESEA accountability reporting and who, in the reporting year, graduated high school.</p>	Exiting Students
<b>(3S1) Post-Program Placement</b>	<p><b>Numerator:</b> The number of CTE concentrators who, in the second quarter after graduating from high school in the previous reporting year, are in postsecondary education or advanced training, military service or a service program that receives assistance under Title I of the National and Community Service Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12511 et seq.), are volunteers as described in section 5(1) of the Peace Corps Act (22 U.S.C. 2504(a)) or are employed. (<i>Concentrators who graduated by June 30, 2018 would be assessed between October 1, 2018 and December 31, 2018</i>).</p> <p><b>Denominator:</b> The number of CTE concentrators who graduated high school during the previous reporting year.</p>	Previous Year / Exiting Students
<b>(4S1) Nontraditional Program Concentration</b>	<p><b>Numerator:</b> Number of CTE concentrators from underrepresented gender groups enrolled in CTE programs and programs of study that lead to non-traditional fields.</p> <p><b>Denominator:</b> Number of CTE concentrators enrolled in a CTE program or program of study that leads to a non-traditional field, during the reporting year.</p>	Active / Enrolled
<b>(5S3) Participation in Work-based Learning</b>	<p><b>Numerator:</b> Number of CTE concentrators who, in the reporting year, graduated from high school having participated in work-based learning.</p> <p><b>Denominator:</b> Number of CTE concentrators who graduated from high school during the reporting year.</p> <p><i>*Work-based learning does not include workplace experience strategies that are simply awareness or exploratory in nature.</i></p>	Exiting Students

## Postsecondary Performance Indicator Definitions

**Academic Year:** 2019-2020  
**Perkins Reporting Year:** 2020-2021  
**Enrollment/Performance Data Used:** 2019-2020  
**Placement Data Used:** 2018-2019

**Postsecondary Student Definition:**

**Concentrator:** A postsecondary student who, in the reporting year, has earned twelve (12) credits in a *single* CTE program OR completed a CTE program if that program encompasses fewer than twelve (12) credits.

INDICATOR	INDICATOR DEFINITION	ENROLLED OR EXIT COHORT
(1P1) Postsecondary Retention and Placement	<p><b>Numerator:</b> Number of CTE concentrators who, during the second quarter after program completion, remain enrolled in postsecondary education, are in advanced training, military service, or a service program that receives assistance under Title 1 of the National and Community Service Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12511 et seq.), are volunteers as described in section 5(1) of the Peace Corps Act (22 U.S.C. 2504(a)) or are retained in employment. <i>(Concentrators who graduated by June 30, 2018 would be assessed between October 1, 2018 and December 31, 2018).</i></p> <p><b>Denominator:</b> Number of CTE concentrators who completed their program in the reporting year.</p> <p><i>*Retention includes students who remained enrolled in their original postsecondary institution or transferred to another 2- or 4- year institution during the reporting year.</i></p>	Previous Year/ Exiting Students
(2P1) Earned Recognized Postsecondary Credential	<p><b>Numerator:</b> Number of CTE concentrators who receive a recognized postsecondary credential during participation in or within one (1) year of program completion.</p> <p><b>Denominator:</b> Number of CTE concentrators who left postsecondary education in the prior reporting year.</p> <p><i>*A recognized postsecondary credential includes an industry-recognized certification, a certificate of completion of an apprenticeship, an occupational licensure, an associate's degree, or a bachelor's degree.</i></p>	Active/ Enrolled; as well as Exiting Students

(3P1) Non- Traditional Program Concentration	<p><b>Numerator:</b> Number of CTE concentrators, from underrepresented gender groups, enrolled in CTE program and programs of study that lead to non-traditional fields during the reporting year.</p> <p><b>Denominator:</b> Number of CTE concentrators enrolled in a CTE program of program of study that leads to a non-traditional field during the reporting year.</p>	Active / Enrolled
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<b>Perkins V State Determined Levels of Performance</b>					
<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Reporting Year</b>				
	<b>Baseline (FY19)</b>	<b>2021 (FY 20)</b>	<b>2022 (FY 21)</b>	<b>2023 (FY 22)</b>	<b>2024 (FY 23)</b>
<b>SECONDARY</b>					
1S1: Graduation Rate	<b>93.57%</b>	94.23%	94.89%	95.55%	96.21%
2S1: Proficiency in reading/language arts	<b>52.97%</b>	53.15%	53.33%	53.51%	53.69%
2S2: Proficiency in mathematics	<b>50.72%</b>	52.21%	53.69%	55.18%	56.66%
2S3: Proficiency in science	<b>55.57%</b>	56.81%	58.04%	59.28%	60.51%
3S1: Post-program placement	<b>79.05%</b>	80.20%	81.35%	82.50%	83.65%
4S1: Non-traditional concentration	<b>19.70%</b>	21.27%	22.85%	24.42%	25.90%
5S3: Participation in work-based learning	<b>5.31%</b>	6.70%	8.09%	9.47%	10.86%
<b>POSTSECONDARY</b>					
1P1: Postsecondary retention & placement	<b>76.08%</b>	77.27%	78.47%	79.66%	80.85%
2P1: Recognized postsecondary credential	<b>39.45%</b>	39.90%	40.36%	40.81%	41.26%
3P1: Non-traditional concentration	<b>19.54%</b>	20.27%	20.99%	21.72%	22.44%





It is the policy of the Nebraska Department of Education not to discriminate on the basis of gender, disability, race, color, religion, marital status, age, or national origin in its education programs, administration, policies, employment, or other agency programs.