

A Unified Statewide Vision

Aligning ESSA, Perkins V and WIOA Across the Lifespan

The reauthorization of three federal statutes — the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, the Every Student Succeeds Act and Perkins V — has given states the chance, and an unprecedented flexibility, to align all three in powerful ways. *The time to act is now.* Any state whose legislators, departments and agencies work to implement them as one coherent system will immeasurably improve the lives of its citizens. Partnerships between educators and business leaders, policymakers and parents will build both trust and engagement, reaping benefits such as funding flexibility, equity and accountability.

This will require not just quick action but the vision to perceive “student development” as a seamless arc from childhood to adulthood, pre-K to secondary to postsecondary to career training. The prize? An efficient and effective workforce, boosted economic vitality, stronger communities and more successful, productive lives.

Questions for the State Education Agency

1. How does the state ESSA plan define college and career readiness?
2. Is career readiness a part of the state accountability model, and does the state share career readiness measures on the state report card?
3. Who was involved in the development of the state ESSA plan? Will some of the same individuals be involved in the development of the state Perkins V plan?
4. How is the state collecting data related to student completion of career pathway programs of study, and are these data shared with the state higher education agency and workforce development agency?
5. How does or could the state incentivize opportunities for early postsecondary and career experiences like dual enrollment and work-based learning?
6. What secondary program of quality indicator is the state considering for the Perkins plan?
 - a. Attainment of recognized postsecondary credentials and industry certifications
 - b. Attainment of postsecondary credit in the CTE program
 - c. Participation in work-based learning experiences like internships, co-ops or apprenticeships

Questions for Higher Education Agency

7. How does the higher education agency work with the state education agency to align programs of study for high-wage, high-skill, in-demand careers?
8. What current policies incentivize early postsecondary opportunities like dual enrollment for high school students?
9. How do postsecondary institutions prioritize the use of Perkins funds?
10. Has the state considered the implementation of “ceilings” and “floors” related to how colleges and universities use the Perkins basic grant?
11. How does the state use labor market data to determine whether to implement or eliminate programs?
12. How does the higher education agency interact with the state or local workforce innovation and opportunity boards?

Questions for the Workforce Development Agency

13. Who was involved in the creation of the state's WIOA plan? Were representatives for the state education agency and higher education agency involved?
14. Does the state plan address training for out-of-school youth?
15. Has the Workforce Development agency considered working with the fiscal agent of the Perkins Act to create a consolidated plan?

Questions for the State Education Agency and Higher Education Agency

16. Have there been discussions about the braiding or leveraging of funding from the three federal acts to develop career pathways that align with leading economic sectors in the state or region?
17. How could state leaders work together across agencies to better streamline and strengthen all three plans?
18. What state policies, funding or programs could help integrate efforts in K-12, CTE, higher education and workforce?
19. How is the state addressing access and equity related to high-quality programs of study within career pathways?
20. What is the secondary/postsecondary split of Perkins funds, and how is the split determined?
21. What is the process for determining how the Perkins State Leadership funds (up to 15 percent of the state's total allocation) are allocated and distributed? Are the allocations determined by a cross-agency committee?

Questions for All Three State Agencies

22. Are there common definitions for career pathways in the state's ESSA, Perkins and WIOA plans?
23. What steps have been taken to more closely align performance indicators for ESSA, Perkins and WIOA?
24. Have funds in the state's ESSA, Perkins and WIOA plans been allocated for career advising programs?
25. How often do the three state agencies meet to discuss the common components of ESSA, Perkins V and WIOA?
26. What incentives would encourage more collaboration among state agencies and integration of the three federal acts?

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