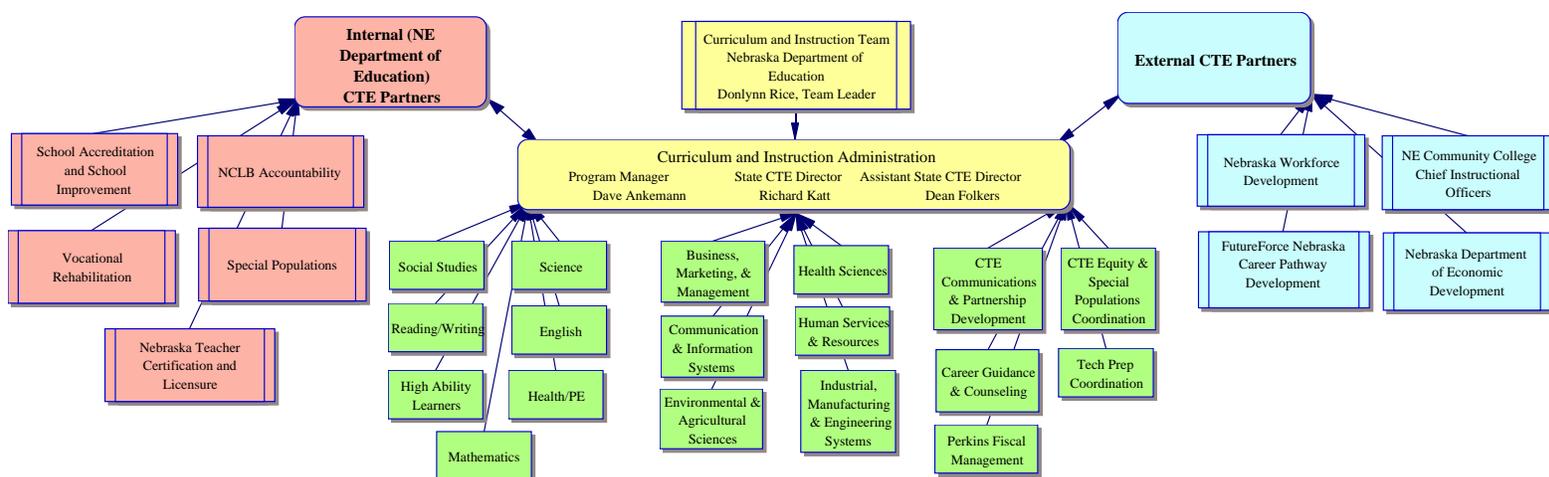


# Nebraska

## Consolidated Annual Report Program Year 2004-2005

### I. A. Sole State Agency and Governance Structure



#### State Administration

The Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) is the designated agency responsible for the administration of the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Act of 1988. The Nebraska State Board of Education also serves as the State Board for Vocational Education. The State Board, through the work of NDE staff in the Curriculum and Instruction Team, administers the Perkins Act and provides leadership for the delivery of quality Career and Technical Education throughout Nebraska.

NDE staff with career and technical education responsibilities work with counterparts from other curricular areas to provide leadership to Nebraska schools in standards-based curriculum and assessment. Nebraska Department of Education's administrative structure has created internal partnerships between career and technical education and other NDE responsibilities such as school improvement initiatives, administration of NCLB, teacher certification and licensure, services for Special Populations and Vocational Rehabilitation.

Although NDE career technical education staff has no direct supervision of the community/technical college system in Nebraska, the Perkins legislation has allowed us to build a strong relationship with the community college system. We work collaboratively to administer the Perkins Grant and to continue to build and expand secondary/postsecondary transitions through Tech Prep and other initiatives.

NDE career technical staff have also developed a network of external partners to efficiently use state and federal funds through collaboration and cooperative planning including a strong working relationship has been developed with Workforce Development, WIA administration and our career technical staff. We have also strengthened relationships with the Department of Economic Development and a new collaborative group implementing FutureForce Nebraska.

#### *Roles of CTE Staff:*

**State Director** – responsible for leadership and management to ensure compliance with the Perkins legislation. Provides overall leadership and direction for career and technical education in alignment with other initiatives within the Nebraska Department of Education

**Assistant State Director** – responsible for financial and performance measure leadership and management as directed by the Perkins legislation. Provides connectivity to other teams and initiatives of the Department of Education.

**Equity/Nontraditional Coordinator** – responsible for providing leadership, technical assistance and Perkins monitoring in the area of equity and nontraditional participation.

**Career Education Specialists (12)** – responsible for Perkins monitoring and providing leadership/technical assistance to LEA's for the improvement of career and technical education.

***Responsibilities of CTE Staff:***

Monitoring

As a part of their Perkins administrative responsibilities, the CTE staff are responsible for carrying out the following monitoring functions:

- Review and approval of LEA applications for funds
- On-site monitoring of LEA's for compliance with Federal law
- Approve program standards to determine adequate size, scope, and quality for funding eligibility.
- Review of fiscal procedures including verification of expenditures and accounting records
- Review of annual reports, final claims and expenditure documentation
- Review of LEA's performance data and its use in planning for CTE improvement and future use of Perkins funds
- Recommending approval of the local application, annual report, and final claim to CTE administration for acceptance

Technical Assistance

The CTE staff provides on-going technical assistance and professional development for CTE instructors and administrators. The CTE staff identifies promising and noteworthy practices in career and technical education for statewide dissemination. The staff also provides curricular leadership to assist in ensuring relevant and rigorous curriculum for CTE students. CTE staff work jointly with curriculum staff in academic areas to provide professional development for all teachers and counselors in meeting academic standards and the improvement of assessment.

Internal Audit and Fiscal Management

The internal audit process is a part of the annual review for the state of Nebraska. An annual audit is conducted of the fiscal and accountability processes and procedures implemented in managing and conducting the work of the Perkins Grant. This past year the audit process resulted in no audit exceptions and the audit process continues to serve as a tool to improve processes and procedures of the grant management process.

The fiscal activity of the grant does utilize professional accountants employed through the fiscal division of NDE. The experience of the personnel in managing grants, adhering to OMB circulars and federal laws, as well as meeting the demands of additional state guidelines is exceptional.

Data and Accountability

The Nebraska Department of Education is committed to the process of improving data collection, analysis, and overall accountability. The continued use and improvement of the online submission process that collects data at the district level has provided connectivity to the

statewide report card and the work of No Child Left Behind legislation. Collaboration with the development of a statewide student record system and the implementation of the system over the next two years will have long term impact on improving the data available for analysis at the state and local level.

Nebraska schools participating in Perkins activities are required to report annually the data and results of the students participating in approved programs. The data serves as a basis for planning and local applications require an analysis of the data to determine planning for the use of funds locally.

## I. B. Organization of Vocational and Technical Education Programs



For the past two years, Nebraska career and technical education has worked with CTE educators, administrators and partners to develop our new Nebraska Career Education structure. It is based on the 16 career clusters that are grouped into six career fields. The career fields were created to organize the clusters into areas of common knowledge and skill.

This new model has been adopted by the Nebraska Board of Education for use in all middle and secondary schools in Nebraska. Beginning in the 2007-2008 school year, schools will report curriculum based on this model rather than traditional CTE disciplines.

In creating this model, Nebraska considered the following objectives –

- Improve the equity of access of program offering for all students

- Increase the rigor, relevance, and academic content of CTE courses
- Align CTE courses with rigorous academic courses to create career pathways

**Equity** – The Nebraska model encourages the broadening of CTE courses to include new areas of technical skill development that were not previously covered in the traditional discipline based model.

**Rigor, Relevance and Academic Content** – All courses will be reviewed as they are placed in the new model. Special emphasis is given to reinforcing the state standards in reading, writing, math and science.

**Course Alignment** – All students will be required to have a personal learning plan by the 2007-2008 school year that combines their academic and technical curriculum and potential postsecondary options for a career pathway. The plan is flexible, changeable and must be reviewed at least annually. This is a plan to show the relevance of their courses for careers they are considering, not a tracking of students into one definite job.

## II. A. Report on State Leadership Required Activities

Planning and prioritizing of the leadership activities, both required and permissive, ensure a strong focus and connection to the core indicators. The following list of activities, projects, and events describe the efforts of Nebraska to achieve excellence. Each core indicator is referenced as a part of the description.

### **Program Assessment**

Nebraska assesses the size, scope and quality of career and technical education programs using our program standards approval process. Programs meeting these established standards of excellence are eligible to participate in the Perkins funds. The number of programs meeting these standards increased again this year due to effective technical assistance provided by CTE staff. A component of the program standards reviews services for special populations. The results of the program standards approval process and performance measure core indicators were publicized on the State of the Schools Report Card. Increasing emphasis is being placed on reviewing the data from the performance measures for each school as work toward school and program improvement.

### **Developing, Improving or Expanding Use of Technology**

Nebraska has expanded the use of the technology in career and technical education programs. Perkins funds have been used to model new and innovative technology to assure quality and relevance of CTE programs. Examples include the implementation of computer speech recognition training on both the secondary and postsecondary level, expansion of information technology programs, computer network training such as SMARTNET, Oracle, CISCO, A+ training and Project Lead the Way.

Perkins funds have been used to provide inservice for teachers in new technology through targeted workshops and the annual CTE professional development conference. Career and technical education continues to lead Nebraska schools in implementing effective instructional technology to provide increased learning opportunities. Perkins funds have been used to provide model programs in the use of distance learning to enhance the quality of CTE curriculum on the secondary level and to provide diversity of course offerings to schools in remote locations.

### **Professional Development**

The annual CTE Professional Development Conference is sponsored by NDE partially supported with the use of Perkins funds. With over 750 in attendance, the conference is one of the largest teacher development conferences conducted in Nebraska. Secondary and postsecondary CTE instructors, academic/non-CTE instructors, counselors, and administrators participate in the conference. This conference focuses on the integration of academic and CTE instruction, training on new technology, increasing the relevance and rigor of CTE curriculum, assessment and improvement of student performance, and secondary/postsecondary curriculum alignment.

Career and Technical Education Staff at NDE conduct regional workshops for CTE instructors and administrators. These workshops focus on adapting new technology, introduction of new curriculum, and focus on the integration of academic and career and technical education.

CTE staff continues to maintain a strong partnership with the teacher education institutions that prepare CTE teachers. A CTE Teacher Educator Forum is held each fall that brings together all CTE teacher educators to discuss program direction, new initiatives, increase alignment and discuss needs of preservice teacher candidates. The CTE staff serve as regular presenters in our teacher education programs.

Perkins funds were used to provide our annual School Counselor Academy. Over 150 school counselors attended to learn about their role in providing a comprehensive counseling program including career guidance.

Perkins funds also supported a collaboration with the Association for Career and Technical Education of Nebraska (ACTEN) to conduct a REAL Teacher workshop that was designed for 1-5 year CTE instructors to gather, gain insight on managing, preparing, and dealing with the world of teaching. The event provided resources and support for the new teachers and created an opportunity for the teachers to tour and experience the community college campuses that hosted the events with the Tech Prep Coordinators.

CTE continues to partner with our Education Service Units (ESU) to provide professional development opportunities for all Nebraska teachers. These regional support units have conducted workshops such as training in technology, assessment, grading techniques and meeting needs of special populations.

A special project was conducted with three ESUs to provide a two-year professional development program for selected CTE instructors and administrators. Techniques used included small learning communities, web based collaborative instruction, and workshops with state and national leaders.

### **Support for Programs that Improve Academic Technical Skills**

Nebraska has continued to develop the relationship between state core academic standards and the career and technical education instruction that helps students achieve those standards. Our LINKS to Standards website was expanded with new options for helping schools crosswalk standards between career and technical education and academic education.

The annual CTE Professional Development Conference focuses on best practices in the integration of academic and career and technical education. A special daylong workshop on effective reading strategies was held for school teams consisting of CTE and academic

instructors and school building administrators. Special emphasis was given to the development of technical reading strategies for CTE instructors.

CTE is fortunate to be on the same team as the academic consultants at the Department of Education. This allows for collaborative planning of professional development and school improvement activities.

### **Preparation for Nontraditional Training and Employment**

The Nontraditional grant fund opportunity was made available to Nebraska high schools and community colleges, in coordination with the Nebraska State Plan for Vocational and Technical Education Act. The Perkins funded grant projects prepare students for gender nontraditional occupations, including careers in computer science, technology and other high skill, high wage occupations. Funding through the Carl D. Perkins Act and the Nebraska State Plan, mentioned above, for \$150,000 was made available in a competitive grant process. Two very successful projects were:

1. CyberCamp4Girls, held at three campuses of Central Community College, offered hands-on experiences in technology to more than 30 participants. The camp offered workshops in interactive games, preparing PowerPoint presentations on careers in information technology, using Ethernet cards to connect a computer network, creating animation objects, creating a music CD with a play list, using graphics software combined with family photos to create a balloon montage, and "Extreme Makeover" used software to design their own room and to redo themselves with new makeup, hair, eyes, etc. <http://www.cybercamp4girls.com/>
2. Central Community College (CCC) partnered with the Hastings Spouse Abuse/Sexual Assault Crisis Center (SASA) to build career paths with business and industry. Participants in SASA had career educational services orientation, including financial aid information, and were given career resources from CCC. Two day-long hands-on workshops and tours of local business and industry, including Reinke Manufacturing, Hastings Utilities, Werner Construction, Adams County Roads Dept., Eaton Corp, Thermo King Corp, Servi-Tech Lab and KHAS Cannel 5, enhanced awareness for participants of careers considered nontraditional for their gender. Forty-two women participated, including nine single parents, six displaced homemakers, and eight educationally disadvantaged.

Other examples of funded projects are:

- “*Staff Development for Guidance Counselors and CTE Teachers*,” A series of workshops to increase the number of nontraditional programs concentrators.
- “*Connections*” Workshops to increase awareness of nontraditional careers at the (52) high school counselor/student/administrator level & provide support services for nontraditional students.
- “*Highway to Health Occupations*” A program to increase the number of males and special pops in health careers with summer health career camp, linking through Tech Prep Med Health, and job shadowing.
- “*Women in Transition and Trades*” A partnership between the YWCA and Southeast Community College to prepare and train women for nontraditional occupations.

### **Partnerships**

***FutureForce Nebraska*** has been developed to align career and technical education curriculum offerings with industries targeted for expansion by the Nebraska Department of Economic

Development. A steering committee has been appointed representing the Department of Education, Department of Labor, Department of Economic Development, business and industry, organized labor, and all two and four year public and private career schools and colleges in Nebraska. The focus is on alignment of secondary and postsecondary curriculum to ensure a prepared workforce for Nebraska's targeted economic growth. Career pathways are being developed in Health Science, Manufacturing, Construction, and Transportation, Distribution and Logistics. Each career pathway model includes a rigorous academic program aligned to the technical skills required for success in the pathway.

The new Nebraska Career Fields model has opened opportunities for discussions about the connections between rigorous academic curriculum and the technical skills needed. Perkins funds were also used to conduct a two-day workshop for 100 educators looking at *Rethinking the High School Experience* with integration of academic and CTE curriculum as a central focus of the workshop.

We have continued to build a strong working partnership with the Workforce Development Office of the Nebraska Department of Labor and the Nebraska Department of Economic Development. CTE staff and WIA staff have collaborated on providing services and looked for ways to support the work of both Perkins and WIA. A special partnership has been developed to provide technical assistance and WIA information for Nebraska's alternative education network.

### **Individuals in State Institutions**

The Youth Rehabilitation and Treatment Center (YRTC-K) , West Kearney High School, average daily population is 166 students and 562 were served during 2004-2005. YRTC-K is for male youth under the age of 19 and uses both education and treatment goals designed for each student. In the past, because of overcrowding, a typical youth stay was 4 months. With the help of home monitoring systems and probation, less students are being referred to YRTC-K and the typical stay has increased to 6.5 months. This additional stay is an opportunity for more concentrated vocational education and the successful development of skills. The treatment center felt that in a school of their size the best way to utilize the funds would be a counselor/instructor to provide services to youth in career guidance along with instruction in career pathways. A monitoring visit was made to this corrections facility during the grant period to confirm that the funds were being utilized as a productive means to assist the youth in furthering vocational opportunities and skills.

### **Support for Special Populations**

Perkins funds were used to continue CTE's involvement in the overall Nebraska Department of Education Improving Native American Education and Improving Hispanic Initiatives. These Initiatives have brought together all programs currently serving Nebraska's reservation schools and minority-majority Hispanic schools with a mission to improve student academic performance. Perkins funds were used to provide special curriculum inservice days for CTE staff at the Native American Schools and to support the efforts of improving reading skills in career and technical education programs.

All LEA's are required to address the needs of special populations in their local applications and annual reports. The NDE career and technical education staff monitor this during their review and on-site monitoring processes.

Nebraska's renewed commitment to improved school counseling programs with emphasis on career guidance and counseling has resulted in identification of effective career guidance strategies for special populations.

A special relationship is maintained with the ILCD (Integrated Learning for Children with Disabilities), the internal term focused effort for Special Populations. Together we are focused on using the data to assist in determining program and curriculum decisions. Also, a focused effort on creating relationship in transition planning for individuals with disabilities has begun to develop within the Nebraska Department of Education and Career and Technical Education.

The career and technical education staff at the Nebraska Department of Education has played a pivotal role in bringing together educators involved in alternative education programs. These programs serve students who no longer attend the comprehensive high school. We have worked to provide effective career and technical education programs including workplace-learning experiences to help prepare these students for the workplace. Perkins funds were used to provide a professional development conference and materials to improve the quality of career and technical education curricular offerings.

## **II. B. Permissive Activities**

### **Technical Assistance**

The Nebraska Department of Education Career and Technical Education Staff provide on-going technical assistance to schools and community colleges. This technical assistance consists of help with Perkins processes, curriculum consultation to improve the quality of CTE and professional development for instructors and administrators. Many of the workshops conducted for CTE teachers involved building linkages between academic and career and technical education and enhancing the relevance of the curriculum in response to labor market information.

### **Career Guidance and Counseling**

Nebraska continues to focus on the professional development of Career Guidance Counselors through workshops and presentations across the state. A web site was maintained to provide current information and resources to school counselors on career guidance. A full time person is employed to provide on-going technical assistance for school counselors at the secondary and postsecondary levels.

### **Cooperative Education programs**

Perkins funds were used to provide inservice on work-based learning and cooperative education. Assistance in providing a curriculum model for postsecondary teacher training institutions to ensure the highest level of preparation occurs for the future Career and Technical Education instructors is a part of the goal of ensuring highly qualified staff in Nebraska.

### **Career and Technical Student Organizations/Vocational Student Organizations**

Nebraska continued to provide support for Career and Technical Student Organizations through employment of staff to coordinate activities. The staff has worked to align CTSO activities with current curriculum and labor market needs with a special emphasis on assessment of vocational skills.

### **Curriculum Improvement and Development**

Nebraska's commitment to increased rigor and relevance of career and technical education programs was fulfilled with Perkins funds providing resources for workshops and curriculum implementation in new areas.

The LINKS to Standards website was enhanced. This website provides a crosswalk for all career and technical education essential learnings (standards) to the states' academic core standards.

**Performance Measurement Initiative**

Nebraska's focus on using the resources and relationships to discuss the role of performance measures and determine the best possible options for coordinating and connecting a statewide data process were the focus of activities over this past year. Evaluation of coordinating curriculum and aligning assessments primarily focused on the vocational skill attainment measures, but have implications for all of the core indicators.

**III. Distribution of Funds and Local Plan**

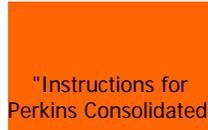
Nebraska has a large number of secondary school districts, but the majority of the 260 high school districts are not eligible to become a standalone Perkins project. This requires a large number of schools to form a consortium and most of these occur through the Educational Service Units (or regional education cooperative system). The following table provides a summary of the number of different grant projects and the total amount of dollars allocated to the project for the 2004-2005 grant year.

<b>CONSORTIUM/STANDALONE</b>	<b>COUNTY/ DISTRICT</b>	<b>TOTAL ALLOCATION</b>	<b>Number of Districts Reps</b>
TOTAL ESU #01	00-0001	93,236.00	19
ESU 1 (N AMER SCHOOLS)	00-0001	43,221.00	4
TOTAL ESU #02	00-0002	55,325.00	12
TOTAL ESU #03	00-0003	41,735.00	9
TOTAL ESU #04	00-0004	82,166.00	14
TOTAL ESU #05	00-0005	48,061.00	9
TOTAL ESU #06	00-0006	55,218.00	10
TOTAL ESU #07	00-0007	129,494.00	20
TOTAL ESU #08	00-0008	131,345.00	19
TOTAL ESU #09	00-0009	63,530.00	12
TOTAL ESU #10	00-0010	175,135.00	32
TOTAL ESU #11	00-0011	49,209.00	11
TOTAL ESU#13	00-0013	74,701.00	11
TOTAL ESU#14	00-0014	45,249.00	7
TOTAL ESU#15	00-0015	45,298.00	8
TOTAL ESU #16	00-0016	51,796.00	15
TOTAL ESU #17	00-0017	38,781.00	5
HASTINGS	01-0018	40,884.00	1
ALLIANCE	07-0006	25,428.00	1
KEARNEY	10-0007	55,717.00	1
PLATTSMOUTH	13-0001	15,462.00	1
WESTPOINT Consortium	20-0001	28,931.00	3

SO SIOUX	22-0011	51,245.00	1
LEXINGTON	24-0001	39,696.00	1
FREMONT	27-0001	46,777.00	1
OMAHA	28-0001	803,848.00	1
ELKHORN Consortium	28-0010	49,706.00	4
MILLARD	28-0017	120,631.00	1
RALSTON	28-0054	18,591.00	1
WESTSIDE	28-0066	31,215.00	1
BEATRICE	34-0015	27,431.00	1
GR ISLAND	40-0002	107,437.00	1
OGALLALA	51-0001	15,628.00	1
LINCOLN	55-0001	385,103.00	1
WAVERLY	55-0145	17,204.00	1
NO PLATTE	56-0001	57,314.00	1
NORFOLK	59-0002	57,116.00	1
HOLDREGE Consortium	69-0044	36,894.00	3
COLUMBUS	71-0001	35,344.00	1
MCCOOK	73-0017	17,999.00	1
BELLEVUE	77-0001	67,132.00	1
PAPILLION	77-0027	59,448.00	1
ASHLAND Consortium	78-0001	18,039.00	2
GERING	79-0016	24,495.00	1
MITCHELL	79-0031	17,668.00	2
SCOTTSBLUFF	79-0032	66,834.00	1
HEARTLAND Consortium	93-0096	47,710.00	5
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>3,610,427.00</b>	
<b>POST-SECONDARY PERKINS</b>			
<b>GRANT PAYMENTS</b>			
WESTERN	94-1000	186,239.00	1
MIDPLAINS	94-2000	183,837.00	2
NORTHEAST	94-3000	236,400.00	1
CENTRAL	94-4000	444,785.00	1
SOUTHEAST	94-5000	653,969.00	1
METRO	94-7000	701,730.00	1
		<b>2,406,960.00</b>	
<b>POST-SECONDARY TECH PREP</b>			
<b>GRANT PAYMENTS</b>			
WESTERN	94-1000	77314.33	1
MIDPLAINS	94-2000	72599.25	1
NORTHEAST	94-3000	83979.26	1
CENTRAL	94-4000	111667.07	1
SOUTHEAST	94-5000	139461.23	1
METRO	94-7000	145807.10	1
LITTLE PRIEST	94-9000	53213.00	1
		<b>684,041.24</b>	

## Local Application

Attached is the Excel Template of the 04-05 Local Application. This past year the local application process moved to an online web-based system for 05-06 year. The first year of transition to this system has faced some challenges, but is progressing and does provide flexibility for the future. Attached is a copy of the framework of the local application as a PDF file, but the full functionality of the web-based system exists through the NDE portal at <http://portal.nde.state.ne.us> for the 2005-2006 year.



## IV. A. Accountability – State’s Overall Performance Results and Program Improvement Strategies

Analyze the state's overall performance results compared to the agreed-upon performance levels for the past program year. For each instance where the state met its performance levels, provide a brief explanation of factors that may have contributed to those results.

For each instance where the state did not meet its performance levels, provide a brief explanation of factors that may have contributed to those results, along with strategies planned for implementation during the program year to improve those results.

### Secondary Met Measures

The secondary schools have increased the commitment to ensuring high quality experiences and developmental opportunities for all students, including those engaged in Career and Technical Education in Nebraska. The overall performance results for the secondary schools in Nebraska have met all agreed-upon performance levels for the past program year. Several of the factors that contribute to this success may include:

- Nebraska’s CTE Concentrator designation and definition
- Increased focus on rigor and relevance in the curriculum including the academic component of the curriculum
- Nebraska’s significantly higher graduation and placement rates
- Strong commitment to support the nontraditional areas through established and engaging nontraditional concentrators in areas of underrepresented careers.

### Postsecondary Met Measures

The postsecondary schools have made significant progress in meeting the agreed upon measures of performance for the program year. This progress occurred in the areas of Academic Attainment, Completion, Placement, and Retention. The area of Vocational Skill attainment did not meet performance by .02%. The equivalent to statistically meet this measure is three (3) additional concentrators out of the 13,480 at the postsecondary level. For purposes of program evaluation, the Vocational Skill Attainment measure at 91.28% is considered met. The factors that may have contributed to the successful attainment include:

- Nebraska’s CTE concentrator designation and definition

- A renegotiation of the performance measures to represent the current capacity of the system.
- A commitment to ensure student success.
- Focused efforts to implement programs and activities using Perkins funds that support the outcomes of the legislation.
- A strong and growing coordination between the efforts of secondary and postsecondary for students to achieve the outcomes established.

### **Secondary Did Not Meet Measures**

There were no agreed upon areas that did not meet for the 2004-2005-program year.

### **Postsecondary Did Not meet measures**

The two areas that did not meet agreed upon performance measures for the postsecondary side were in the areas of nontraditional participation and completion. The efforts and focus over the past few years in this area continues to demonstrate progress in both the reporting and actual performance. Although the efforts are not necessarily reflected when using a single year comparison to the agreed upon performance levels the significant improvement and increased trend in these numbers over the past three years are very encouraging. In addition, the negotiated levels for the 2006 program year provide an opportunity to move closer to achieving the agreed upon measures for the coming year.

While there is still a great deal of progress that can be made in the area of nontraditional careers the acceptance and support for promoting and accepting the opportunities available for students to enroll and complete these programs is increasing. In addition, the number of specific projects and programs that are designed to support the recruitment and promotion efforts in areas of high skill and high wage areas typically under represented by a certain gender are providing successful results and appear to be influencing the enrollments and ultimate completion of the programs in Nebraska at the postsecondary level.

## **IV. B. Accountability – State’s Performance Results for Special Populations and Program Improvement Strategies**

### **Special Populations Performance Areas**

Evaluating the performance at the aggregate level within the state does provide insight into the overall picture of performance, but the importance of evaluating and synthesizing the disaggregation of the data is critical to understand the trends and perspectives specifically related to the areas of special populations.

Nebraska has historically been represented by a very homogenous culture and now finds itself, like many states, faced with supporting the needs of a diverse population of students with a variety of potential barriers to success. The focus on serving the needs of these students is priority for all Nebraska schools, secondary and postsecondary.

### **Secondary Met**

When evaluating the subpopulations of the measures it is also important to reflect on the historical data to determine if trends are available and if progress through a focus on improvements is making a difference. The primary special populations and measures that were

met in Nebraska during this past program year primarily reside in the vocational skill attainment, completion, and placement measures. The primary reasons for this success may include:

- Definition of CTE concentrator
- Focused efforts on successful completion of program
- Increased focus on the special populations served through the Perkins grant
- Increased focus on special populations in all aspects of school improvement in Nebraska.

### **Postsecondary Met**

Similarly, when evaluating the subpopulations at the postsecondary level using the historical trend data is essential to further understand the implications of the data. In many cases, the numbers within each subcategory are significantly small as compared to the total. The small numbers within each area does influence dramatically the performance within each performance measure. When in some cases there are six (6) in the denominator a single person could influence the performance by nearly 17 %. Given this caveat for the performance numbers there are only two areas where all students, in all subcategories met the agreed upon performance measure. The areas are retention in employment and academic attainment. The most significant reason for this probably is the methodology for collecting the data to report. The survey mechanisms are currently used in Nebraska to achieve this measure and the results represent primary a large proportion of those that are currently employed. In the areas of academic attainment, the Other Educational Disadvantaged and Native American subpopulations both met the measures of performance, but showed a slight decrease from the previous year.

### **Secondary Did Not Meet**

The specific special population areas and measures that did not meet the state goal primarily reside in the academic attainment area. The Economically disadvantaged, Limited English Proficient, Individuals with Disabilities and Other Educational Barriers all provided results that did not meet the state agreed-upon goal of 67 %. However, each of these areas had an increase in the performance over the previous year. This trend is consistent with the overall NCLB results for Nebraska where progress continues to be made by all categories, but there remains a gap in achievement.

The Vocational skill attainment measure was not met only by the individuals with disabilities special population. Most schools still utilize a vocational GPA to determine this status and the grades may have influenced the actual reporting of the measure.

The LEP and Individuals with Disabilities did not meet the completion measure, but their performance was 92% and 94% respectively. This represents a high percentage of graduation at the secondary level and is close to the state goal of 95%. These two special population areas also did not meet the placement goal of 90.71%. Along with the Economically disadvantaged and the Other Educational Barrier sub population this should be an area of focus for the coming year to determine strategies for success. A possible reason for this disparity in performance may deal with the follow up survey process employed at the local school level. The identification of students that are determined to have the special population designation has not been included in some of the follow up work and may not be carried over when identifying those that have been placed.

### **Postsecondary Did Not Meet**

Although the disaggregation results provide a number of subcategories that are below the state average as well as the negotiated level of performance the opportunity to focus on the

areas that showed a decrease over the past two years in addition to lack of meeting the agreed-upon performance measure is used in the narrative for review possible reasons.

The vocational skill attainment measure was not met by a number of special population areas, although again the percentage difference in most categories is only by a small number of concentrators for each area. The specific areas where there was a decrease over last year's data included the Individuals with Disabilities area that held strong with an 89% attainment, the single parents category with an equal 89% attainment and the Native American area with 83% attainment. The 83% attainment represents 12 total individuals that did not meet the qualifications for vocational skill attainment.

The area of completion has been an attainment measure at the postsecondary level that continues to be met with a variety of challenges. The primary challenge is the status of the working adult that on average requires more than two years to complete an associates degree or diploma. The nearly 30% attainment in this measure is high compared to national averages and the IPEDS cohort process, but does reveal a few areas of focus in downward trends in the data over last year. The individuals with disabilities (ID) showed 22% completion. This represents a shortfall of 34 individuals from the total concentrator sub population to meet the goal.

The area of placement does provide a number of special populations areas that did not meet the state goal of 90.72%. The most significant category below the goal was the Limited English Proficient (LEP) area where 5 of 6 met the measure of placement for 83%. The other areas that came in at 89% placement where Economically Disadvantaged and Individuals with Disabilities.

### **Additional Thoughts**

Close attention to the role Perkins funds and the activities conducted serve special populations are a strong focus for Nebraska. The use of disaggregated data to determine areas of priorities is encouraged in developing local plans for activities using the Perkins funds. The analysis of special population and data measure performance reported progress compared to previous years. Progress to improve measured performance areas of special populations continues as a priority.

CTE has helped to build a collaborative network between providers of alternative education throughout the state. This has helped to strengthen the CTE accessibility and positively impact their success in CTE.

## **IV. C. Accountability – Definitions**

### **Definition of Vocational Concentrator and Tech Prep Students**

There have been no changes to the definitions used in Nebraska this year. The definitions used are as follows:

#### **Nebraska's Secondary Threshold Level of Vocational Education:**

A secondary student who has enrolled and/or completed a sequence of three or more Career and Technical Education courses (or has completed all of the courses offered in an area) during their high school attendance, which lead to entry-level occupations, apprenticeship, military or post high school training and has achieved the 12<sup>th</sup> grade level.

#### **Nebraska's Postsecondary Threshold Level of Vocational Education:**

The following is used to define a threshold level of vocational education for postsecondary students in Nebraska:

- (a) Is considered a vocational participant (has taken at least one 1.5 or 2.0 level course) during the program year; and
- (b) has a declared a vocational major; and
- (c) has completed 30 or more semester (45 or more quarter) hours (as reported to IPEDS).

**Tech Prep Student:** A student that:

(a) is a secondary student enrolled in one or more approved career and technical courses that are delineated in a Tech-Prep Articulation agreement; Or,

(b) a postsecondary students who was enrolled in one or more approved career and technical courses that were delineated in a tech prep articulation agreement at the secondary level and who are continuing their technical preparation at the postsecondary level.

#### IV. D. Accountability – Measurement Approaches

##### Measurement Approaches and Data Quality Improvement

The following table (c-1) indicates the measurement approaches and numerator/denominator definitions used for each of the sub-indicators. The state assessment of the quality of data is also within the table and used the peer evaluation resource guide from the PCRN website. The activities used to improve the quality of data re discussed in narrative format following the table presentation.

(Table c-1)

Sub indicator	Approach	Definition
<b>1S1</b>	National/State Academic Assessment System or Overall Grade Point Average	<p><b>Numerator:</b> Number of students concentrating in vocational education and who meet academic standards.</p> <p><b>Denominator:</b> Number of students concentrating in vocational education during the same reporting period.</p>
<b>1S2</b>	Local Standards and Assessment Systems or Vocational Grade Point Average	<p><b>Numerator:</b> Number of students concentrating in vocational education who attained program defined and validated vocational-technical skills.</p> <p><b>Denominator:</b> Number of students concentrating in vocational education during the same reporting.</p>
<b>2S1</b>	State/Local Administered Data	<p><b>Numerator:</b> Number of seniors concentrating in vocational education who graduated from high school.</p> <p><b>Denominator:</b> Number of seniors concentrating in vocational education who were eligible to graduate during the same reporting period</p>
<b>3S1</b>	School-Administered Surveys/Placement Records	<p><b>Numerator:</b> Number of students included in the denominator who, within one year of graduation are enrolled in documented postsecondary programs, advanced training, in the military or are employed.</p> <p><b>Denominator:</b> Number of students who were vocational program concentrators that graduated.</p>
<b>4S1</b>	State/Local Administered	<p><b>Numerator:</b> Number of non-traditional students who concentrated in programs leading to occupations that are determined to be non-</p>

	Data	traditional.  <b>Denominator:</b> Total number of students who concentrated in the same programs during the same reporting period.
<b>4S2</b>	State/Local Administered Data	<b>Numerator:</b> Number of non-traditional students who complete programs leading to occupations that are determined to be non-traditional  <b>Denominator:</b> Total number of students who complete the same programs during the same reporting period.
<b>1P1</b>	National/State Standards and Local Assessment Systems or Overall Grade Point Average	<b>Numerator:</b> Number of students who have concentrated in a program leading to a certificate, diploma or associate degree will meet program defined academic standards.  <b>Denominator:</b> Number of students who have concentrated in a program leading to a certificate, diploma or associate degree during the same reporting period.
<b>1P2</b>	Local Standards and Assessment Systems or Vocational Grade Point Average	<b>Numerator:</b> Number of students concentrating in a program leading to a certificate, diploma or associate degree who attained programs defined and industry validated vocational-technical skills.  <b>Denominator:</b> Number of students concentrating in a program leading to a certificate, diploma or associate degree during the same reporting year.
<b>2P1</b>	State/Local Administered Data	<b>Numerator:</b> Number of students, who attain a certificate, diploma or associate degree.  <b>Denominator:</b> Number of students who defined as program concentrators during the same reporting period.
<b>3P1</b>	School-Administered Surveys/Placement Records	<b>Numerator:</b> Number of students who attained a certificate, diploma or associate degree or who were employed, entered the military, or advanced training one year after graduation.  <b>Denominator:</b> Number of students who attained an associate degree or certificate during the same report period.
<b>3P2</b>	School-Administered Surveys/Placement Records	<b>Numerator:</b> Number of postsecondary students placed for employment that remains employed for one year.  <b>Denominator:</b> Number of postsecondary students placed for employment during the same time period.
<b>4P1</b>	State/Local Administered Data	<b>Numerator:</b> Number of gender non-traditional students in programs leading to occupations that are determined to be non-traditional.  <b>Denominator:</b> Total number of students who concentrated in the same programs during the same reporting period.
<b>4P2</b>	State/Local Administered Data	<b>Numerator:</b> Number of gender non-traditional students who complete programs leading to occupations that are determined to be non-traditional.  <b>Denominator:</b> Total number of students who complete the same programs during the same reporting period.

#### **IV. E Accountability – Improvement Strategies**

##### **Improving Data Quality**

The process of improving the data quality has been ongoing over the past four years. An overview of the main activities that have occurred over this past year and are a part of this next years plan include:

**Implementation of an online submission and reporting system.** This system allowed for data entry at the district level for those participating in the Perkins funding. The aggregate of the data

for consortiums was calculated automatically. In addition, features of the online system allowed for real-time reporting and provided information in “chart and graph” format designed to assist in analysis of the information at the local level.

**Conducted workshops and demonstrations:** The process of providing technical assistance through workshops and demonstrations at the statewide, regional, and local levels was implemented this past year. Two statewide meetings were held in addition to local presentations at schools and eleven Educational Service Units.

**Validation and Review Process:** In addition to a validation process implemented in the previous year where the individual districts or consortiums must sign and validate the information within the system an additional resource evaluation and feedback of the primary issues identified that were common among the data was provided. This feedback process followed with an opportunity for the districts to adjust or clarify their submitted data before there was validation and processing of the annual claims for reimbursement created much more effective means for updating the data. Expanding the process for the coming year and identifying the intended uses through inservice and training workshops scheduled for the coming year is a part of the plan. An additional piece was to engage the Perkins Monitors in reviewing the data for the schools/projects they monitor. This created a clearer understanding of the data and the issues the are specific to the projects that are monitored.

**Performance Measurement Initiative (PMI):** Nebraska was one of six states selected to participate in the federal PMI project. This process has created a team of representatives from secondary, postsecondary, labor, NCLB to look at performance measures proposed at the federal level, but more importantly to look at the performance measures currently used in Nebraska. Nebraska has used the opportunity to support the growth and development of a consistent reporting processes, data definitions, and the possibility of using records data from the department of labor. Several discussions, meeting, and pilot projects have been conducted to assist in framing the future performance measures and the application to Nebraska’s successful implementation of quality data for program improvement and reporting. An opportunity to be a part of the WRIS pilot and continue the collaboration through the work of the DQI (Data Quality Institutes) has also continued the discussion.

**Nebraska Student and Staff Record System (NSSRS):** Nebraska Department of Education has contracted with a vendor to assist in developing a statewide individual student record system. The opportunity to identify the data fields and align the potential data needs with the Perkins performance measures have been key to the discussion and planning for the statewide system. The access to data at the student level will continue to increase the process of ensuring data quality and reduce the local burden of reporting to several different sources of data. an individual career plan.

## **E. Additional Improvement Strategies supporting Accountability**

The local application was modified to require LEA’s to focus more on the performance measures in evaluating their career and technical education programs. LEA’s are required to use data for future planning. A series of meetings for Perkins administrators were held to help them understand the changes and use the performance measure data effectively in the development of their local application for Perkins funds.

Nebraska established six target areas for career and technical education improvement. Each local application must address how the uses of Perkins funds address the six areas of improvement.

These six are:

- Student gains on performance measures
- Enrollment and success of special populations in career and technical education
- Nontraditional training and employment
- Professional development for CTE teachers and administrators
- Secondary/Postsecondary connections
- School counseling and career development

A commitment to the activities and goals of the improvement plan from this past year will be essential to the development of improvement for the next program year. Building on the successes of last year the foundation for excelling in program performance and achieving excellence expected from the legislation will be possible.

The following are priorities for the coming year:

- Continue the commitment to the development of reading skills across the curriculum with special emphasis on technical reading in career and technical education and coordination with the Reading First grant.
- Continue the implementation of the Nebraska Career Field model focusing on using career clusters and coordinating the secondary and postsecondary education processes.
- Continue the partnership with *FutureForce Nebraska*, our targeted economic development initiative that aligns career and technical education curriculum from the secondary to the postsecondary based on Nebraska's labor market needs and economic development priorities.
- Improving data quality and use through the work of the performance measurement initiative (PMI) group.
- The Nebraska Board of Education passed a policy on Nebraska Essential Education. The Department of Education will now work with the development of our new accreditation standards for Nebraska schools based on the Essential Education Policy. Career and technical education is included in the Essential Education Policy.
- Continued use and implementation of the online Grants Management system in collaboration with all federal and state grant programs.
- Involvement in the development of the statewide student and staff record system for Nebraska.
- Collection and evaluation of economic development data analysis of community college areas and creating an opportunity to use the data in program decisions.

## **V. Monitoring Follow-up**

This section not applicable for this year.

## **VI. Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Incentive Grant Award Results**

### **Nebraska Career Management System**

Through the contract work of Visions Unlimited a working model was developed in addition to a pilot test with schools and career center one-stops. The information gathered informed the ongoing development and adaptations of the system for Nebraska's segment of the portal development and provided a positive response to the resource in addition to insightful suggestions by the end user. A meeting of the multi-state consortium occurred in February and finalized some of the main components necessary for development. This process informed the estimation and cost structure for creating the portal system and provided the basis for Phase II of the development occurring during year two of the grant. An implementation site will be available in the fall of 2005, in depth pilot testing of the comprehensive portal system will begin in January 2006, and the complete launch of the site will be available in fall 2006. Pursuit of business and organization partners is continuing to occur in an effort of ensuring the long-term viability and stability of the resource for all Nebraskans.

## **Marketing**

Additional work has continued to market and develop an understanding and application of the career cluster framework to be used with the portal including specific work with the school counselors. A recommendation of the compliance committee of the state Workforce Investment Board was to create a stronger understanding and relationship with the school counselors and the programs offered through WIA. A resource guide for school counselors on the comprehensive school-counseling model (Using the sixteen career clusters, industry alignment, and support of the Nebraska Career Management System) and plans for the training to support this connection are occurring.

## **FutureForce Nebraska**

During Year One of the of the PY02, FY 03 incentive grant a subgrant was provided to Central Community College in Grand Island to assist in supporting the development and framework of the working groups for Future Force Nebraska. Through the work of a steering committee a consultant was funded to assist in the coordination and facilitation of the emerging efforts and priorities. FutureForce is an effort to align secondary, postsecondary, and business in priority economic development clusters within Nebraska. The project integrates the industry skills necessary through curriculum alignment and resources. These resources will be delivered through the Career Management System and serve as a source of delivery of the resources, curriculum, and integration of the project. The project involves all entities of secondary and postsecondary education and key industry leaders in the targeted industries.

The two primary areas during the FY 04 year were in the area of Health Sciences and Manufacturing. Work has begun in the area of Transportation, Distribution, and Logistics and most recently the area of Biotechnology was identified as the next priority.

## **Educational Materials**

Through an additional opportunity provided by the Department of Labor, as the result of a cancelled contract, educational resources were provided to administrators throughout the state of Nebraska related to the priorities of Rigor, Relevance, and Relationship Framework. These resources and philosophical approaches assisted in creating an additional resource to support the industry needs for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.