

PART B: NARRATIVE PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

Nebraska's Response

1. Implementation of State Leadership Activities

a. Required Uses of Funds

Conducting an assessment of the vocational and technical education programs funded under Perkins IV.

- Nebraska conducts an ongoing assessment of the CTE programs funded through a system of monitoring activities including:
 - Desk monitoring of each Local Eligible Recipient on an annual basis that includes a review of CTE programs, expenditure of funds, and performance measure indicators. Each LEA submits an annual report that documents their self-assessment and proposed changes for the future based on that assessment.
 - On-site monitoring of local eligible recipients once every three years.
 - On-site monitoring of local eligible recipients and sub-recipients (local schools) verifying equipment placement and usage once every three years.
 - Nebraska identifies approved programs of study and posts the programs of study by school on the State of the Schools Report on the Nebraska Department of Education website.
- Nebraska has implemented a Programs of Study data collection and reporting site. The purpose of the process was to initially identify eligibility for Perkins participation, but more importantly to serve as the basis for the understanding the sequences of courses and programmatic activities that exist in Nebraska. The implementation of this resource is step one of several over the next two years that will implement the activities of local assessment of career and technical education programs.
- Several resources exist to assist in the evaluation of programmatic quality and assessment, including the quality assessment from OVAE, national quality standards from specific discipline areas, and other resources. Nebraska is working to create a modified tool to support evaluation and assessment of the programs offered within the Nebraska schools.

Developing, improving, or expanding the use of technology in career and technical education.

- Conducted full-day technology workshops and multiple one-hour sessions were offered during the 2008 Nebraska Career Education Conference. Software

training was conducted in: Office 2007, Adobe Acrobat Pro, AutoDesk, MasterCAM, CNC, Google, MS Photo Story, iPhoto, iMovie, and MS Office Picture Manager. These workshops included teaching strategies for implementation of technology tools in their classrooms, i.e. teachers learned to develop digital documentaries and podcasts that integrated writing and speaking competencies. Teachers learned about Vista, OneNote, Groove, Web 2.0, online course management systems, and many technology toys that can be integrated into all courses.

- Conducted regional workshops in collaboration with our Nebraska Education Service Units for all CTE teachers and administrators. Topics included updates on programs of study, strategies for academic and technical student achievement, updating of technical skills and emphasis on 21st Century Skills.

Offering professional development programs, including providing comprehensive professional development (including initial teacher preparation) for career and technical education teachers, faculty, administrators, and career guidance and academic counselors at the secondary and postsecondary levels.

- CTE staff conducted workshops and professional development on High Schools That Work/Making Middle Grades Work through a variety of venues including Administrators Days, individual school professional development days, Nebraska Career Education Conference, and individual contacts via phone, mail and e-mail. Provided staff in-service to Omaha Public Schools middle grades teachers and high school staff.
- Leadership funds supported the annual Nebraska Career Education Conference attending by over 600 CTE secondary and postsecondary instructors and administrators. Full-day technology workshops and multiple one-hour sessions were offered. Teachers received software training in Office 2007, Adobe Acrobat Pro, AutoDesk, MasterCAM, CNC, Google, MS Photo Story, iPhoto, iMovie, and MS Office Picture Manager. Workshops included teaching strategies for implementation of technology tools in their classrooms, i.e. teachers learned to develop digital documentaries and podcasts that integrated writing and speaking competencies. Teachers learned about Vista, OneNote, Groove, Web 2.0, online course management systems, and many technology toys that can be integrated into all courses.
- Regional workshops were held with additional workshops being offered for larger stand-alone schools. Attendees included secondary, postsecondary, teacher educators and preservice college students. The outcomes for these workshops included:
 - Develop a better understanding of the NCE career fields and clusters model
 - Educate teachers on the programs of study

- Guide teachers in program/curricula changes that would help them implement the NCE model, recommended course titles and descriptions, and the state models for programs of study
- Use the Career Cluster knowledge and skill statements to drive curricula changes
- Learn about new curriculum and resources available
- Produced and distributed a CD's with curriculum for Introduction to Health Science Class.
- Cooperated with Extension personnel in providing professional development for teachers, including information about new majors/options of study at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.
- Coordinated first-year teachers experience that included several conference calls, a mentoring program, participation in workshops and conferences and on-site visits.

Providing support for career and technical education programs that improve the academic and career and technical skills of students through the integration of academics with career and technical education.

- Nebraska continues to emphasize professional development to enhance the skill level of CTE instructions. At our annual Nebraska Career Education Conference, a workshop on the Rigor and Relevance in Technical Writing drew not only CTE teachers but secondary English teachers.
- Conducted Math in Construction workshop at Nebraska Career Education Conference.
- Nebraska continued membership in the HSTW Consortium
 - Participated in periodic conference calls to plan strategies both statewide and nationally.
 - Represented Nebraska's interest at two annual State Leaders meetings including the State Coordinators meetings and annual State Leaders Forum.
 - Continued to disseminate information regarding Nebraska's High Schools That Work school improvement membership. Conducted workshops and professional development through a variety of venues including Administrators Days, individual school professional development days, Nebraska Career Education Conference, and individual contacts via phone, mail and e-mail.
 - Developed a home page for Nebraska High Schools That Work as a means of providing resources and information to Nebraska educators.
 - Developed a listserv specifically for Nebraska High Schools That Work and Making Middle Grades Work.

- Conducted Making Middle Grades Work Site Development Workshop for Omaha Public Schools and other interested districts.

Providing preparation for non-traditional fields in current and emerging professions, and other activities that expose students, including special populations, to high skill, high wage occupations, except that one-day or short-term workshops or conferences are not allowable.

- NDE issued a competitive RFP to study barriers and strategies for overcoming barriers to recruiting and retaining Special Population students in CTE programs. Dr. Patricia Funk, a private contractor, was awarded the study project for \$46,000. The final study and report was to be completed by June 30, 2008, but was extended until December 31, 2008.
- Based on the final report, future recommendations for uses of funds designated for nontraditional and special populations will include an implementation other strategies identified in the report.

Supporting partnerships among local educational agencies, institutions of higher education, adult education providers, and, as appropriate, other entities, such as employers, labor organizations, intermediaries, parents, and local partnerships, to enable students to achieve State academic standards, and career and technical skills, or complete career and technical programs of study.

- Nebraska continues to utilize Leadership Funds to support the structure of FutureForce Nebraska, FutureForce Finance is a partnership of education, workforce and economic development as well as business and industry.
 - Conducted focus groups of business/industry representatives to review the Insurance Pathway and Banking Services Pathway knowledge and skill statements.
 - Designed 3 dual-credit courses: College Principles of Accounting, College Personal Financial management and College Introduction to Business.
- Promoted the implementation of ProStart in collaboration with the Nebraska Restaurant Association
- Conducted and annual Nebraska CTE Teacher Education Forum, bringing together all the teacher educators involved in preparing CTE teachers for updates, professional development and collaborative work.
- The Nebraska Entrepreneurship Career Pathway Task Force (NET-Force) continued significant work through quarterly meetings of the full group as well as the Curriculum and Marketing/Public Relations Sub-Committees. The six Entrepreneurship Courses that were created with common titles and syllabi and approved by the CIOs of all six Nebraska community colleges were reviewed, revised, and submitted for approval (approval granted) by the CIOs. All of the courses are now being offered in a variety of ways (traditional classroom and on-line) at the community colleges and are being used to create articulation

agreements with secondary schools and four-year private and public postsecondary institutions.

- Facilitated and/or participated in discussions related to feasibility of career academies.

Serving individuals in State institutions.

- The Sarpy County Juvenile Justice Center, Papillion, 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. Their project “ENGAGE” was approved for \$33,480.00 to serve adjudicated and expelled youth using outdoor learning as a tool. The primary objective is to reinforce academic performance goals recommended by the State of Nebraska and Sarpy school districts by using career technical education that includes the integration of science, mathematics, and reading in an outdoor laboratory.
- Perkins Funds were awarded to Southeast Community College, in collaboration with funding from Adult Basic Education, to provide instruction and transition to adult inmates at the State of Nebraska Corrections facility. Their project “7 Steps” implements an integrated academic and career technical education system that helps to transition institutionalized adults from their current level of education to postsecondary education.

Providing support for programs for special populations that lead to high skill, high wage and high demand occupations.

- Nebraska continued to invest leadership funds to continue our commitment to improved school counseling programs with emphasis identification of effective career guidance strategies for special populations.
- Leadership funds were used to support professional development for CTE instructors on strategies for engagement of special populations that ensures 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.
- Partnered with other sections of NDE to conduct a Hispanic/Latino Summit. Served on the Planning Committee for the Summit and provided direction and guidance on incorporating Career Education focus into the Summit program of activities. This included bringing Nebraska Career Connections into the planning process and incorporating workshops for conference participants on Nebraska Career Connections.
- 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. Focused on using the data to assist in determining program and curriculum decisions. This effort is helping in the transition planning for individuals with disabilities. An outgrowth of this discussion is new collaboration on leadership development for special population students.

- Nebraska encourages LEA's to expend Perkins funds to support CTE in alternative education settings. With growing numbers of students seeking alternatives to the traditional high school, enrollment in alternative education programs are increasing. An example of success is in Blackburn Alternative Education Center in Omaha Public Schools where Perkins funds were used to enhance CTE opportunities for all students and develop new CTE programs.

Offering technical assistance for eligible recipients.

- All Nebraska Department of Education CTE staff maintain a listserv to provide technical assistance to Nebraska CTE teachers. NDE can provide timely announcements, new resources, and visionary direction. More powerful, however, is networking and collaboration among CTE teachers who utilize the listserv as a vehicle to solve problems, gather information, and share success stories as they learn from each other.
- Developed a Perkins IV Strategic Planning Guide for use by local educational agencies and consortia
 - Pilot-tested the Guide with and conducted a full-day Strategic Planning Retreat for Kearney Public Schools Career Education Staff
 - Refined the Guide based on the Kearney Public Schools Retreat
 - Participated in and presented during a two-day Strategic Planning Retreat for ESU 10 consortia schools during which the Guide was utilized.
 - Provided the Guide to NCE staff for use with Nebraska Career Education programs.

b. Permissible Activities

Improving career guidance and academic counseling programs.

- 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. Nebraska used leadership funds to help conduct a School Counselor Academy to improve the knowledge and skill of counselors especially with reference to career counseling activities.

Establishing agreements, including articulation agreements, between secondary school and postsecondary career and technical education programs to provide postsecondary education and training opportunities for students.

- Nebraska has used leadership funds to begin the process of developing statewide articulation agreements. CTE staff have facilitated meetings between secondary and postsecondary individuals to develop a system of articulation agreements. Career clusters and pathways have been identified to begin this work. Agreements have been reached with three courses in the Finance and Business, Management, Marketing Career Clusters.

Supporting initiatives to facilitate the transition of sub baccalaureate career and technical education students into baccalaureate programs.

- Nebraska has used leadership funds to facilitate meetings to enhance the Nebraska Transfer Initiative, a special initiative that outlines courses that articulate between community colleges and four-year colleges and universities. This is also used in our work to develop statewide articulation agreements.

Supporting career and technical student organizations.

- Perkins leadership funds were used to 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 technical skills.

Supporting public charter schools operating career and technical education programs.

- Nebraska does not have public charter schools.

Supporting career and technical education programs that offer experience in, and understanding of, all aspects of an industry for which students are preparing to enter.

- All LEA's are required to address this point in their local application. NDE uses leadership funds to support professional development to assist LEA's in developing strategies to address all aspects of an industry.

Supporting family and consumer sciences programs.

- Provided financial support to develop a 12th grade two-semester 'Life and Career Essentials' curriculum focused on three major themes: financial literacy, relationship literacy and life/work literacy. The framework, benchmarks and competencies were finalized during workshop settings in the fall of 2007. In June, 2008, twelve secondary teachers met for three days to select and design learning experiences for the curriculum. This curriculum was disseminated to all teachers attending the fall 2008 ESU workshops.

Supporting partnerships between education and business or business intermediaries, including cooperative education and adjunct faculty arrangements at the secondary and postsecondary levels.

- The Career Field specialists for Business, Marketing and Management and Communication and Information Systems present to preservice students who are preparing to become business, marketing or information technology teachers. In addition, one career field specialist serves as an adjunct methods instructor at the University of NE-Lincoln.
- Cooperate with FutureForce Nebraska in developing a partnership for the review of Knowledge and Skill statements and updating of curriculum in the Finance career cluster.
- Coordinate with Nebraska Logistics Council for the creation of new logistics program of study on the secondary and postsecondary levels and with Dream It, Do It campaign to evaluate and update manufacturing curriculum on the secondary and postsecondary levels.

Supporting the improvement or development of new career and technical education courses and initiatives, including career clusters, career academies, and distance education.

- NDE CTE staff in cooperation with CTE instructors at the secondary and postsecondary level developed and disseminated an Introduction to Human Services and Resources curriculum that is used as the first course in the program of study for Human Services.
- Cooperated with FutureForce Nebraska, Finance Cluster Committee to develop three dual-credit college courses: College Introduction to Business, College Personal Financial Management and College Accounting.
- Developed new state model Transportation, Distribution and Logistics program of study at Omaha Bryan High School. Added new Project Lead the Way at Omaha North and Lincoln Public Schools and created new construction academy at Omaha Public Schools Career Center.
- Professional development included the following course guides: Marketing, Introduction to Business, Marketing and Management, Entrepreneurship Investigation (ESI) and C4C: Curriculum for Careers.
- Facilitated and/or participated in discussions related to feasibility of career academies.

Awarding incentive grants to eligible recipients for exemplary performance or for use for innovative initiatives under section 135(c)(19) of Perkins IV.

Not Addressed

Providing activities to support entrepreneurship education and training.

- Participated in curriculum sub-committee meetings to review and revise the syllabi for the six Entrepreneurship courses that have been accepted by the Chief Instructional Officers of all six Nebraska community colleges.
- Developed and staffed exhibits at a variety of conferences that showcased the work of NET-Force, Nebraska Career Education, and local educational agencies and districts throughout the state.
- Conducted a cross-state “Focus on Entrepreneurship Education/Building Entrepreneurial Communities” speaking tour at the request of the Sandhills Scenic Byway group during which presentations were given to local chambers of commerce, high schools, and economic development groups.
- Participated in the meetings and assisted with planning for an “Entrepreneurship Boot Camp under development by the Global Competitiveness Program at the University of Nebraska-Kearney.
- Developed a “Building a Strengths-Based Entrepreneurship Program” in-service and curriculum materials in collaboration with the Gallup Organization and presented a half-day in-service at the 25th Annual Entrepreneurship Forum in Charleston, SC.
- Participated in planning for a Southeast Nebraska Entrepreneurship Youth Summit at the UNL Kimmel Education and Research Center.
- Participated in Entrepreneurship Focus program/career academy discussions hosted by the Greater Omaha Chamber of Commerce.
- Collaborated in and provided guidance and support for the taping and broadcast of eight-hours of web broadcasts highlighting Nebraska Entrepreneurship Education efforts, programs, best practices, and successful youth entrepreneurs in collaboration with CISCO, the Consortium for Entrepreneurship Education, and NET-Force.
- Assisted in a full-day entrepreneurship education professional development activity (Native American Institute) for Northeast Nebraska conducted at Winnebago Public Schools.
- Participated in the first High School Entrepreneurship Business Showcase at Central Community College-Columbus.
- Represented NDE/NCE as a curriculum design team member for four distinct and separate curriculum projects in collaboration with Nebraska 4-H, HomeTown Competitiveness, Nebraska Farm Bureau, USDA Rural Development, and the Nebraska Entrepreneurship Career Pathway Task Force (NET-Force)

Providing career and technical education programs for adults and school dropouts to complete their secondary school education.

- NDE CTE staff worked with the AIM Institute in Omaha, NE to develop a model program for dropouts to use their information technology skills as entrepreneurs and also complete their secondary school education. The program has been presented for funding to several foundations and private donors.

Providing assistance to individuals who have participated in Perkins-assisted services and activities in continuing their education or training or finding appropriate jobs.

Not addressed

Developing valid and reliable assessments of technical skills.

- Consulted with and served as pilot site for National SkillsUSA Workforce Ready System. Provided professional development for implementation of this system in secondary and postsecondary institutions.
- Provided professional development for secondary and postsecondary individuals to evaluate assessments and research appropriate industry certifications to be used where appropriate.

Developing or enhancing data systems to collect and analyze data on secondary and postsecondary academic and employment outcomes.

- CTE staff coordinated with NDE Data Center to implement the new Nebraska Student and Staff Record System. This new system ties CTE data system into the statewide system for more accurate information

Improving the recruitment and retention of career and technical education teachers, faculty, administrators, or career guidance and academic counselors, and the transition to teaching from business and industry, including small business.

- NDE CTE staff regularly present information about Nebraska's CTE career cluster and pathway model, programs of study, and strategies for improving student academic and technical skill attainment to University/College undergraduate teacher preparation students.
- NDE CTE staff regularly addresses teaching methods classes for undergraduate teacher preparation students.
- CTE staff collaborated with NDE Teacher Certification Staff to revise the Trade Certificate program that allows community college CTE staff and individuals from business and industry to provide secondary career technical education instruction

Supporting occupational and employment information resources.

- NDE continued to support the Nebraska Career Connections website to provide up-to-date career information, labor market information and allow students to develop Personal Learning Plans based on their career aspirations. This website is provided free to all Nebraskans and is used in over 80% of Nebraska schools.

2. Progress in Developing and Implementing Technical Skill Assessments

- (1) the program areas for which the State had technical skill assessments.

Nebraska currently does not have any statewide technical skill assessments.

- (2) the estimated percentage of students who would be reported in the State's calculation of career and technical education concentrators who took assessments.

Secondary Level

The first year of implementation of an individual student record system provided an opportunity for subrecipients to report the methodology used to achieve technical skill attainment. The results indicate that of 10,364 unduplicated concentrators there were 12 that met technical skill attainment using either a third party assessment or an industry certification at the secondary level. The reporting process did not allow for multiple method identification to be used. The percentage provides for .116 % (or a little more than 1/10th of one percent of students at the secondary level engaging in a technical skill attainment assessment different from Grade Point Average or Completion of an articulated/dual credit postsecondary course.

Postsecondary Level

At the postsecondary level in Nebraska the current approach relies on the Grade Point Average of the concentrators to determine technical skill attainment. It has been determined that in order for the institution to meet accreditation the industry councils associated with providing oversight and direction to the programmatic and assessment activities of the instruction require a significant level of industry based rigor within the courses offered. The additional factor of vendors to re-disclosing confidential data, to the institutions related to the performance of students, on the industry based technical skill assessments is problematic.

It is estimated that somewhere between 3 and 11 % of the completed concentrators attempt a industry certification after completing the program at the postsecondary level, but no data is currently available on the success rate for these assessments.

- (3) the State's plan and timeframe for increasing the coverage of programs and students reported in this indicator to cover all career and technical education concentrators and all program areas in the future.

- Nebraska is currently in the process of developing programs of study in all career clusters and statewide articulation agreements in priority career cluster and pathway areas. The priority cluster areas for development of statewide articulation agreements are:

Finance; Business Marketing and Management; Health Science; and Transportation, Distribution and Logistics.

- The development of programs of study is being completed by bringing together secondary and postsecondary instructors, business and industry representatives and NDE CTE staff representing the given cluster area. Curriculum is reviewed and aligned with the SCCI Knowledge and Skill statements. Student outcomes are determined for each course.
- The final part of the curriculum alignment is the development of identification of dual credit courses in each area to assist students in transitioning from secondary to postsecondary education.
- Throughout this process, assessment strategies for both academic and technical skill attainment are identified. The committees continue to look for industry validated certificates where possible.
- Nebraska is also working to align to the new Nebraska Student Accountability process (NeSA). The system will be the first ever in Nebraska to provide a state test in areas of Reading, Math, and Science. Access to an item bank to populate the system with Career and Technical assessments is an option that we continue pursue.
- Our timeline is to continue this process until we have completed all 16 career clusters. This process will take the next 5-8 years to complete.

3. Implementation of State Program Improvement Plans

Using the data submitted for the 07-08 performance year Nebraska met at least 90 percent of all State-adjusted level of performance for the core indicators of performance under section 113 of Title I of the Act. The result of the achievement, although based upon limited access and timing issues associated with the data reporting process, do not require Nebraska to implement of state program improvement plan. It should be mentioned thought, that despite the lack of a requirement for developing a plan, Nebraska is constantly focusing on improvement of the programmatic opportunities for students.

4. Implementation of Local Program Improvement Plans

Section 123(b)(1) of Perkins IV requires each State to evaluate annually, using the local adjusted levels of performance described in section 113(b)(4) of Perkins IV, the career and technical education activities of each eligible recipient receiving funds under the basic grant program (Title I of the Act). Section 123(b)(2) of Perkins IV further requires that if the State, after completing its evaluation, determines that an eligible recipient failed to meet at least 90 percent of an agreed upon local adjusted level of performance for any of the core indicators of performance described in section 113(b)(4) of Perkins IV, the eligible recipient shall develop and implement a program improvement plan with special consideration given to performance gaps identified under section 113(b)(4)(C)(ii)(II) of Perkins IV. The local improvement plan must be developed and implemented in

consultation with appropriate agencies, individuals, and organizations. It must be implemented during the first program year succeeding the program year for which the eligible recipient failed to meet its local adjusted levels of performance for any of the core indicators of performance.

As identified in the state plan Nebraska has opted to synchronize the state goals with that local goals and require the local sub recipients to achieve the same goals. As a part of the transition year and the implementation of the Nebraska Student and Staff Record System (NSSRS) there were six districts that could provide data for either the Reading and/or Math AYP measures from the system. The primary reason is that overwhelming majority of districts with concentrators report the AYP for the 11th grade students. As this was the first year for reporting to the statewide system, the historical AYP performance data was not available for inclusion within the system for analysis and ultimately was not included in the reporting process.

A determination was made to not enforce the local improvement plan process upon four or five districts; although none would require the implementation of improvement planning this year as they all met the 90% threshold for both the AYP oriented measures. The graduation rate was based on the 06-07 information reported for completers as indicated on the accountability notes section and all districts met this performance measure at that time as well.

The process for local improvement plans will be incorporated with the 2009-10 local planning process and require sub recipients to include a focus for meeting any performance measures not met during the 2008-09 reporting year.

The postsecondary institutions did not report official data this year, but engaged in a base line pilot year of reporting data. The collaborative approach of the institutions to test and compare results, along with clarifying and identifying best practices was indeed an opportunity that should provide a strong baseline for the future. The state goals established through the FAUPL will also be used as the postsecondary goals through the first two years of the implementation, before a determination of process will be made to engage in local performance negotiations.

5. Tech Prep Grant Award Information

- Nebraska merged Title I and Title II. No Tech Prep Grant Awards were given.