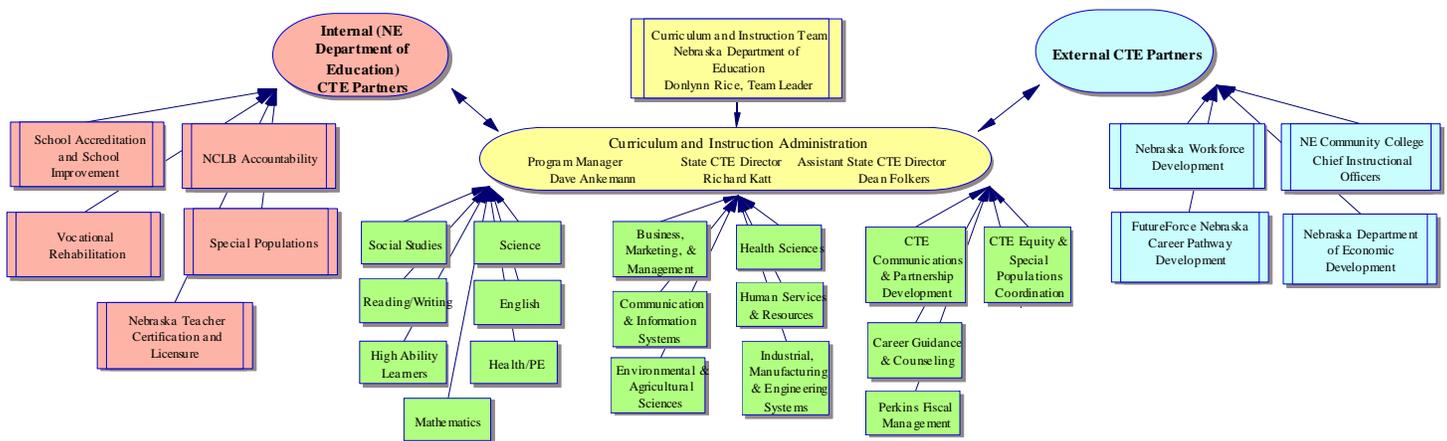


## SECTION B: Instructions for completing the narrative report for the consolidated annual performance, accountability, and financial status report

Section 114(a)(1) of Perkins III requires the Secretary to collect performance information about, and report on, the condition of vocational and technical education and on the effectiveness of State and local programs, services, and activities carried out under the Act. Below are the specific items that States are required to report on for the past program year (July 1, 2006 - June 30, 2007). Reports must address each of the items in the order outlined below, should make use of tables and charts to summarize key points, and should not exceed 20 pages.

### I. State Administration [sec. 121 of Perkins III]

#### 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 Career and Technical Education Act of 2006. The elected Nebraska State Board of Education also serves as the State Board for Career and Technical 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.

The NDE career and technical education staff are organized as a part of the Curriculum and Instruction Team. This allows them to partner with counterparts from other curricular areas to provide leadership to Nebraska schools in standards-based curriculum and assessment. This 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.

Nebraska is organized into six independent community colleges, each with their own Board of Governors and administrative structure. The community colleges provide the public postsecondary career and technical education for the state. Nebraska does not have a public technical college system outside of the community colleges. The NDE career and technical education staff has no direct supervision of the community 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 and technical staff. We have also continued to strengthen relationships with the Department of Economic Development and 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 (10)** – 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. CTE staff also work 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. 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.

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



Nebraska career and technical education adopted a new model for the delivery of career and technical education in 2001. This model 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. The career fields created a more manageable way of addressing the 16 career clusters in our comprehensive high schools.

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 2008-2009 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 and 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 2008-2009 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. The free web-based Nebraska Career Connections career information system provides a copy of our career and technical education programs of study as a guidance tool for students when completing their Personal Learning Plans. The Personal Learning Plans are also online with the Nebraska Career Connections system.

The newly developed Partnerships for Innovation consortium is focusing efforts on developing statewide articulation agreements that align the secondary CTE courses with postsecondary through programs of study. These will continue to be developed over the next several years.

Nebraska does not have area CTE centers, rather relies on delivery of career and technical education through the comprehensive high school. This also requires a close working relationship with the community college system. Nebraska has used Perkins funds, both leadership and basic grant funds to strengthen the relationship between secondary and postsecondary education including distance course offerings, on-line career academies and dual credit career and technical course offerings.

## **II. State Leadership Activities [sec. 124 of Perkins III]**

### **A. Required Uses of Funds**

Provide a summary of your major initiatives and activities in each of the following areas that are "required" under section 124(b)(1-8) of Perkins III:

- **An assessment of the vocational and technical education programs that are funded**

Nebraska conducted the assessment of the career and technical education programs using our on-going monitoring process. All programs receiving Perkins funds are subject to monitoring as required in our State Plan. The monitoring consists of an annual desk audit of activities and expenditures with an on-site visitation once every three years. Part of the desk audit process is a review of performance measures submitted by each school as a part of their consortium or stand-alone reporting. This review was completed as a part of the monitoring of the Perkins grants to the local eligible recipients. State CTE staff also conducted a review of the Program Standards for those programs that had changes in personnel or curriculum. The Program Standard checklist is used to determine the size, scope, and quality of the programs receiving Perkins grant funds.

This list is update to reflect changes as needed. Only those programs approved through the program standards process are eligible for Perkins funds.

- **Developing, improving, or expanding the use of technology in vocational and technical education**

State leadership funds were used to support professional development through the Nebraska's Career Education Conference, regional workshops and inservices and local technical assistance. These included "hand-on" experiences in software application, new instructional technology and instruction in new industrial technology and equipment to strengthen the relevance of the instruction provided in career and technical education classrooms. Examples of trainings provided include: Adobe InDesign, Digital Photography and Photo Editing, Design Education and CNC-3D Printer, Dreamweaver, Mechatronics, Podcasting, and Animation Graphics.

Perkins leadership funds have been used to create state model programs in the use of distance learning and web-based courses 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 programs, including providing comprehensive professional development (including initial teacher preparation) for vocational and technical, academic, guidance, and administrative personnel**

The majority of professional development conducted centered on the implementation of the new career and technical education model and the transition to career clusters as the framework for Nebraska CTE. These sessions focused on curriculum design, secondary and postsecondary curriculum alignment, development of programs of study, alignment of curriculum to regional economic and workforce development needs, and strategies for program improvement.

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. Over 1,500 teachers and administrators attended the workshops this year. Special professional development opportunities were offered for school administrators to understand the transition to career clusters and implementation of the new career and technical education model.

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.

- **Support for vocational and technical education programs that improve the academic, and vocational and technical skills of students...through the integration of academics with vocational and technical education**

The structure of the Nebraska Department of Education has greatly enhanced the integration efforts of academic and career and technical education. With consultants serving together on the Curriculum and Instruction team, we do not have a separation between the two worlds. Our staff

continues to plan joint inservices, provide technical assistance to schools on integration efforts and work to develop materials needed to assist schools. One of the most successful projects this year assisted with leadership funds is the development of model career academies that focus on the integration of academic and CTE. While still being built, the development work is helping to identify barriers, best practice and strategies to strengthen student achievement, and development of secondary/postsecondary curriculum alignment around programs of study. These model career academies will provide solid examples for the rest of the state to follow.

Leadership funds are used to provide professional development focusing on the integration of academic and career and technical education. Strengthening reading and writing skills were the major areas of focus this past year.

The local application for Perkins funds encourages LEA's to invest Perkins funds in developmental activities that strengthen the academic content of CTE.

- **Providing preparation for nontraditional training and employment**

Nebraska continued to invest leadership funds in activities that promote preparation for nontraditional training and employment. Examples of funded projects are:

“CyberCamp4Girls” focused on increased awareness of nontraditional careers to girls at the middle and high school level at Central Community College’s three locations.

“Workforce Equity Services” promoting nontraditional careers through panels, forums, Girls in Technology Day, role model presentations, promotional pieces, and scholarships.

Special workshops, student support, and activities designed to raise 4th core indicator.

“Nontraditional Careers Conference,” raising awareness of nontraditional careers for students at this one-day conference with speakers, exhibitors, etc.

“Technical Assistance for Nontraditional,” YWCA and Metro Community College partnership to provide workshops that train individuals for nontraditional and information technology careers.

“Career Camp,” a three-day camp designed to increase the awareness of nontraditional career opportunities for young women and eliminate sex career stereotyping.

“Gender Equity” focusing on recruiting and retaining students in nontraditional career areas including support services, and nontraditional peer mentoring,

“Women in Transition and Trades” YWCA and Southeast Community College partnership to prepare and train low-income women for nontraditional occupations

Special workshops to provide hands on activities and informational presentations on nontraditional careers to community and faith-based organizations, conducted two “Day Trips for Women” and workshops and tours of nontraditional careers.

Support for activities that engage girls in science, math and technology using 3D design activities and animation

- **Supporting partnerships to enable students to achieve State academic standards, and vocational and technical skills**

Nebraska CTE continues to partner with *FutureForce Nebraska* to align career and technical education curriculum offerings with industries targeted for expansion by the Nebraska Department of Economic Development. Perkins leadership funds were used to support the 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, 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.

Nebraska has expanded the number of schools participating in High Schools That Work. This program is supported by leadership funds and works to improve student achievement in both academic and technical skills. We have implemented HSTW as a partnership between Perkins, School Accreditation and School Improvement areas of the Department of Education.

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

- **Serving 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 teacher salaries and benefits. The leadership funds are utilized 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 programs for special populations that lead to high skill, high wage careers**

Nebraska continued to invest leadership funds to continue our commitment to improved school counseling programs with emphasis on career guidance and counseling. This effort has realized some of our greatest results in identification of effective career guidance strategies for special populations.

Leadership funds were also used to provide professional development for CTE instructors on strategies for special populations to ensure both academic and technical skill attainment in CTE classes. This is an on-going effort to improve the skills of teachers to meet the needs of all students, especially 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.

## **B. Permissible Activities [sec. 124 of Perkins III]**

### **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 for Vocational and Technical Education Programs [sec.131 and 134 of Perkins III]**

#### **A. Provide a summary of the State's eligible recipients, listing the number of secondary local eligible agencies, area vocational and technical education agencies, postsecondary agencies, and consortia.**

The following list is the breakdown for 2006-2007 program year allocations of eligible districts.

#### **2006-07 Perkins Allocations**

<b>County Dist.</b>	<b>Consortium/Standalone</b>	<b>Total Allocation</b>	<b>Number of Dist. Reps</b>
010003	ESU 09	\$54,370	12
010018	Hastings Public School	\$40,289	1
020009	ESU 08	\$95,451	19
030500	ESU 16	\$52,150	15
040001	ESU 13	\$109,881	18
050071	ESU 10	\$140,508	31
060001	ESU 07	\$108,457	20
070006	Alliance Public School	\$23,075	1
090010	ESU 17	\$26,793	5
100007	Kearney Public School	\$53,467	1
110001	West Point Consortium	\$22,717	3
110014	ESU 02	\$49,673	12
130001	ESU 03	\$53,954	9
140008	ESU 01	\$71,910	19
150010	ESU 15	\$31,775	8
220011	South Sioux City Community School	\$46,116	1
240001	Lexington Public School	\$34,554	1
270001	Fremont Public School	\$46,441	1
280001	Omaha Public Schools	\$840,286	1
280010	Eastern Midlands Conference Consortium	\$48,859	4
280017	Millard Public School	\$121,804	1
280054	Ralston Public School	\$18,897	1
280066	Westside Community School	\$31,735	1
300001	ESU 06	\$64,940	11
300025	Heartland Consortium	\$43,969	5
310506	ESU 11	\$35,878	11
340001	ESU 05	\$39,196	9

340015	Beatrice Public School	\$25,397	1
400002	Grand Island Public School	\$110,398	1
410504	Holdrege Consortium	\$33,720	3
490032	ESU 04	\$71,619	13
540505	ESU 1 (Reservation Schools)	\$32,931	4
550001	Lincoln Public Schools	\$393,876	1
560001	North Platte Public School	\$55,481	1
590002	Norfolk Public School	\$55,252	1
710001	Columbus Public School	\$33,471	1
730017	McCook Public School	\$16,553	1
770001	Bellevue Public School	\$73,575	1
770027	Papillion-LaVista Public School	\$63,504	1
780001	Ashland-Greenwood/Wahoo	\$15,995	2
790016	Gering Public School	\$22,345	1
790032	Scottsbluff Public School	\$61,366	1
TOTAL SEC		<b>\$3,372,628</b>	
944000	Central Community College	\$467,411	1
947000	Metropolitan Community College	\$844,969	1
948000	Mid-Plains Community College	\$248,135	2
943000	Northeast Community College	\$278,483	1
945000	Southeast Community College	\$781,001	1
941000	Western Community College	\$161,556	1
TOTAL PS		<b>\$2,781,554</b>	

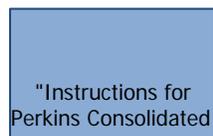
**B. Attach the latest version of the local application used to fund eligible recipients**

**Local Application**

Attached are the instructions for the 2006-2007 Local Application. The local application process moved to an online web-based system beginning in 2005-2006. 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>.



**IV. Accountability [sec. 113 of Perkins III]**

**A. 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 that will be implemented 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**

The only measure that did not meet this year was academic attainment. The primary reason for this may have been a part of the shift in preparation for data reporting using the NCLB measures of academic attainment. In preparation for the new Perkins IV measures, many schools

began to use the AYP data to determine this calculation. The definition and guidance provided to make this shift required that a student met in both Math and Reading to be considered for attainment. This will be different in the new measures of Perkins IV as the two categories will be in separate measures. Efforts to support the exchange and implementation of data reporting that is aligned with existing data collections will also be a significant leap forward to address the issue.

### **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 Vocational Skill Attainment and Completion. The past five years of data collection continue to address issues of data quality. The measure of Vocational Skill Attainment uses a Vocational GPA of a C or higher and the measure was missed by .57 % or a little more than a half of one percent. The implications of not meeting this measure could be addressed by simply rounding the numbers. Nonetheless, the measure was not met and efforts to shift and change the methods of measuring technical skill attainment are among the initiatives planned to address this issue in Perkins IV implementation.

The graduation or completion rate is something that significant progress had been over the past five years in performance. When analyzing the institutional data provided for the aggregate, one of the six reporting institutions increased the denominator by nearly 700% over the past three years report and dropped from a 35 % completion rate to just over 15% in one year. This highlights an opportunity for validation of the numbers provided and supports the need of achieving consistent approaches to data quality and reporting. These issues will be addressed as a significant part of the implementation of the new accountability and performance measures process under Perkins IV.

### **B. State's Performance Results for Special Populations and Program Improvement Strategies**

Analyze the State's performance results for special populations listed in section 3(23) of Perkins III 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 that will be implemented during the program year to improve those results.

### **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 70.5 %. However, many of these areas had slight 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 94% and 92% 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 94.00%. 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 94% attainment, the LEP category with an equal attainment and the Native American and Hispanic populations with 81% and 84 % attainment. The 81% attainment represents 17 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 25.64% attainment from the seven year high of 31% attainment last year and does reveal a few areas of focus in downward trends in the data over last year. The individuals with disabilities (ID) showed 23% completion and the Native American population performed at 18%, although this represented 16 out of 15,285 total concentrators.

The area of placement does provide a smaller number of special populations areas that did not meet the state goal of 90.28%. The most significant category below the goal was the Individual with Disabilities (ID), but the total population of 94 reported influences the percentage dramatically and came in at a respectable 87%. The other areas that came in lower were the 68% placement of nontraditional enrollees

### **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.

### **C. Definitions for Accountability Forms**

**Career and Technical Education (CTE) Participant:** Student who enrolled in at least one (1) Career and Technical Education course in the program year.

**Career and Technical Education (CTE) Completer:** Concentrator who attained a high school diploma or GED.

**Career and Technical Education (CTE) Concentrator:** Student who enrolled in a “*threshold level*” of Career and Technical Education.

#### **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.

### **C. 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
1S1	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>
1S2	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>
2S1	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>
3S1	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>
4S1	State/Local Administered Data	<p><b>Numerator:</b> Number of non-traditional students who concentrated in programs leading to occupations that are determined to be non-traditional.</p> <p><b>Denominator:</b> Total number of students who concentrated in the same programs during the same reporting period.</p>
4S2	State/Local Administered Data	<p><b>Numerator:</b> Number of non-traditional students who complete programs leading to occupations that are determined to be non-traditional</p> <p><b>Denominator:</b> Total number of students who complete the same programs during the same reporting period.</p>
1P1	National/State Standards and Local Assessment Systems or Overall Grade Point Average	<p><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.</p> <p><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.</p>
1P2	Local Standards and Assessment Systems or Vocational Grade Point Average	<p><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.</p> <p><b>Denominator:</b> Number of students concentrating in a program leading to a certificate, diploma or associate degree during the same reporting year.</p>
2P1	State/Local Administered Data	<p><b>Numerator:</b> Number of students, who attain a certificate, diploma or associate degree.</p> <p><b>Denominator:</b> Number of students who defined as program concentrators during the same reporting period.</p>
3P1	School-Administered	<p><b>Numerator:</b> Number of students who attained a certificate,</p>

	Surveys/Placement Records	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.

## E. Improvement Strategies

*Provide a brief summary of any changes that are planned to improve the overall accuracy, reliability, and completeness of the State's Perkins accountability data.*

### Improving Data Quality

The process of improving the data quality has been ongoing over the past five years. An overview of the main activities that have occurred over this past year and are a part of the plan for improvement are provided below.

**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.

**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.

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

This section not applicable for this year.

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

The primary objectives of this final year are to support the transition of FutureForce Nebraska and the NebraskaCareerConnections resource into a long term strategic resources for all Nebraskans. Specific work and identification of integration opportunities with the Department of Labor information will continue to be a priority, although the USDOL did not fund the grant proposal for the Heartland Pipeline that would have significantly increased the capacity of achieving the integration. To that end the following information is provided on some of the work that has been occurring.

### ***Nebraska Career Connections***

The following is a report provided by the trainers for NebraskaCareerConnections.org who have been working with schools and other entities to understand, implement, and create a resource that supports Nebraska.

September began with Corky and I exhibiting at the Nebraska State Fair. There were over 40,000 people that came through the 4-H Cyberfair Building which is where our table was located. There was much interest from home school families, and many, many others! This was a great awareness-building event! Other meetings and trainings at the beginning of the month included Omaha Public Schools where we met with John Moore to discuss the Curriculum Manager and his ideas on revising this component to ease the process, Lincoln Christian School training, ESU #6 training in Milford for teachers and counselors where a few of the schools had used the system last year with one class of students, but plan to use it with all students this year. Mid Plains Community College Educator Appreciation Day included training to area counselors and teachers. There were 6 schools that received site information forms to get signed up.

Mid September was just as busy with Voc Rehab staff training in Scottsbluff (The Harms Technology Center is a great facility!), Scottsbluff High School, Voc Rehab staff training in North Platte and Gretna High School. All that attended these trainings are very excited to have the information!

We also had the opportunity to present at Wayne State to a methods class with four students that will be student teaching next spring and fall. All of them commented that they wish they would have had this system when they were in high school.

The month with Administrative Database training at Creighton High School and ESU #1 Native American Schools training where we received a very positive response. One teacher is using the system every Friday in his classes. We also attended the Nebraska Counseling Association Conference in Lincoln where we had an exhibit booth and conducted two presentations and trained counselors both at Pender and Howells Public Schools. One of the counselors said he had been looking for something like this and the other said the system is very user friendly and easy to navigate.

#### 2007 Results To Date:

Through the month of September 19,435 interest, skills and work values assessments have been taken with 1,450 CALS and 1,364 Discussion Guides used. There are 305 schools and institutions signed up to use the system to date.

Top Interest Clusters: Finance and Health Science.

#### ***FutureForce Nebraska***

Updates and review of information occurring with FutureForce are available at [www.futureforcenebraska.org](http://www.futureforcenebraska.org). The website has been updated and revised to include the four primary areas of work that include talent pipeline development, Think Nebraska, NebraskaCareerConnections, and a new statewide consortium of schools entitled Partnerships for Innovation.

FutureForce conducted a statewide kickoff of the *Think! Nebraska* program that focuses on informing and encouraging students and parents about the benefits of pursuing courses in high school that provide an opportunity to be college and career ready. The Governor spoke at the kick off and a promotional blurb on the Husker Sports Network game day coverage about FutureForce Nebraska was provided.

#### ***Online Program Improvement***

The resources earmarked for the Program Improvement Tool have been used to support the rollout of the NebraskaCareerConnections.org resource. The integration and evaluation of this resource is put on hold pending the outcome of a joint planning meeting with WIA and Perkins representatives in evaluating the opportunities for the future development of state plans and implementation of new Perkins legislation.