Section A: Cover Sheet

Consolidated Annual Performance, Accountability, and Financial Status Report For State-Administered Vocational Education Programs

Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Act of 1998 (Perkins III)

1. ***RECIPIENT ORGANIZATION***
N. C. Department of Public Instruction
301 North Wilmington Street
Raleigh, North Carolina 27601

2. ***PR/AWARD NUMBERS:***
Basic Grant to States: VO48A010033

Tech-Prep Education: V243A010033

3. ***RECIPIENT IDENTIFYING NUMBER:*** 067195610

4. ***PERIOD COVERED BY THIS REPORT (mm/dd/yy):*** From: July 1, 2003 To: June 30, 2004

5. ***REMARKS:*** This document contains North Carolina's annual report for the basic grant and tech prep grant programs authorized by Perkins III, P.L. 105-332.

6. ***CERTIFICATION:*** I certify to the best of my knowledge and belief that this report, including the attached FORMS I-IV and Narrative Performance Report, is correct and complete and that all outlays and unliquidated obligations are for the purposes set forth in the award documents.

SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED CERTIFYING OFFICIAL:	DATE REPORT SUBMITTED:
	December 4, 2003
TYPED OR PRINTED NAME AND TITLE:	TELEPHONE (Including Area Code):
Howard N. Lee, Chairman State Board of Education	919-807-3815

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Section B:

Secondary Executive Summary

Career-Technical Education

Career-Technical Education in North Carolina* is organized in grades 6 through 12 in the public school system. The program begins with exploratory courses and leads to specialized classroom instruction.

Mission

The mission of career-technical education is to empower students for effective participation in an international economy as world-class workers and citizens.

Purposes

The purposes of Career-Technical Education are to

- Prepare students for further career-technical education and lifelong learning.
- Prepare students for initial and continued employment.
- Assist students in making educational and career decisions.
- Apply and reinforce related learnings from other disciplines.
- Assist students in developing decision-making, communications, problem-solving, leadership, and citizenship skills.
- Prepare students to make informed consumer decisions and apply practical life skills.
- Make appropriate provisions for students with special needs to succeed in career-technical education programs.

* For purposes of this report, Career-Technical Education (CTE) is also referred to, and is synonymous with the term Vocational and Technical Education.

Department of Public Instruction

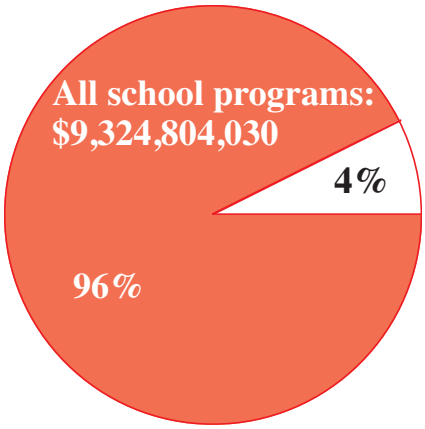
Served:

115 Local Education Agencies (LEAs)

338 Secondary Schools

9 Career Centers

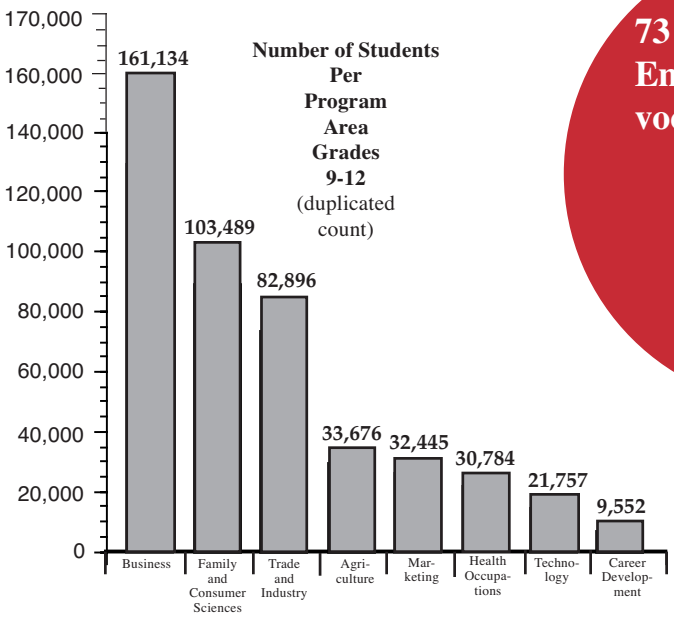
Total Educational Expenditures: (2002-2003)

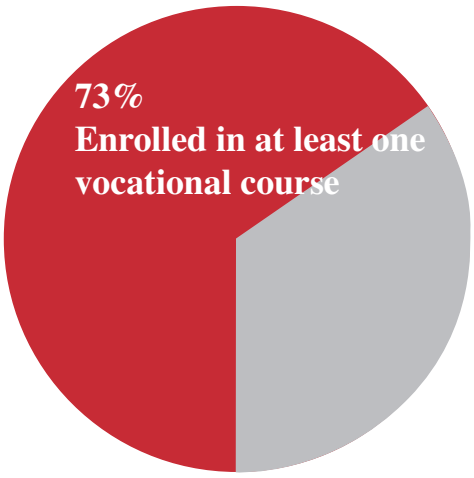


All vocational programs: $327,242,614

Career-Technical Education

Total statewide enrollment in Grades 9-12:	368,598
Total statewide student enrollment in Career-Technical Education, Grades 9-12: (unduplicated count)	270,418*





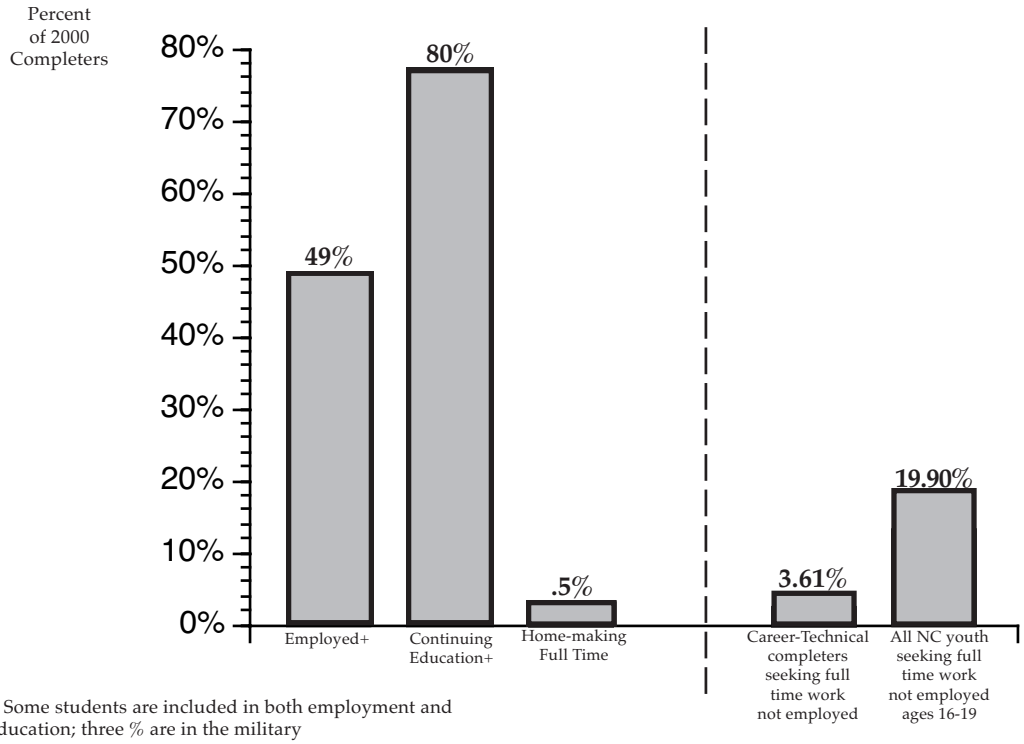
*Total student enrollment for Career-Technical Education Grades 6-8: 361,145 (unduplicated count)

Program Areas

Agriculture
Business and Information Technology
Career Development
Family and Consumer Sciences
Health Occupations
Marketing
Technology
Trade and Industrial

Completers of Career-Technical Education

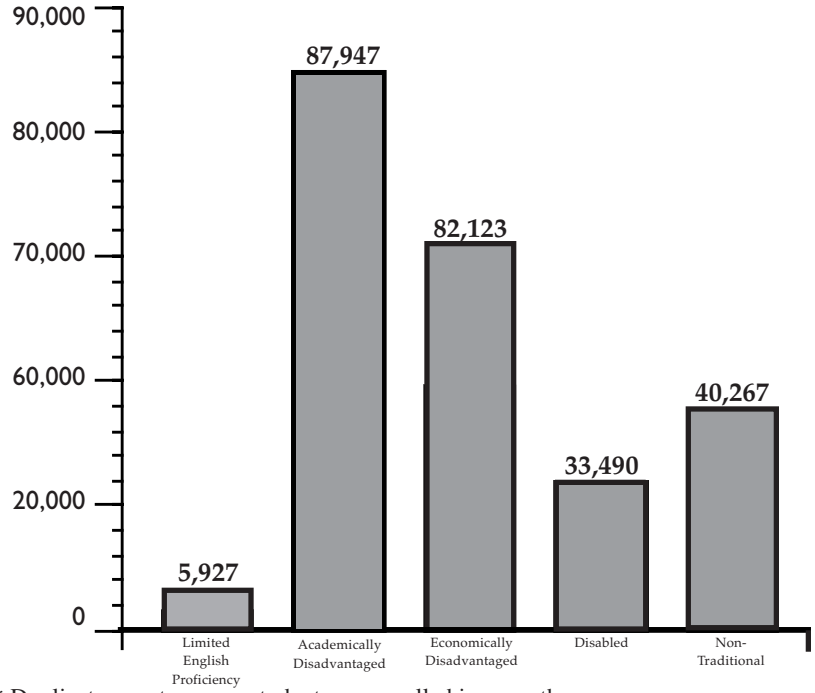
Status of the 32,019 Career-Technical Education Completers:



+ Some students are included in both employment and education; three % are in the military

Special Populations in Career-Technical Education Enrollment

Number of Special Populations Students in Grades 9-12*



* Duplicate count = some students are enrolled in more than one program area.

With funds provided under the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Act of 1998, the following were a few of the programs, services, and activities conducted:

Curriculum

- **Curriculum Development** – 31 curriculum guides and 71 course blueprints were developed/revised for student assessment measurement purposes.
- **Test Item Bank Development** – 59 new test item banks were developed.

Professional Development

- **Professional Development** with state-of-the-art technology – 163 staff development workshops/conferences were implemented for 12,424 participants; NC Information Highway, Distance Learning by Satellite, virtual classroom and the Internet, to include on-line instruction, were used to provide professional development.

Assessment

- **Assessment of Courses** was conducted through the following strategies:
  - Accountability was provided through on-site visits to 16 schools using the *High Schools That Work* program;
  - Five course sequences were correlated to national industry standards and national curriculum standards;
  - Career planning programs were developed and implemented in all 115 local education agencies;
  - Twenty course blueprints were reviewed to ensure inclusion of career planning, all aspects of the industry, and principle concepts that supported nontraditional employment;
  - Fifty-nine classroom assessment test item banks were developed;
  - All post assessment test item banks were reviewed to ensure support and inclusion of nontraditional employment and training.
  - Reliability study was conducted for over 12,000 test items;
  - Validation was conducted for 64 courses with 500+ participants;
  - Four focus groups gave input on the College Tech Prep plan and local partnering; and
  - Ninety-two nurse aide program audits were conducted.

Definitions

The following definitions were used for program year 2003-2004:

Vocational Concentrator: A student who completes four vocational (career-technical education) credits in a career major (threshold level of vocational education) *and* who graduates. This definition has not changed from the previous program year.

Tech Prep Student: A concentrator who completes four credits of English, three credits of mathematics, three credits of science, three credits of social studies, one credit of health and physical education, four credits of career-technical courses, two elective credits for a total of 20 credits (plus any local requirements) *and* who scores proficient on the North Carolina Exit Exam (ASSET). This definition is the same as for the previous program year (2002-2003).

The remainder of this report (Secondary Narrative) addresses the progress North Carolina made in implementing the State Plan. It emphasizes accountability for performance and fiscal management in contributing to the education goals of local education agencies for all career-technical students. All baseline data were obtained from most recent years' databanks. The narrative which follows:

- Incorporates the accountability reporting requirements under Section 113 of the Perkins III Act;
- Includes the reporting requirements under the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (34 CFR Part 80.40 and 80.41);
- Streamlines program administration by eliminating duplication and unnecessary information; and
- Continues to be a "developing" document/instrument as consultation with federal officials and USDE guidelines are provided and plans are implemented.

Secondary Narrative Report

State Administration

I. a. State Roles/Responsibilities Summary

As directed by the North Carolina State Board of Education, the FY2004 federal grant and the contents of this report reflect the two-thirds/one-third split by secondary and postsecondary education and the appropriate clientele served at each level. Pursuant to the Perkins III Act, the North Carolina State Board of Education is the state agency for Vocational and Technical Education of which Dr. Mike Ward, State Superintendent, was a member. Dr. Elsie Leak is the Assistant State Superintendent and Dr. Wandra Polk then follows in this direct line of supervision acting as the State Director of Vocational and Technical Education hereto referred to as Career-Technical Education (CTE).

I. b. 1. and 2. Required Activities/Permissive Activities

State Leadership

The Career-Technical Education program includes a Standard Course of Study for secondary education in eight content areas: agricultural education, business and information technology education, career development education, family and consumer sciences education, health occupations education, marketing education, technology education, and trade and industrial education. Within each content area, cumulative activities were noted:

- **Curriculum Development:** Validated and determined reliability levels for student assessment measures for 64 course blueprints; aligned five courses with national curriculum standards; and guided local school systems to update and to implement/improve programs.
- **Test Item Bank Development:** Developed 59 test item banks.
- **Professional Development:** Implemented/coordinated staff development for 163 events and 12,424 participants; State-of-the-art technology uses included the North Carolina Information Highway, Distance Learning by Satellite, virtual classroom, the Internet to include on-line instructions, voice recognition software and digital communication systems.
- **Assessment of Courses** was conducted through the following strategies:
  - Accountability was provided through over 32 on-site visits to schools using the *High Schools That Work* program;
  - Five course sequences were correlated to national industry standards and national curriculum standards;
  - Career planning programs were developed and implemented in all 115 local education agencies, with career plans plus for students identified as special populations.
  - All course blueprints were reviewed to ensure inclusion of career planning, all aspects of the industry, and principle concepts that supported nontraditional employment and training.
  - Fifty-nine classroom assessment test item banks were developed.
  - All post assessment test item banks were reviewed to ensure support and inclusion of nontraditional employment and training.
  - Reliability study was conducted for over 12,000 test items.
  - Validation was conducted for 64 courses, using over 500+ participants.
  - Six focus groups gave input on College Tech Prep and other aspects of educational issues.
  - Ninety-two nurse aide program audits were conducted.

- **Promotion of Business and Industry Partnerships** were continued with the
  - Labor Department
  - Commerce Department
  - Employment Security Commission
  - Community College System
  - 2,000 plus business/industry representatives
  - North Carolina Hospital Association
  - North Carolina Association for Biomedical Technology

  These groups were involved in:
  - Local School Systems Partnerships
  - College Tech Strategic Planning
  - Curriculum development
  - Staff development
  - Career-Technical Student Organizations
    - Test validations assessment and reliability to include business/ industry focus groups

  Employer ratings of Vocational completers were ranked consistently as meeting and/or exceeding workplace standards.

- **Systems building:** Collaborated with groups and individuals regarding building a systems network for
  - Workforce Investment Act
  - *High Schools That Work*
  - College Tech Prep
  - Business and Industry Symposiums
  - Health Care Industry

  Provided a variety of types of vocational/Career-Technical Education information for local, state, and federal agencies on
  - Enrollments
  - Completions
  - Employer feedback
  - Student and completer performance

Activities and Outcome

I. b. 3. Core Indicator Activities

Curriculum: The secondary education system upgraded the Internet-based Planning and Performance Management System (PPMS) to incorporate a variety of interrelated systems that display and accelerate performance of vocational/ career-technical education students. The PPMS can be found online at

http://wdeppms.dpi.state.nc.us/wdeppms.nsf

Logon and password is *guest*.

Conducted meetings with a variety of education and business groups to gain input into reaching the core indicator measures as noted in the Perkins III Act.

Updated the test item banks for the CTE courses to be tested for skill development competence.

Utilized e-groups to share information essential for improvement of CTE composed of CTE administrators, teacher educators and business/ industry representatives;
Began Phase III of PPMS to improve the quality of data and make the system more efficient and effective at all levels (local, state and federal reporting/usage);
Updated the Single Audit Guidelines for CTE program administrator use with Perkins III Act activities; and
Updated the PPMS with built-in automatic monitoring and accountability mechanisms.
Made sure that local plans were tied to each LEA's greatest opportunities for improvement.

The budget activities related to State Leadership are referenced in section C: Financial Status Report.

I. c. Implications

Next Fiscal Year/ State Plan

During the next fiscal year, we will try to regroup the state and local data collection, planning, approval, and monitoring systems.

We also will begin to examine the needs of the PPMS to get ready for the next federal law for CTE.

The data collection system will be improved to better:

- Collect better data more times per year; move the data from localities to the state and support the online Planning and Performance Management System

State-level, regional, and local training will occur at key intervals to:

- Obtain feedback, Implement changes, and re-assess PPMS in its entirety

Additional training will be provided using effective methodologies including the Baldrige system on how to analyze the resulting information and use it systematically to target and improve the lowest performing programs and subgroups in LEAs, schools, and classrooms.

Timelines and deadlines will be examined and reformulated as needed as they affect and are affected by local and state abilities to collect, process, analyze, share, and use information for planning, evaluation, and monitoring.

II. Program Performance

II. a. State Performance Summary

The following indicate progress in performance:
In academic attainment, although all the performance categories made progress, N.C. overall did not attain its performance benchmark. Only one of the 16 subcategories did. That was Tech Prep, which met its individually calculated benchmark based on its initial baseline.

- Technical attainment: The state attained its benchmark, and exceeded next year's also. Only two of the 17 subcategories did not attain theirs: economically disadvantaged and limited English proficient.
- Credential attainment: North Carolina exceeded its benchmark. Plus all 17 of its subcategories did.
- Placement: The state exceeded the performance benchmark in all areas.
- Nontraditional Enrollments: The state did not attain its benchmark. However, two of the 17 subcategories did. They were the categories of disabled and business education.
- Nontraditional Completions: The state did not attain its performance benchmark. However, two of its subcategories did.

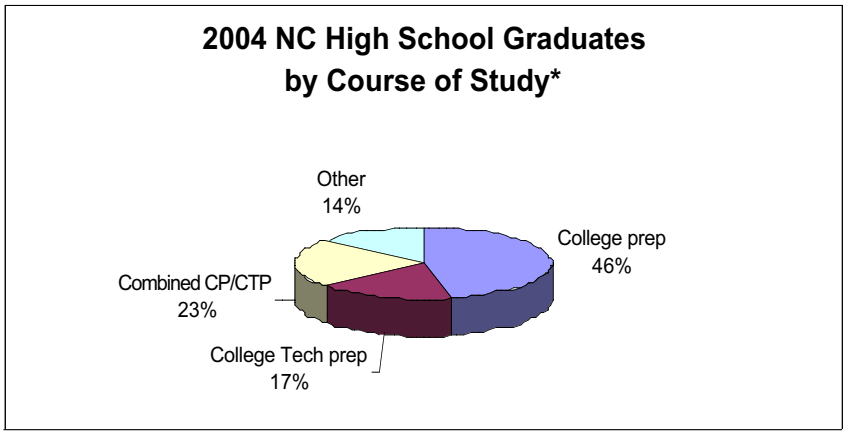
Special Populations

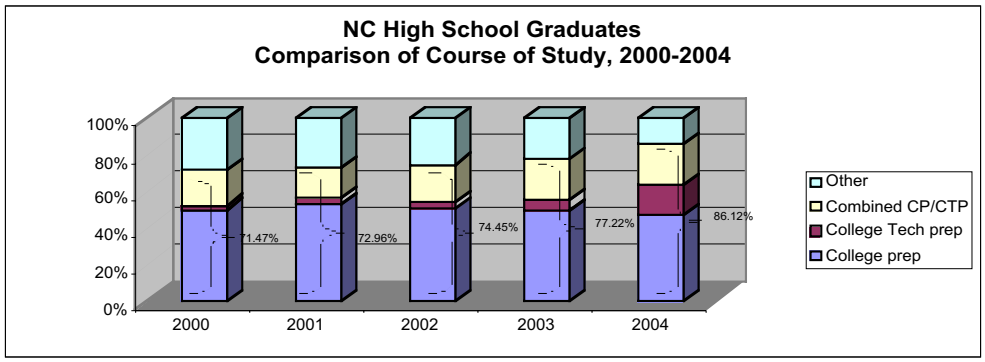
On two performance standards, special populations students overall met their agreed-to benchmarks for the year. The highest scoring grouping of all groups, including Tech Prep, usually is nontraditional students. In most of the performance indicators, economically disadvantaged and disabled students typically are the lowest performers.

Tech Prep

II. b. Career-Technical Concentrators and Tech Prep Students

For definitions please refer to page four.





The courses of study that have shown an increase over prior years is reflecting students graduating in a College Tech Prep or combination College Tech Prep (CTP) and College Prep Course of Study. Six years ago the statewide ABC Accountability program included students graduating with a CTP course of study in their ratings of school performance.

Approaches

II. c. Measurement Approaches and Data Quality Improvement

Measurement approaches used per subindicator were used as follows:

Core indicator	Measurement Approach
1S1	Postsecondary eligibility test scores
1S2	Career Technical Education End-of-Course test scores
2s1a	NA
2s1b	Credentials
3S1	Concentrator follow-up feedback data
3S2	NA
2S1	Enrollment data * nontraditional
4S2	Enrollment and concentrator data * nontraditional

Data Quality

A summary of data quality per subindicator follows:

1S1 - Postsecondary Placement test scores (national Assessment System (ASSET)): North Carolina used the ASSET test in all 115 LEAs in conjunction with the North Carolina community college system. All CTE concentrators were tested statewide in four academic attainment categories: reading, writing, math, and elementary algebra. These data were collected through a statewide checking/editing process to assure all numbers, courses, and student identifiers were valid.

All 2002-2003 end-of-year scores were subtracted from all 2003-2004 agreed-to benchmarks for each of 17 subgroups. These gaps became annual yearly progress benchmarks (AYPs) for the following year. The AYPs indicate each subcategory's distance to go next year to attain it's benchmark. LEAs were ranked from the largest to smallest to show improvement priorities in each LEA and school. This process was followed in all performance indicators.

LEAs are required to target Perkins III resources to their greatest AYPs, especially those for special populations, as well as to their greatest opportunities for improvement overall. Perkins III resources were aligned with LEAs' greatest AYPs in order to have the expenditures of funds approved.

Data Quality Continued

1S2 – Career Technical Education End-of-Course Tests. These technical attainment data were collected through a statewide Internet-based screening process to assure all numbers, courses, and student identification were valid. Performance information for all students were placed in each LEA's PPMS at the LEA and school levels, including for each special populations category, tech prep, and each CTE program area. The AYPs for each of these subcategories and categories were identified and ranked from the largest to smallest for each LEA and school.

2S1a – Not Applicable

2S1b – Credentials: These data were collected statewide and disaggregated for each LEA and school into relevant special populations categories, tech prep, and CTE program areas. Ranked AYPs for each of each of these subcategories and categories were identified.

3S1 – Feedback Data (State Developed and Locally Administered Survey/ Placement Forms): These data were processed as they were the previous year. This methodology is stable and produces reliable information. Performance information for each student, combining data about entering further education and/or work, was inserted into each LEA's PPMS at the LEA and school levels by each special populations category, tech prep, and each CTE program area. AYPs for each of these subcategories and categories were identified and LEAs identified these top opportunities for improvement for each categories.

3S2 – Not Required.

4S1 – Enrollment data * nontraditional (State/Local Administrative Data): These data were inserted again this year into each LEA's online Planning and Performance Management System for the LEA and for each school by each special populations category, tech prep, and each CTE program area. AYPs for each of these subcategories and categories were created from subtracting this year's end-of-year actual score from next year's benchmark. LEAs are expected to target Perkins III resources to their greatest milestones and their greatest opportunities for improvement.

4S2 – Enrollment and concentrator data (State/Local/Administrative Data): These data were placed into each LEA's online Planning and Performance Management System for each LEA and school by each special populations category, tech prep, and each CTE program area. Calculations for AYPs were made for each of these. The AYPs indicate each subcategory's distance to go next year to attain its benchmark. LEAs are expected to target Perkins III resources to their greatest milestones and their greatest opportunities for improvement.

Efforts to Improve Quality

Weekly and special meetings are held with key interagency team participants in collecting, processing, sharing, and using the resulting information to improve programs. Two sets of programming projects that were outsourced were stopped by the agency because of failures in programming: one to improve the quality of the data collected and processed, and another to allow each user to tailor make any reports of results.

Data Quality Continued

II. d. Effectiveness of Improvement Strategies in Previous Program Year

Our focus again was on improving the quality of (a) the data collected, (b) the processes for changing the data into information and (c) reporting. 44 edits make sure that the correct numbers are provided and collected for each LEA, school, 600k students, course, special populations category, and performance score. The collection of statewide enrollments is based on two enrollment collections, one in the spring and fall respectively to capture accurate information for both first and second semesters. Data collection timelines are aligned with other collections of data for special populations. Interfaces enable our data collection processes to access and use other relevant data for each student. Each LEA was provided immediate reports about the quality of its data in all categories. Plans and timelines were set to repeat the above to improve the data collection and processing in the coming year.

Online statewide and regional calendars were developed to identify, coordinate, and manage CTE data collection, processing, and reporting.

A brief summary of usage and improvement strategies for each subindicator follows:

Core Indicator	Usage and improvement strategies
• 1S1	Collected and processed data statewide for most LEAs. Identified data collection problems and solutions for the test providers, the community colleges, the LEAs and schools, and the state-level programmers
• 1S2	Collected and processed data for all LEAs and schools. Processed data correctly for nearly all LEAs and schools. Fixed problems to assure data were valid and reliable.
• 2S1a	Not Applicable
• 2S1b	Provided data back to LEAs to compare with local figures to ascertain validity. Used computer programs to interrelate several databases to provide data by relevant student categories, including special populations, tech prep, and program areas for local users, and in clusters for federal reporting.
• 3S1	Combined follow-up data showing further education outcomes with those showing work outcomes to create scores for each LEA, school, region and statewide, and each student subcategory in each of these levels.
• 3S2	Not Applicable
• 4S1	Provided the percentage scores as well as numbers which generated these percentages to each LEA, school, region, and statewide to determine if these numbers matched those at each scale.
• 4S2	Provided the percentage scores as well as numbers which generated these percentages to each LEA, school, region, and statewide to determine if these numbers matched those at each scale.

Effectiveness

Effectiveness

Results and effectiveness per core indicator follows:

• **1S1** – Directions were refined and shared online during the year. Training was conducted. Data were collected. Results varied by LEA and statewide. Statewide scores were collected for 84% of the graduating concentrators of the relevant high school graduates, up from 74% the previous year. Processes are being developed to account for the percentages of the students unaccounted for. Performance levels were adjusted and resubmitted to OVAE for reconsideration.

Effectiveness Continued

• **1S2** – End-of-course technical attainment tests were taken by 298,438 of the 386,766 enrollees in CTE courses for which there were end-of-course tests. Processes are being developed for the 12% of the students unaccounted for. The data were processed and put into cells for each relevant subcategory of students. Benchmarks were compared for each category and subcategory, to actual scores. Milestones were calculated to determine how far each category and subcategory needed to progress to attain their benchmarks for the coming year.

• **2S1a** – Not applicable

• **2S1b** – Credentials: Calculations were revisited for all performance areas. Improvement methods developed the previous year were put into effect for this year. Some problems were corrected in computer programming.

• **3S1** – Follow-up feedback data: These data were used again in LEAs. The statewide average exceeded the benchmark for the fiscal year.

• **4S1** – Enrollment data * nontraditional: The data were analyzed locally. Approved activities were aligned with the greatest opportunities for improvement.
• **4S2** – Enrollment and concentrator * nontraditional: The data were used and analyzed locally.

Improvement Strategies

II. e. Improvement Strategies for Next Program Year
Based on the State Performance summary (IIa) and the Effectiveness of Improvement Strategies, (IId), improvement strategies were developed and implemented for both local and state levels. We will address the local level first.

Local Improvements
At the local level, there are three sets of opportunities for improvement.

1. All the programs for all the performance categories were audited by a contract programmer in each LEA. Errors were found and corrected.
2. Significant steps have been taken to improve the quality of the data collected for performance measures.
3. Significant steps have been taken to provide more relevant, timely, and accurate information for local use in improving local programs based on the annual evaluation. The online management system used is the Planning and Performance Management System (PPMS). In it, select aspects of Perkins III have been revisited and improved including the Perkins III requirements and permissibles and the programming for performance indicators. Of the five commendations for CTE in North Carolina based on the federal five-year audit last spring, three were about the PPMS.

State Improvements
Multiple and varied training activities were provided about information for improving programs locally. These include the following state level strategies.

Strategies
- At the state level, we will try to determine which of the projects that were stopped because of programming failures will be resurrected.
- The following are a sample of other improvement strategies for the coming program year.

- The CTE Performance Acceleration Academy was begun using part of the federal WD incentive funds that N.C. received for meeting all its performance measures. 35 LEAs have been identified to take part.
- A comprehensive, local self-assessment instrument for high performance CTE was field-tested and refined for these groups.
- A comprehensive local self-assessment instrument for technical attainment will be shared via training.

The highest performing (benchmark) LEAs in technical attainment again will be identified for the training of similar LEAs based on size. The highest performing LEA's in each size category will conduct training for their counterparts on their proven practices for high performance.

- Professional development on using trend data to improve the quality of curriculum will be provided both through the Performance Acceleration Academy and in each region.
- Greater use of business/industry representatives will focus key strategies.
- New CTE director internships will train rookies in high performance management.
- New CTE teacher workshops will show these teachers how to survive and thrive.

Postsecondary

Executive Summary - The North Carolina Community College System utilized administrative funds to support a staff of three consultants, a part-time data analyst, and one support person. The leadership funds were spread over a variety of projects and activities to capitalize on the flexibility offered by the Act. The goal was to positively affect the core indicator activity while fulfilling the required and permissive uses mandated. Projects at several colleges dealing with professional development, academic integration, and technological improvement were funded. As performance results are obtained in the future, comparative analysis will dictate types and direction of succeeding projects.

Negotiations between the U.S. Department of Education and the Community College System resulted in final agreed-upon baseline and performance levels in September 2001. The baseline data is from program year 1999–2000, except for participants who were placed in employment, for which 1998–1999 data is to be used. For reporting purposes, a vocational concentrator is defined as a student who is enrolled in a state-approved curriculum program that leads to an Associate of Applied Science degree, a diploma, or a certificate and who has completed 75% or more of the hours required in the student's major program of study. A postsecondary Tech Prep Student is any student enrolled in a two-year Associate in Applied Science Degree program, a two-year Certificate program, or a registered apprenticeship program at a North Carolina community college who completed a College Tech Prep course-of-study while in high school.

The measurement approaches used for the core indicator data were overall grade point average, state/local administrative data, and record exchange with the Employment Security Commission of North Carolina. The data is considered to be of high quality as it is obtained through the System's Management Information System, which is the consolidating point for all data for all community college activity in North Carolina. There is constant checking for consistency and completeness with feedback to the colleges.

I. Program Administration

a. **State Administration** - State administration funds were used to support salaries of three consultant positions, a halftime system analyst, and one support position. These positions were responsible for refining the State Plan for Vocational and Technical Education, reviewing local plans, monitoring and evaluating program effectiveness, assuring compliance with all applicable Federal laws, and providing technical assistance to all 58 community colleges.

b. **State Leadership** – Leadership funds were used in a variety of ways to promote innovative methods of improving core indicator related activity as well as to meet the uses of the funds required by the Act. A number of activities were funded directly from the System Office (A – D below) while others were released to the colleges through a proposal process (1 – 4). Both rural and urban schools were funded and the thrust and cost of the projects varied with several addressing distance learning and technology issues. A total of 239 faculty, five counselors, and 16 administrators directly participated in these projects.

Directly Funded Projects

A. The colleges of North Carolina's Community College System banded together in an effort called the Virtual Learning Community (VLC). It is a collaborative effort of all 58 colleges, sharing resources and expertise to expand access to quality online courses and support services. Benefits to colleges include: a library of online credit and non-credit courses that can be offered as-is or adapted to local needs; access to Blackboard (the system chosen for statewide delivery of online courses) for development or delivery of online courses or support materials; online and face-to-face faculty training; tips for effective online course delivery; help materials for online students; online student support services; a web listing of online offerings from each college with links back to local web sites; newsletters, online discussion, and mailing lists to spur communication; and evaluation materials for online courses.

In 2003-2004, an additional 11 vocational education courses were added to VLC online course library and 35 existing vocational education courses were updated with Carl D. Perkins Funds. The addition of new courses and updating of existing courses enables the VLC to support the vocational education faculty and students throughout the state.

B. In order to ensure that all of North Carolina's citizens have access to the opportunities available at our colleges, a project addressing the special needs of students identified through the Americans with Disabilities Act was designed and implemented by Blue Ridge, Catawba Valley, and Surry Community Colleges. Through this collaborative effort faculty were trained to understand the issues related to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) as they pertain to students in traditional seat courses as well as courses delivered through a distance education medium; incorporate assistive technologies into the design of courses that will allow students with different learning styles and special needs to successfully complete their courses; acquire skills for effective student engagement techniques in a distance education environment; and disability services providers will receive intensive training in assistive technology in order to meet the colleges' responsibilities to maintain academic standards by providing accommodations without compromising the content, quality or level of instruction.

C. Providing access to high quality professional development activities is a perennial focus of the North Carolina Community College System. To address these needs, the North Carolina Community College System has developed and began implementation of the North Carolina Network for Excellence in Teaching (NC-NET). NC-Net is an online repository of information that provides opportunities for professional development in the areas of greatest need in the 58 community colleges across the state. The project exists entirely in an electronic environment that provides courses delivered via blackboard, as well as, other online content.

D. A looming teacher shortage, combined with the mandates of the No Child Left Behind Act requiring that all teachers be "highly qualified" in the subject areas that they teach, Head Start Performance Standards, North Carolina's More at Four Program Standards, North Carolina Childcare licensing laws, and North Carolina's Smart Start Initiative Performance Based Incentive Standards pose significant challenges for teacher education programs within North Carolina community colleges, each of which offers the Associate of Applied Science in Early Childhood Education degree. To address these regulations, a reference manual was developed and orientation sessions will be held statewide. Each Early Childhood Program at the community colleges benefits from these resources by positively impacting the education programs at community colleges by training faculty in ways that directly impact the foundations of teacher preparation. The expected results of the project are better prepared early childhood teachers and increased articulation with high schools and four-year institutions.

College-Proposed Projects

1. ***Learning Community of Faculty and Staff for Professional Development*** **— Durham Technical Community College**. Appropriately, community colleges focus intently on providing the best possible learning opportunities for students; however; this intentional focus is time intensive leaving faculty and staff to rely on their previous training to serve students. As student demographics, technology, and pedagogies advance, college faculty and staff are at risk of becoming outdated. Recognizing this risk, the college has addressed this challenge by establishing a professional development learning community. The learning community members share knowledge from different disciplines to explore new ways to prepare students for their professional lives in technical and vocational fields. Using a DVD, produced through previously funded activities, the learning community members were able to tell others about the activities of the project and encourage the college to incorporate workplace training skills in all classes.

   Seventy-five faculty, five counselors, and 10 administrators participated in this project.

2. ***AutoCAD Faculty Upgrade Training*—Guilford Technical Community College.** This project provided an opportunity for faculty members in three different engineering technology disciplines from nine community colleges to receive two days of intensive exposure to the latest improvements in AutoCAD 2004 and its add-on packages. The obvious benefit to be derived from their participation is that these faculty members were able to take back to their colleges knowledge of these improvements that they could share with other faculty members. They and the other faculty members are now able to use this knowledge in instructional delivery in their classrooms.

   An unanticipated and useful benefit of this workshop is that these instructors were able to acquire a well developed sense as to the appropriateness and applicability of these software packages as the primary means of CAD instruction for community college students.

   Twenty-six faculty participated in this project.

3. ***Professional Development* — Halifax Community College**. This project focused on professional development in three areas- marketing; integrating academic and technical competencies; and implementing instructional technology training.º Professional development activities/workshops in marketing equipped the faculty with the knowledge to develop a new paradigm of thinking about marketing the program.

   As a result of the training, the college has developed a marketing strategy for each curriculum. ºTraining in instructional technology enabled faculty to expand online course offerings and enhance instruction with audio-video and multi-media.º Additionally, Internet resources are now being utilized for interactive communication. Faculty gained more content with the distance learning and would like to utilize a variety of learning styles in their classrooms and in future courses.º Hands-on training in instructional technology enabled the faculty to develop technology and incorporate it into instructional programs and courses.

   Twenty-one faculty and four administrators participated in this project.

4. ***Creating a Framework for Integrating Technology Into Online and Hybrid Teaching Strategies* — Martin Community College.** This project served approximately 30 community colleges and faculty from all vocational and technical disciplines by providing workshops covering hands-on learning, theory and concepts of online teaching and learning, and networking with others. The activities were conducted utilizing a Mentor/Mentee relationship that continues to help the less experienced faculty as courses are enhanced.

   Ninety-one faculty and two administrators participated in this project.

The following table indicates how the above-described projects satisfied the Required and Permissible Uses of the Act.

Project	Required Uses								Permissible Uses											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
A		X		X	X		X	X	X						X			X		
B	X		X		X		X	X	X											X
C	X	X	X	X	X				X	X	X				X			X		
D			X						X						X			X		
1			X	X	X										X			X		
2			X			X									X			X		
3			X												X			X		
4			X	X	X										X					X

c. Implications for Next Fiscal Year/State Plan – State Leadership funds were spread across all of the Core Indicator related activities. Program year 2003– 2004 results will be analyzed with these projects in mind to determine which may have been especially effective and which less so. Until results are available, the RFP process, which allows colleges the flexibility of approaching indicator activity improvement in ways they think most appropriate, is continuing. Statewide dissemination of funded activities is guaranteed by exclusively supporting projects suitable for NC-NET.

II. Program Performance

a. State Performance Summary – The community college system met or exceeded negotiated performance levels in all core sub-indicators with the exception of "3P2" and "4P1". Considering the national unemployment crisis and the particularly devastating effects that the crisis has had on North Carolina's economy, the actual results for "3P2" are certainly justifiable.

We will continue to stress services for all special population groups and are extremely cognizant of this need for services. As a result, most schools have included them in basic grant activities. Some leadership-funded activities are also tied to this effort. At the State level, the System Office continues to focus on non-traditional students, improved access to higher education, and ADA compliance.

A focus on special populations is apparent and increasingly important as our college enrolment swells to unprecedented levels with students desperate for training, re-training, and enhanced skills necessary to survive an unpredictable economy. Stretching to serve a burgeoning enrollment, our colleges are at risk of under serving special population students. Intentionally spotlighting special populations ensures that progress will continue as institutional funds are diffused by increased enrollment. Despite these challenges, several core sub-indicators show special population groups' Actual Level of Performance exceeding the Adjusted Level of Performance.

b. Definition of Vocational Concentrator and Tech Prep students - A Vocational Concentrator is a student enrolled in a state-approved curriculum program that leads to an Associate of Applied Science degree, a diploma, or a certificate and who has completed 75% or more of the hours required in the student's major program of study.

A post-secondary Tech Prep Student is any student enrolled in a two-year Associate in Applied Science Degree program, a two-year Certificate program, or a registered apprenticeship program at a North Carolina community college who completed a College Tech Prep course-of-study while in high school.

These definitions have not changed from those used last year.

c. Measurement Approaches and Data Quality Improvement -

Core Indicator	Measurement Approach	Quality Assessment
1P1	Overall Grade Point Average	Academic attainment measurement addresses the academic content areas addressed in state-approved program academic standards and is measured concurrent with or after concentrated participation in vocational education.
1P2	Overall Grade Point Average	Attainment measurement addresses state defined and industry validated skills and is measured concurrent with or after concentrated participation in vocational education.
2P1	State/Local Administrative Data	Measurement is based on state approved and program defined requirements for degree, diploma, and certificate completers.

3P1	Administrative Record Exchange	Third quarter UI data is used to determine placement in employment for program completers.
3P2	Administrative Record Exchange	Fourth Quarter UI data is used to determine retention in employment for those included in 3P1.
4P1	State/Local Administrative Data	Non-traditional occupations are defined at the state level and enrollments of the underrepresented gender groups are measured.
4P2	State/Local Administrative Data	Non-traditional occupations are defined at the state level and completion rates of the underrepresented gender groups enrolled in those programs are measured.

Data quality improvement is a statewide focus. Several workshops were held in 2003-2004 to specifically address data input and quality. Additionally, the System Office has employed a full-time Data Analyst with the sole function of gathering and interpreting data for federal grant programs. Sixty percent of the Data Analyst's work responsibility is devoted to data collection for Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Act of 1998 activities.

d. Effectiveness of Improvement Strategies in Previous Program Year – Projects were implemented to increase teacher effectiveness, improve career-focused activities through training, and strengthen academic skills of students through integration of academic and vocational courses. The immediate effectiveness of such projects is still being measured, but a general strengthening of the program is unquestionable. All colleges are aware of and are working to improve the core indicator performance levels of special populations. Close attention is given to identify students with special needs and diverse backgrounds. To foster this increased concentration, the System Office has implemented an Americans with Disabilities Act professional development program that increases the capability of instructors to ensure that higher education opportunities are made available to all students, regardless of disability; a Hispanic/Latino Initiative funded through a private foundation; and a Minority Male Mentoring project funded by the North Carolina Governor's Crime Commission. Indications are that some success is being achieved in that all but two of the overall performance levels of the core sub-indicators were met this program year.

e. Improvement Strategies for Next Program Year – Each community college submitted a local plan that included improvement strategies for future program years. The following are samples of the many and varied approaches.

1P1 - Strengthening academic skills of students by utilizing services of Individualized Learning Centers or Pre-Curriculum programs; placing students in need of remediation in appropriate developmental subjects and closely monitoring their progress; requiring all students to perform at the same level on academic as well as vocational examinations.

1P2 - Hiring faculty with appropriate work experience to lead students in class and lab experiences toward industry standards; using information solicited from advisory councils composed of practitioners; offering cooperative education courses and internships.

2P1 - Providing effective academic advising and support services, including financial aid and career counseling; providing a large array of flexible vocational/technical programs representing the major business/industry needs of the region; providing faculty training opportunities that are directly related to teaching their subject and improving their computer usage skills.

3P1 - Devising teaching strategies that integrate employability skills into course content; working with local employers to ensure that students will become employed in their field upon graduation; offering assistance to students in resume preparation, interview skills, and placement referrals.

3P2 – Continuing contact with ex-students and employers, intensive counseling before job placement to ensure proper fit, tailoring courses so that completers will possess the type and quality of skills which will enable employment success, assisting victims of plant closings through enrollment in training and retraining programs.

4P1 – Identifying targeted program areas for non-traditional recruitment based on North Carolina employment data; encouraging students to enter and remain enrolled in non-traditional programs; maintaining staff presence at local One-Stop centers to advance knowledge of and interest in non-traditional training areas; encouraging focused marketing programs to promote interest in non-traditional training areas.

4P2 – Utilizing existing resources to enhance opportunities for non-traditional students to earn degrees and obtain employment; increasing access to developmental programs and Individualized Learning Centers; providing support services such as financial aid, academic counseling, career counseling and developmental instruction to address barriers to success; remaining committed to the successful placement of students/graduates regardless of gender and race into employment opportunities directly related to their major field of study.

Section C
The Financial Status Report*
(Form II)

Section D
The Basic Grant and Tech Prep Student Enrollment Report
(Form III)

Section E
The Accountability Report
(Form IV)