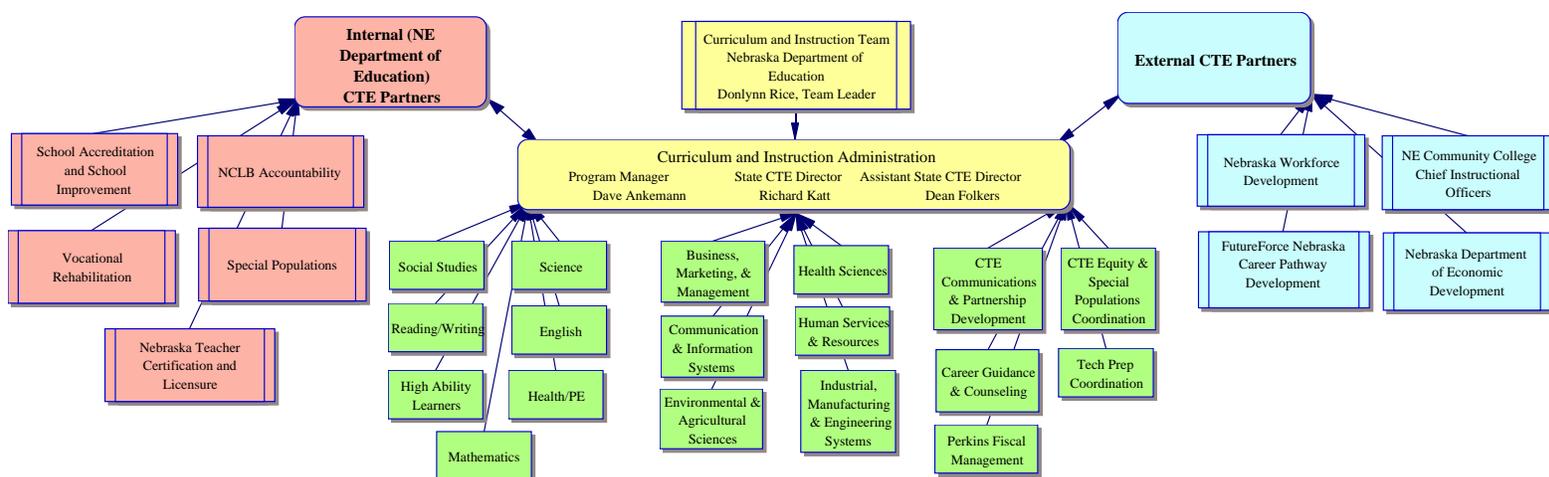


# Nebraska

## Consolidated Annual Report Program Year 2005-2006

### 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 elected Nebraska State Board of Education also serves as the State Board for Vocational Education. The State Board, through the work of NDE staff on the Curriculum and Instruction Team, administers the Perkins Act and provides oversight and leadership for the delivery of quality Career and Technical Education throughout Nebraska secondary and postsecondary institutions.

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 academic education as well as other NDE responsibilities such as school improvement initiatives, administration of NCLB, teacher certification and licensure, services for Special Populations and Vocational Rehabilitation.

The NDE career technical education staff has no direct supervision of the community/technical college system in Nebraska, but does have monitoring responsibilities through the Perkins legislation that 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 alignment/transition initiatives.

NDE career technical staff has 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 and advancement of TechPrep.

***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. CTE staff also work to implement TechPrep throughout the system to ensure secondary/postsecondary transition.

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.

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 four 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. Community colleges and four-year colleges and universities are aligning their curriculum offerings to this model. It is becoming the common language around which we create our career technical education and workforce development systems.

In creating this model, Nebraska focused on 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. Work is continuing to review policies and procedures to ensure the removal of barriers for gender nontraditional students and other special populations.

**Rigor, Relevance and Academic Content** – Perkins funds continue to be the major driving force in the upgrading of the rigor and relevance of our career and technical education offerings. Perkins funds have also been used to support the integration of academic content.

**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 their career pathway program of study. 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 purchase 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. Equipment was also purchased to support an increased emphasis on manufacturing and skill development that is necessary in today's manufacturing environments.

Perkins funds have been used to provide inservice for teachers in new technology through targeted workshops and the annual CTE professional development conference and regional workshops conducted to provide hands-on training for instructors. 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 700 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 based on Nebraska's new curriculum model, 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. The Nebraska 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. CTE staff from NDE and local CTE programs both seek out opportunities to be presenters in teacher pre-service 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 collaboration with the Association for Career and Technical Education of Nebraska (ACTEN) to conduct a REAL Teacher workshop that was designed for one-five 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 was coordinated 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 continued 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. These schools will serve as a model for the rest of the state.

Workshops have been conducted at the Nebraska State School Administrators Conference and Nebraska State School Boards Convention to educate about our new CTE model and educate administrators and board members on the components of a quality program.

### **Support for Programs that Improve Academic, Vocational and 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. We have worked together on the integration of reading and math academic skills into our CTE curriculum through professional development and model programs.

The Perkins local application reflects the LEA's commitment to improving skills and using the core indicator data as a starting point for making decisions about the use of Perkins funds in LEA's.

### **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. Examples of projects are:

- “CYBERCAMP4GIRLS” a multi-day on campus experience designed to increase participation of females in Information Technology secondary and postsecondary programs and careers
- “Highway to Health Occupations” project designed to increase the number of males and special pops in health careers linking through Tech Prep Med Health and job shadowing
- “Promoting Nontraditional. Occupations for Men and Women” project was designed to increase number of special pops (by reaching parents and community) in nontraditional occupations by niche marketing, media promotion, and traveling wooden cutouts
- “Workforce Equity Services” provides assistance to students entering nontraditional careers; provides gender equity training for faculty; nontraditional occupation panels at community college career fairs and nontraditional career choices promotional pieces

- “Career Camp” was a three-day camp designed to increase the awareness of nontraditional career opportunities for young women and eliminate sex career stereotyping.
- Career planning efforts and materials focus on recruiting and retaining students in nontraditional career areas at community colleges including support services.

The 2006 Equity Conference was held during the annual NCE Conference, hosted by NDE. Approximately 40 teacher educators, administrators and counselors attended this 1-day workshop. The theme was “Closing the Equity Gap,” and several topics were discussed, including: poverty, bullying, race, ELL, and students training for nontraditional occupations.

### **Partnerships to enable students to achieve academic standards, vocational and technical skills**

Career and technical education’s partnership with *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. Perkins funds were used to support the further development and the work of *FutureForce Nebraska*. 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. This project has helped to develop the Nebraska Programs of Study. Programs of Study are being developed in Health Science, Manufacturing, Construction, Entrepreneurship, BioTechnology/BioSciences 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.

Through the use of Perkins funds, career and technical education has played a major role in Rethinking the High School Experience. We have worked with a select group of pilot schools to explore new approaches to high school including closer collaboration between career technical and academic education, implementation of career academies and programs of study, alternative grading practices, improving school counseling and implementation of personal learning plans. This activity involved a partnership between the Department of Education, Educational Service Units, higher education, community colleges and Perkins local eligible recipients.

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 at Kearney, Nebraska, is an eligible recipient of Carl D. Perkins funds in accordance with the approved State Plan for Vocational and Technical Education as a corrections and treatment facility for youth. This “Correctional Institution Project Proposal” was approved for \$46,000 for teacher salaries and benefits. The treatment center felt that in a school of their size the best way to utilize the funds would be to hire instructors to lead and instruct specific vocational programs. 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 by providing an opportunity to become aware of varied vocational opportunities and attain pre-vocational skills

necessary for occupational success. In addition, work was done to help students develop a positive and realistic self-image, the ability to make decisions, a positive attitude toward work and life necessary for every day living, and gain the skills and attitudes to assist in the student's transition into society so they can be more prepared and productive citizens.

### **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 inservice activities for CTE staff at the Native American Schools and to support the efforts of improving reading and math 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 our NDE internal term focused on Special Populations and Vocational Rehabilitation. Regular meetings are held to share data and initiatives to improve opportunities for special populations.. Together we are focused on using the data to assist in determining program and curriculum decisions. This focused effort is helping in the transition planning for individuals with disabilities.

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.

## **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. School Counselor academies were held to improve the knowledge and skill of counselors especially with reference to career counseling activities.

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

Perkins funds were used through state leadership dollars to provide support for Career and Technical Student Organizations through employment of staff to coordinate activities. The staff continued work on alignment of 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. LEA’s focused on expanding the development and improvement of new courses aligned with meeting labor market demands and providing articulation to postsecondary education

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

Special emphasis was given to the infusion of new technology to increase the rigor and relevance of the curriculum. Equipment and software/instructional materials were purchased and inservice workshops were provided to help instructors modernize curriculum and meet labor market demands.

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

Nebraska has a large number of secondary school districts, but the majority of the 250+ 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 2005-2006 grant year.

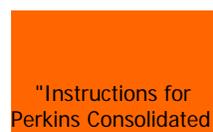
<b>CONSORTIUM/STANDALONE</b>	<b>COUNTY/ DISTRICT</b>	<b>TOTAL ALLOCATION</b>	<b>Number of Districts Reps</b>
TOTAL ESU #01	00-0001	\$80,529	19
ESU 1 (N AMER SCHOOLS)	00-0001	\$39,566	4
TOTAL ESU #02	00-0002	\$53,160	12
TOTAL ESU #03	00-0003	\$40,931	9
TOTAL ESU #04	00-0004	\$77,469	14
TOTAL ESU #05	00-0005	\$44,226	9
TOTAL ESU #06	00-0006	\$54,010	10
TOTAL ESU #07	00-0007	\$117,745	20
TOTAL ESU #08	00-0008	\$110,247	19
TOTAL ESU #09	00-0009	\$57,421	12
TOTAL ESU #10	00-0010	\$160,997	32
TOTAL ESU #11	00-0011	\$41,739	11

TOTAL ESU#13	00-0013	\$124,847	19
GORDON-RUSHVILLE	00-0014	\$18,156	1
TOTAL ESU#15	00-0015	\$38,185	8
TOTAL ESU #16	00-0016	\$57,009	16
TOTAL ESU #17	00-0017	\$32,260	5
HASTINGS	01-0018	\$40,069	1
ALLIANCE	07-0006	\$23,993	1
KEARNEY	10-0007	\$56,752	1
PLATTSMOUTH	13-0001	\$15,046	1
WESTPOINT Consortium	20-0001	\$26,298	3
SO SIOUX	22-0011	\$47,269	1
LEXINGTON	24-0001	\$38,759	1
FREMONT	27-0001	\$46,310	1
OMAHA	28-0001	\$861,017	1
ELKHORN Consortium	28-0010	\$49,152	4
MILLARD	28-0017	\$124,957	1
RALSTON	28-0054	\$19,309	1
WESTSIDE	28-0066	\$32,624	1
BEATRICE	34-0015	\$28,225	1
GR ISLAND	40-0002	\$114,717	1
LINCOLN	55-0001	\$407,144	1
WAVERLY	55-0145	\$15,294	1
NO PLATTE	56-0001	\$57,548	1
NORFOLK	59-0002	\$59,704	1
HOLDREGE Consortium	69-0044	\$35,380	3
COLUMBUS	71-0001	\$33,834	1
MCCOOK	73-0017	\$17,283	1
BELLEVUE	77-0001	\$68,693	1
PAPILLION	77-0027	\$60,676	1
ASHLAND Consortium	78-0001	\$17,187	2
GERING	79-0016	\$23,498	1
SCOTTSBLUFF	79-0032	\$66,323	1
HEARTLAND Consortium	93-0096	\$46,175	5
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$3,563,577.00</b>	
<b>POST-SECONDARY PERKINS</b>			
<b>GRANT PAYMENTS</b>			
WESTERN	94-1000	\$169,730	1
MIDPLAINS	94-2000	\$220,847	2
NORTHEAST	94-3000	\$225,065	1
CENTRAL	94-4000	\$461,794	1
SOUTHEAST	94-5000	\$606,957	1
METRO	94-7000	\$691,326	1
		<b>\$2,375,719.00</b>	
<b>POST-SECONDARY TECH PREP</b>			
<b>GRANT PAYMENTS</b>			

WESTERN	94-1000	\$75,681	1
MIDPLAINS	94-2000	\$78,861	1
NORTHEAST	94-3000	\$83,145	1
CENTRAL	94-4000	\$115,076	1
SOUTHEAST	94-5000	\$134,656	1
METRO	94-7000	\$146,035	1
LITTLE PRIEST	94-9000	\$26,607	1
NE INDIAN COMMUNITY COLLEGE	94-9100	\$26,607	1
		\$686,668	

### Local Application

Attached are the instructions for the 2005-2006 Local Application. The local application process moved to an online web-based system for 05-06 and 06-07. The first year of transition to this system faced some challenges, but progressed to provide an efficient and effective resource. 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>.



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. The consistency across years in the areas of Academic Attainment, Vocational Skill Attainment, and Completion have provided a strong case for the effectiveness of the programmatic work. The Nontraditional measures also met this year. 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 especially in the areas of nontraditional.
- 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**

All measures were met for the 2005-2006-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 placement and retention. The efforts and focus over the past few years in this area continues to demonstrate potential elements of data quality issues. The use of surveys and survey responses as the means of collecting data does not yield a consistent and sufficient approach to these performance measures. In addition, the turnover of institutional staff members responsible for reporting the data has provided some elements of inconsistent application of the process. The use of administrative records in the future may eliminate the potential for the data to fluctuate and work to ensure a more consistent approach to the reporting process.

## **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 nontraditional measures this year. 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 (3) in the denominator a single person could influence the performance by nearly 33%. Given this caveat for the performance numbers there are no areas where all students, in all subcategories met the agreed upon performance measure. All areas fared very well, but the academic attainment, vocational skill attainment, placement, and retention provided the best overall performance of subpopulations. 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.

### **Secondary Did Not Meet**

The specific special population areas and measures that did not meet the state goal primarily reside in all areas including the academic attainment, vocational skill attainment, completion, and placement areas. 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 86% and 93% 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 93.00%. Along with the Economically Disadvantaged and the Other Educational Barrier sub population, this must 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.

A number of special population areas did not meet the academic skill attainment measure although the percentage difference in most categories is only by a small number of concentrators for each area. The specific areas where there was a increase over last year's data included the Individuals with Disabilities area that held strong with an 88% attainment, the LEP category with an equal 98% attainment and the Native American and Hispanic populations with 84% and 90 % attainment. The 84% attainment represents 11 total individuals that did not meet the qualifications for academic skill attainment.

The area of completion has been an attainment measure at the postsecondary level that continues to provide 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 31% attainment in this measure is highest Nebraska has achieved, but does reveal a few areas of focus in downward trends in the data over last year. The individuals with disabilities (ID) showed 25% completion and the Native American population performed at 22%, although this represented 15 of 69 total concentrators.

The area of placement does provide a number of special populations areas that did not meet the state goal of 90.00%. The most significant category below the goal was the Limited English Proficient (LEP), but the total population of 3 reported influences the percentage dramatically and came in at 33%. The other areas that came in lower were the 63% placement rate for Native Americans and an 82% placement for Economically Disadvantaged.

### **Additional Thoughts**

Close attention to the role Perkins funds, and the activities conducted to 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)

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

	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.

**Data Quality Institutes:** Representatives from Nebraska participated in the DQI meetings conducted through the United States Department of Education. The meeting provided technical assistance and insight to coordinate and develop a more consistent approach to the collecting and reporting of Perkins performance measure data.

**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.

## **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.
- 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.
- Pursue additional opportunities for administrative records exchanges.
- 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**

### **NebraskaCareerConnections.org**

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 initial site was rolled out to secondary and postsecondary schools in the fall of 2006 as a result of the work conducted throughout 05-06. 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 NebraskaCareerConnections.org 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, Warehousing, and Logistics and most recently, the area of Biotechnology became the next priority.