

SECTION 1: NARRATIVE REPORT FOR THE CONSOLIDATED ANNUAL PERFORMANCE, ACCOUNTABILITY, AND FINANCIAL STATUS REPORT

Executive Summary

Part I, Program Administration: The New Jersey Department of Education (DOE) provides quality educational services for NJ's K-12 and postsecondary education systems. Within that broad mission, the DOE's Office of Vocational-Technical, Career and Innovative Programs (OVTCIP), within the Division of Educational Programs and Assessment, is responsible for providing the leadership for the K-12 career education and counseling system and for vocational-technical education programs in secondary and postsecondary schools and colleges. OVTCIP is also responsible for administering the funding provided under the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Act of 1998 (Perkins Act). In its role, OVTCIP seeks to ensure high student academic achievement and technical skill development supporting opportunities for economic self-sufficiency, as well as economic competitiveness for the state.

During the period from July 1, 2004 through June 30, 2005, the DOE provided leadership in nearly all of the permissible areas cited in Section 124(b) and (c). The DOE used its Perkins leadership funds to support career education initiatives, curriculum development and dissemination, professional development, standards and measures development, high school reform initiatives, education/business partnerships, and to provide leadership through specific initiatives.

Part II, Program Performance: OVTCIP staff provided ongoing technical assistance for vocational-technical education programs in NJ. State measurement approaches have been designed and performance levels have been set to be objective, quantifiable, and measurable. Progress of eligible recipients is measured against the performance indicators using the Vocational Education Data Systems (VEDS) and other sources for employment data. The goal is to deliver an independently collected and verified data system by working with NJ's State Employment and Training Commission (SETC) on a unified Accountability System, so that performance of all providers can be fairly assessed.

Narrative

I. Program Administration [Section 122 (c)]

a. Report on State Administration (roles/responsibility summary)

As noted above, OVTCIP provides leadership for the K-12 career education and counseling system and for vocational-technical education programs in secondary and postsecondary schools and colleges, and administers funding provided under the Perkins Act. The director of OVTCIP serves as the State Director of Vocational Education, representing the Commissioner of Education on all bodies responsible for addressing vocational-technical education and how academic preparation and achievement of high academic standards through secondary and postsecondary vocational-technical education support NJ's workforce development system, as administered by the NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development (LWD). The NJ State Board of Education (SBOE) also serves as the State Board for Vocational Education and approves all plans submitted to the U.S. Department of Education (USDOE).

b. Report on State Leadership [Section 124]

New Jersey used leadership funds to support career education initiatives, curriculum development and dissemination, professional development, standards and measures development, high school reform initiatives, and education/business partnerships, as well as to provide leadership through specific initiatives. The DOE provided services to local education agencies (LEAs), including charter schools, and to community colleges by: distributing state and federal funds; creating and/or continuing support for interagency coordination and cooperation among various state and federal agencies, including the LWD, the NJ Department of Human Services (DHS), the NJ Department of Corrections (DOC), the NJ Commission on Higher Education (CHE), the NJ Juvenile Justice Commission (JJC), the SETC, the US Department of Labor (USDOL)-Bureau of Apprenticeship and Training, as well as other commissions

and boards; providing technical assistance to all eligible local recipients; participating actively in joint planning activities on the SETC; entering into a partnership with the USDOL, the federal Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA), the LWD, the University of Medicine and Dentistry of NJ, and the Environmental and Occupational Safety and Health Institute (EOSHI) to design and implement a pilot training program for teachers supervising students in work-based structured learning experiences; and, providing support for staff positions in other offices within the DOE to assist in Perkins implementation (*i.e.*, the Offices of Special Populations, Program Support Services, Academic and Professional Standards, and Compliance Investigation).

Career and Technical Education Study – On behalf of the DOE, the John J. Heldrich Center for Workforce Development at Rutgers, The State University of NJ, and the Center for Education and Training for Employment (CETE) at The Ohio State University completed a 2-phase study entitled, “*A Profile of Career and Technical Education Programs in New Jersey High Schools.*” The primary purpose of the study was to gain an in-depth understanding of how career and technical education (CTE) programs are preparing NJ students for careers and further education in current and emerging employment sectors. Another important purpose was to identify how school counseling offices are helping students to plan for the future and make decisions regarding careers and further education. The results of the project will inform NJ officials and educators involved in high school and career and technical education on how best to assist schools in creating, expanding, and improving their programs that educate students about for careers. A final report on the study was submitted in November 2005 and is currently under review.

Career Clusters - The OVTCIP continued responsibility for assisting in the development of guidelines for implementation of the States’ 16 Career Clusters. To this end, OVTCIP updated all programs of study currently offered at 2-year and 4-year institutions of higher education, and at all existing vocational-technical education programs in NJ within each of the career pathways in the 16 Career Clusters. The DOE also worked with the LWD to align with LWD’s crosswalk of Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) to the 16 career clusters. Additionally, OVTCIP staff attended the “National Career Cluster Institute” in Phoenix, AZ. Also underway during FY05 were efforts to reconstitute the Career Cluster Teams (*e.g.*, Arts/AV Technology & Communications, Information Technology, and Law, Public Safety & Security) with responsibilities for specific clusters.

Standards and Certifications/CIP 2000 – The OVTCIP continued its responsibility for the design, development, and implementation of the state’s plan to assist LEAs in meeting industry standards and certifications. To accomplish this objective, the OVTCIP initiated and continued an ongoing review of available industry standards and certifications for inclusion in databases and dissemination to LEAs. A review of the Classification of Instructional Programs 2000 and alignment of the CIP 1990 and 2000 to the 16 Career Clusters and their related career pathways was completed, utilizing available crosswalks from the USDOE. Review of this alignment is ongoing.

Data Quality Institute – To improve performance data quality, OVTCIP staff members participated in the national Data Quality Institute on both secondary and postsecondary levels. A team of secondary and postsecondary representatives returned with information to apply to the state system of data collection, review, and analysis.

Cosmetology Programs – OVTCIP coordinated and carried out a group testing of 1,465 Cosmetology program completers. The number of minutes for the licensure test was increased from 75 to 120 minutes, resulting in an eight percent increase in students passing the state examination. The anticipated rate of increase was calculated at 3.5 percent. OVTCIP also conducted a presentation on Computer Based Testing at the 2004 Generation Next and NJ Education Association Conferences, and led a focus group to collect data on students testing prior to graduation, leading to Board approval in April 2005.

Leadership funds also supported Vocational Student Organizations (VSOs), partnerships with other organizations involved with vocational-technical education programs, data collection, and the infusion of safety and health education and applied academics into vocational-technical education program curricula.

c. Update on Actions Taken in Response to Federal Monitoring Findings

- Finding 1: Local Applications - While the state has an annual application in use for the allocation of Perkins III funds to county vocational schools serving adult students, the budget portion of the application mingles state and Perkins money to such a degree that it is impossible to know for what purposes the Perkins funds will be spent.

Actions: The New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE)/Office of Vocational-Technical, Career and Innovative Programs (OVTCIP) has contacted the affected school districts and provided revised FY06 budget forms for interim fiscal reporting. The forms allow for the separate reporting of state and federal funds. The office is also working to institute revised budget forms for the state FY07 application, which will ensure the separation of state and federal funds. This work is being done in collaboration with the NJ Department of Education's Office of Grants Management. Finally, the office is working to ensure that the revised budget form include space to designate the specific purpose for each proposed expenditure.

- Finding 2: Program Finance - New Jersey currently allocates Perkins III funds to postsecondary subrecipients who fail to meet the minimum funding level of \$50,000, as required by the Perkins legislation.

Actions: The NJDOE/OVTCIP has worked to determine if it is practicable to revise the policy immediately for state fiscal year 2006. Full implementation of this change will not likely occur during FY06, since all plans were already submitted by the time this finding was made known to the NJDOE/OVTCIP. However, the NJDOE/OVTCIP will work to ensure that the necessary changes are made for FY07 and beyond.

The NJDOE/OVTCIP is also working to revise practice allocations so that postsecondary grantees with less than \$50,000 in federal funding are required to form consortia for funding eligibility. In this regard, the office will comply with the regulations set forth in the Perkins Act. Note: This will affect 14 of 21 county vocational school districts in the state with one possible exception (Warren County Vocational) due to that school's rural status.

- Finding 3: Program Administration - New Jersey permits eligible recipients to expend Perkins III funds for vocational student organizations to support student travel to national competitions in the event that such funds are not available from a student's school district. This use of Perkins III funding is not permitted by the legislation.

Actions: The NJDOE/OVTCIP has begun to address this finding by immediately denying request to use of funds for VSO national conventions. The office has also examined state procedures for seeking recovery of liquidated funds. Note: The position of the NJDOE/OVTCIP is that it has permitted funding for professional development activities and leadership development programs (which are allowable under the Act) for students, not “convention” activities alone. Finally, the office will also revise policies for future grant years according to requirements of a reauthorized version of the Perkins Act.

- Finding 4: Accountability - Upon review of New Jersey’s accountability system, the Tech-Prep data do not appear to be complete. The faulty counts of Tech-Prep students and some vocational students appear to stem from imprecise allocation of responsibility assigned to track “Tech-Prep students” and adult students receiving training in county vocational schools. As a result, there is a reasonable concern that the Tech-Prep data are not complete, accurate, or reliable, as required by the Perkins III legislation, and that the academic attainment (1S1) and graduation (2S1) data do not count all students enrolled in programs funded by Perkins III grants.

Actions: The NJDOE/OVTCIP will develop new definitions for Tech-Prep student concentrators and completers. The NJDOE/OVTCIP has already begun re-evaluating data collection and definitions for Tech-Prep and adult students at vocational schools to determine the degree to which current reporting is complete. The office has also devised and implemented a method to compare current postsecondary student enrollment information with student Tech-Prep enrollment information from previous years. Finally, the NJDOE/OVTCIP has developed appropriate policies and procedures to ensure increased accuracy of data collection and definitions.

Please note that NJDOE/OVTCIP staff members believed that this issue concerned postsecondary information (1P1 and 2P1), rather than secondary (1S1 and 2S1) information. The manager of the OVCTIP, Bureau of Program Review, consulted with federal representatives (Jay Savage and Len Lintner) on this matter. As a result of that discussion, it was confirmed that the issue concerned tracking the transition of students from secondary to postsecondary education. The issue does not concern postsecondary vocational schools.

1. Required Activities

1.1 Assessment of Funded Programs

The progress of eligible recipients was measured against the performance indicators using the VEDS information system and other sources for employment information to provide the necessary data. In addition, Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs) ensured that programs of study implemented in NJ responded to the local need for workforce development, and avoided unnecessary duplication. WIB endorsement was required of LEAs and community colleges applying for Perkins funding for entitlement and discretionary grant programs. Data were analyzed by the DOE and discussed with LEAs. A report of enrollments and effectiveness in meeting the core indicators of performance is included in the annual Perkins Performance Report, which is coordinated, edited, and produced by OVTCIP staff.

1.1.1 Monitoring Process

The DOE conducted onsite monitoring of Perkins grant recipients to ensure that grant programs and budget plans met state and federal guidelines. In FY05, OVTCIP monitored 60 different sites and 82 different Perkins-funded and state match-funded grant programs totaling in excess of \$21 million in grant funds. The following are examples of the elements that were examined during the monitoring visit for discretionary (*e.g.*, Tech-Prep) and entitlement grants: the status of implementation activities and timelines outlined in multi-year project plans; outcome evaluation data and observable measures (*e.g.*, documentation) for all completed goals and objectives; budget expenditures; time and activity information for all grant-funded positions; current student enrollment data by program(s) of study; and Perkins mandates (*e.g.*, integration of applied academics and integrated curricula).

1.1.2 Technical Assistance

Entitlement Grants: To ensure high quality, compliant programs, OVTCIP provided enhanced technical assistance throughout the grant period. This took the form of focus groups, regional technical assistance, informational programs, and follow-up regional work sessions. The work sessions gave eligible recipients the opportunity to address individual issues with their assigned OVTCIP program officer and to review the preliminary draft of the FY05 spending plan. Discussions included the distribution and review of program performance data and the use of funds for activities to improve any areas that were deficient. In all cases, OVTCIP staff members were available to work directly with eligible recipients and respond to individual inquiries concerning the Perkins spending plan processes and guidelines. Throughout the year, program officers continued to support grantees by providing technical assistance and remediation related to the submission of formal reports, program development and modifications, and addressing the objectives established in multi-year plans.

Discretionary Grants: Technical Assistance Workshops were provided to eligible applicants prior to the start of discretionary grant programs to provide participants with information about the upcoming grant and governing Notice of Grant Opportunity. Topics for discussion included: program design; fiscal and program reporting; timelines; data collection procedures; and preparing for state/federal grant audits.

Program officers for discretionary grants provided ongoing technical assistance during the grant year. For example, Tech-Prep grantees and subgrantees had opportunities to participate in two conferences. The first, “The Success Triangle: High School, College, and Work,” provided secondary and postsecondary administrators and faculty members with the information and resources necessary to develop and support credit-based transition programs, and allowed Tech-Prep grantees to showcase or present their new models for education. Another opportunity to present their new models for education was provided to Tech-Prep grantees during the annual statewide Generation Next Conference.

Perkins Data Reporting Training: Four hands-on computer training sessions were conducted prior to the annual data collection for federal Perkins reporting. The training helped school districts to better understand the definition of the collected data fields. The key points for data transferring were discussed at the training sessions. The importance of how each field affects a district’s performance was also addressed at the sessions.

1.1.3 Reporting Student Measurement of Progress (Including Special Populations)

During FY05, the DOE compiled performance data submitted by the secondary LEAs. Districts using the DOE program were able to perform edit checks of their own data. For those districts submitting data using Excel spreadsheets, data were reviewed by OVTCIP and any questions were referred back to the districts. This process helped to ensure greater accuracy in data reported by districts. Postsecondary institutions and state agencies were included in the data compilation and review process.

Secondary Students Completing Three or More Courses – LEAs submitted data on all secondary students completing three or more courses in an approved vocational-technical education program, with the results aggregated at the state level. District reported outcome measures were collected using the VEDS and included each student’s demographic and educational data, as well as special population status.

The DOE continued to collaborate with recommended testing authorities to identify approved measures of vocational-technical education program competencies. The state’s *Guidelines for the Testing and Certification of Students in NJ Vocational-Technical Education Programs* identified the tests and certifications listed by Career Cluster that can be used by LEAs and colleges to meet the requirements for vocational-technical education program competency testing. Competency tests were to be selected in the following priority order:

1. If a licensing or industry credentialing examination exists, it must be used (*e.g.*, State licensing examinations for cosmetology and licensed practical nursing).
2. If a recognized industry-credentialing exam exists, such as the ADDA Drafter Certification Examination, or the ASE Certification Exam(s), etc., it must be used.
3. If no such test is available, a nationally-validated test, such as Job Ready Tests from the National Occupational Competency Testing Institute (NOCTI), should be used.
4. If a nationally validated test is unavailable or cannot be administered for some reason, a standardized test (based upon an employer-verified task list) or a test generated from a Vocational-Technical Education Consortium of States (V-TECS) test data bank must be used. The testing authority will provide the previous year’s competency test results on the percentage of students passing in each program.
5. If none of the above tests is available, a teacher-developed test should be used.

Other data needed for accountability requirements under the law were collected by matching student data files with data files from wage records, higher education, state administration, corrections, and the following federal agencies: defense, personnel management, and postal services.

Secondary Students Completing One or More Vocational Course(s) – The LEAs were required to submit data on all secondary students who completed one or more vocational course(s) in an approved vocational-technical education program. Data collected on these students were segregated from data for those students who had completed a series of courses. In addition, students were described by their status in the vocational-technical education system (*e.g.*, participant, concentrator). These students were not reported in competency test results because they had not completed three or more courses in an approved vocational-technical education program.

Postsecondary Students Enrolled in Vocational-Technical Education Programs – Final annual reports from county/community colleges and adult vocational education programs indicated that the number of students served by the Perkins grant was 46,916 for FY05, which included 5,479 postsecondary Tech-Prep students. The information contained in the report represents the total number of students served, including those enrolled in vocational-technical education programs and those receiving support services. The report identifies students according to the program in which they are enrolled, their gender, membership in a special population, and the number of students that were enrolled in postsecondary vocational certificate or degree programs.

The county vocational-technical schools were also required to submit data on all postsecondary vocational students who completed one or more courses in vocational-technical education programs. Institutions reported outcome measures on the VEDS, which were specifically designed to include postsecondary performance measure requirements. The schools reported student demographic data and educational data. These students were not reported in competency test results because they did not

complete a vocational-technical education program and, therefore, were not eligible to sit for an exit test or exam.

Postsecondary Students Completing Vocational-Technical Education Programs – In addition to currently enrolled students, the colleges reported on the number of students who completed their programs each year. Students were identified in the same manner as described above. Furthermore, colleges provided data indicating the students’ success in completing the programs by submitting the percent of completers who pass competency exams. Colleges also provided data indicating the students’ status after completing the program, with the exception of data obtainable through the LWD. The county vocational-technical schools submitted data on all postsecondary students who had completed a vocational-technical education program. These students were identified as completers and were included in competency test results.

1.2 Developing, Improving, Expanding the Use of Technology

Funding was used to support local activities as stated in Section 135(b)(3) of the Perkins Act. Specifically, the following activities were supported in order to develop new and to improve existing vocational-technical education programs and courses: purchase of equipment to provide students with knowledge of and skills to use current technology in order to obtain entry into a chosen field; professional development in the use of the new technology; activities to develop, improve, or expand the use of technology; activities to research, develop, or purchase curriculum materials; activities to research, develop, or purchase supplemental materials; activities to provide students with experience in and understanding of all aspects of an industry; and, activities to strengthen the academic and career and technical skills of the students.

The OVTCIP was actively involved in national activities such as those of the National Skill Standards Board Institute and the Career Cluster Initiative. On the state level, the OVTCIP issued grants to enable LEAs and colleges to upgrade existing vocational-technical education programs to meet the standards established by nationally recognized organizations.

Industry certification was offered for drafting, electronic technologies, welding, air conditioning and refrigeration, cosmetology/hairstyling, practical nursing, certified nursing assistant, information technology, automotive, and printing. The certifying agencies provided technical assistance to participating LEAs and, in cooperation with OVTCIP, provided professional development on the topic of program improvement, including facilities, equipment and hand tools, texts, and instructional materials.

1.3 Professional Development Programs

A successful pilot training program was completed to meet new regulations adopted by the SBOE in December 2003 requiring teachers who place and supervise students in work-based education experiences to complete the OSHA 10 General Industry Certificate training, as well as training on federal and state wage and hour and wage payment laws, child labor laws, and hazardous orders. Teachers also received training on designing student training plans for a variety of work-based structured learning experiences, including: paid and unpaid employment; cooperative education; apprentice training; career exploration; and, special needs student placements, including a variety of community-based placements. Training also addressed how to link such activities to the NJ Core Curriculum Content Standards (CCCS). Over 400 teachers, including vocational-technical, academic, and special education teachers from over 200 high schools, vocational-technical schools, private schools for the disabled, and state institutions (JJC, DOC, and DHS) participated in the pilot program.

The OVTCIP also continued its support of the DOE’s “Senior Year Option” initiative, which encourages LEAs to design enhanced educational activities for seniors who completed their high school requirements and passed the High School Proficiency Assessment. Senior year options include: taking college courses for credit; studying abroad; and, participating in any of a variety of work-based learning activities.

Professional development opportunities were also provided to teachers of agriculture through the grant-supported interagency agreement with the NJ Department of Agriculture. Program specific activities were conducted on a statewide basis and during regional programs. Teachers participated in curriculum development and assessment workshops.

From August 16-17, 2004, OVTCIP, in partnership with the Vocational Education Association of NJ, hosted the annual statewide Generation Next Conference, which showcases best practices and innovation in vocational-technical, career, and adult education at local, state, and national levels. The conference was held in Atlantic City, NJ and opened with a keynote address delivered by Cam Marston, an internationally recognized consultant, author, and speaker on improving multigenerational relations. Nearly 1,000 attendees participated in over 100 workshops presented by local, state, and national experts.

Finally, NJ's Apprenticeship Policy Committee, of which the DOE is a partner, hosted its annual State Apprenticeship and Training Conference. This state-funded conference addressed various apprenticeship-related topics including recruitment, marketing, new apprenticeable occupations, managing affirmative action plans, linking apprenticeship programs to secondary education and college, state wage and hour and child labor laws, best practices for school-to-apprenticeship linkages, workplace literacy, and partnerships. The responsibility for planning this conference was transferred from the DOE to the LWD in FY04; however, OVTCIP remains an active participant in and supporter of the conference.

1.4 Integration of Academics with Vocational-Technical Education

New Jersey served 106,298 secondary vocational education students, which included 21,006 Tech-Prep secondary students, during FY05 through applied academics in the reported vocational-technical education programs of study. Because the SBOE passed the CCCS in 1996, with subsequent modifications, all LEAs must integrate applied academics into seven academic areas at all grade levels. All grant programs administered by the OVTCIP require that grantees include information on how the CCCS are integrated into each grant program.

1.4.1 Overall State Emphasis on Applied Academics

The seven academic areas are arts (visual and performing), comprehensive health and physical education, language arts literacy, mathematics, science, social studies, and world languages. New Jersey has established a multi-year roll-out plan for assessment of students for all indicators at grades 4, 8 and 11/12. To help districts plan curricula to meet the CCCS, the DOE has developed, revised, and printed frameworks upon which LEAs can base their own curriculum guides. All curriculum framework documents were completed in 1999 and are currently available on the DOE's website. The SBOE revises the CCCS on a regular basis; and, new content standards were developed and approved by the SBOE for the following areas: Technological Literacy and Career Education, and Consumer, Family and Life Skills.

Additionally, as part of the new required training for teachers who supervise students in work-based structured learning experiences, all teachers receive instruction on how to link worksite activities to the CCCS, including academic, career, and vocational skills, as required by governing administrative code.

1.4.2 Vocational and Technical Education Programs

Tech-Prep Education – In 2004, the DOE developed a three-year Tech-Prep Grant Program to establish new Tech-Prep Models for Education. Fiscal Year 2005 represented year two of the grant, through which it is DOE's goal to: (1) promote transferability of credit, thereby providing students with a smooth transition from secondary to postsecondary education; (2) help students realize their full academic potential by integrating academic and career-technical curricula; (3) provide students with opportunities to earn college credit while in high school through new methods of program delivery; (4) provide students with the means to earn a broad range of degrees around a particular career focus at 2-year or 4-year

postsecondary institutions, or a combination of the two; and, (5) develop strong partnerships between secondary and postsecondary institutions and a coordinated system of delivery.

Tech-Prep programs of study in NJ consist of three or more courses for which high school students earn college credit. These courses are aligned with or equivalent to college courses in programs of study offered by community colleges or 4-year colleges and universities. Students enrolled in Tech-Prep programs of study during high school earn college credits toward degrees in the 16 Career Clusters.

Over the multi-year grant, eight lead agencies and their partners (*i.e.*, 23 school districts, and 23 community colleges and/or four-year universities and colleges), participated in grant activities and developed 24 new Tech-Prep programs of study under the following broad industry areas: Arts, A/V Technology and Communications; Business Management and Administration; Health Science; Hospitality and Tourism; Information Technology; and Law, Public Safety, Corrections and Security.

High school students enrolled in the programs of study earned between nine and 27 credits toward college degrees in programs such as: Paralegal Studies; Criminal Studies; Safety and Security Management and Hospitality and Casino Compliance; Event Planning; Network Systems; Internet Security; Health Science; Entertainment Technology and Television Production; Radio Production; Performing Arts; Drama and Theatre; Business Administration and Management; and Food Science.

The new Tech-Prep Models for Education varied among the eight lead agencies. Community colleges, as lead agencies, worked with comprehensive and vocational-technical schools to implement new programs of study in which students completed college courses via the internet, on the campus of the high school, or at the local community college. Secondary schools that were lead agencies partnered with one or more comprehensive schools or a vocational-technical school, and a community college and 4-year college or university. Many of these lead agencies taught equivalent college courses on their high school campuses that were articulated with their postsecondary partners. In one case, in addition to developing a new career-technical program of study, students of partnering schools enrolled in a “twilight program” on the campus of a vocational-technical school. This program allowed students from partnering schools to complete core college courses articulated with the local community college after school hours.

In some cases, lead agencies and their partners developed 4-year academies where both comprehensive high school districts and vocational-technical schools coordinated Tech-Prep courses and activities. Two lead agencies and their partners developed 4-year Health Science Academies in which students who enrolled in the academies: (a) completed coherent sequences of health science-related courses for dual credit; (b) earned up to 27 college credits during their freshman to senior years that were articulated with two-year and four-year postsecondary institutions; (c) completed a sequence of strong academic (*e.g.*, anatomy, physiology, biology) and career-technical coursework that prepared them for multiple options in health care so that they did not lose the college credits they earned during high school, and transitioned into college at an accelerated level; (d) were taught college-credit courses by secondary faculty members who were, in some cases, certified as adjunct faculty members for the college or university upon completion of staff development programs; and (e) participated in strong career exploration opportunities, structured learning experiences, project-based learning, and interdisciplinary projects.

In addition, lead agencies developed a coordinated system of delivery and support for the Health Science Academies by: (a) developing strong advisory committees and partnerships with local community health care providers at local hospitals, long-term care facilities, and radiology and physical therapy centers, and involved parents and community supporters in the process; (b) soliciting the help of practitioners in health care who covered topics such as pharmacology, bioethics, stem cell research, and demonstrated their skills and discussed their professions with students; (c) coordinating the development of curricula,

articulation agreements, and special activities for students with partners; and (d) using creative means to obtain funding from a variety of sources to support the 4-year academy programs.

Tech-Prep lead agencies and their partners reported that: (1) Tech-Prep programs provided students with rigorous high school career-technical programs of study that prepared them for a wide variety of occupations in broad industry areas; (2) curriculum alignment and integration was coordinated and completed by faculty members at secondary schools, community colleges, and 4-year universities or colleges; (3) Tech-Prep programs integrated strong academics and career-technical instruction, and promoted contextual learning through the infusion of project-based and work-based learning experiences; (4) new or expanded advisory committees helped educators identify business and industry needs and requirements, and plan field trips and other work-based learning activities for secondary students; (5) some transitional issues that impeded students from experiencing a seamless transition from secondary to postsecondary education were resolved; (6) new partnerships were developed between school districts, vocational-technical schools, community colleges and four-year universities and colleges developing small learning communities; and (7) students earned college credit for college courses they completed during high school, thereby, receiving opportunities for an accelerated transition into college.

Youth Transitions to Work (YTTW) Partnership Grant Program – Responsibility for administering the YTTW grant program was transferred to the LWD at the end of FY04. However, the NJDOE continued to provide financial support to the program in the amount of \$300,000 from the Perkins grant.

Extraordinary Standards Incentive Program (ESIP) – New Jersey school districts with approved occupational programs are screened on an annual basis to see if they meet the criteria for the ESIP. If 80 percent of the completers of an approved occupational program sit for the licensing or certification examination and 90 percent of that group passes, then their school is eligible to receive an incentive award of up to \$10,000. For FY05, nine different schools received the incentive award with 17 different programs being recognized as the best occupationally approved programs in the state.

1.5 Preparation for Nontraditional Training and Employment

During FY05, the Statewide Nontraditional Career Resource Center (NCRC) three-year grant program was in its second year. The program was designed to promote preparation of students for nontraditional vocational-technical education, training and employment to meet the needs of the 21st century workplace and the global economy. The overall state goal for this program is to increase the number of students participating in and completing nontraditional vocational-technical education and training programs in order to broaden their options and opportunities to prepare for and secure high-wage, high-skill employment. The second grant period began on October 1, 2004. One award was made to Rutgers University for the new grant cycle. The Center's website can be found at: <http://ncrc.rutgers.edu/>.

Through the grant, the NCRC staff and DOE staff worked to create new models and strategies to accomplish statewide goals and objectives. The focus of the NCRC has been on building collaboration between the education and workforce development communities to help increase awareness of 7th through 12th grade students regarding opportunities in nontraditional careers. Among the services offered by the NCRC, and supported through Perkins funding, are: a speakers' bureau, an informational expert network, a mentor program, and a variety of student resources. Special events are offered throughout the year, and have included: conferences on nontraditional roles for women, as well as a variety of presentations, career fairs, and career exploration days.

Additionally, the FY05 local vocational-technical education annual spending plan for each individual Perkins entitlement grantee specified the expenditures the grantee planned to meet the identified need for nontraditional training/employment if the grantee had not met the performance standard for nontraditional training. The plans included activities such as workshops that create awareness of nontraditional careers

and vocational-technical education information, recruitment, intake and assessment activities to determine interest and skill level, career counseling sessions and development of an individual career plan, vocational-technical training, and job placement assistance.

1.6 Supporting Partnerships to Enable Students to Achieve State Academic Standards and Career and Technical Skills

High Schools That Work (HSTW) Network – The purpose of this initiative is to provide the opportunity for high schools to join the HSTW network. HSTW is a national effort to engage state, district, and school leaders and teachers in partnership with students, parents, and the community to improve the way that high school students are prepared for work and further education. HSTW seeks to advance the mathematics, science, communications, problem-solving, and technical achievement of students by providing a framework of goals, key practices, and key conditions for accelerating learning and setting higher standards.

The NJDOE HSTW grant program assists school districts serving grades 9-12 that offer both a combination of an academic and an approved occupational program. By implementing HSTW strategies for integrating and upgrading the level of academic studies, students receive both academic and vocational-technical education that addresses key practices leading to accelerating student achievement.

During FY05, NJ's HSTW initiative expanded to include 14 schools, with the addition of three new schools during this time period. In August 2004, a 2-day site development workshop, led by the Southern Regional Education Board, for the three new schools was held at the Generation Next Conference. There are plans to expand the number of schools involved in HSTW through a grant opportunity for the coming year.

Other activities that were supported included sending a state team to the National HSTW Summer Conference in Nashville, TN in July 2004. Throughout the 2004-05 school year, four state-sponsored professional development workshops for NJ's HSTW schools were held. The topics included reading and writing across the curriculum, classroom management and active instructional strategies. Additionally, quarterly networking meetings were held with representatives from HSTW schools to discuss issues such as using data, technical assistance visits, and raising expectations. OVTCIP also coordinated three technical assistance visits to the new schools. The state HSTW coordinator also attends the HSTW board meetings to stay abreast of new initiatives and strategies aimed at improving student achievement and raising the quality of vocational-technical education.

Vocational-Technical Education Consortium of States - New Jersey is a member of the Vocational-Technical Education Consortium of States (V-TECS). Our membership is supported by Perkins Leadership funds. The Consortium provides high quality information and resources for career and workforce development. Vocational and technical information is research-based and validated by business and industry via member states. LEAs and agencies can use V-TECS vocational-technical competencies to establish or enhance vocational-technical education programs, and V-TECS software and materials are distributed to districts as required. The OVTCIP staff attended the V-TECS Coordinator In-service from February 23 – 26, 2005 in Nashville, TN. Training for all vocational-technical schools in NJ in V-TECS software and materials was conducted in November 2004.

FY04 Ford/AAA Student Auto Skills Competition – As the State's education representative for the statewide competition, all of the National Automotive Technicians Education Foundation (NATEF) certified programs were updated and sent to the national headquarters. Note: Only NATEF certified programs are eligible to compete in this competition. There were 19 applicants for the written examination with ten finalists for the hands-on competition. Monmouth County Vocational School was NJ's top finisher in the 2005 statewide competition and NJ's representative in the national competition.

Law, Public Safety and Security Programs – OVTCIP continued its partnership with the National Education Consortium for Careers in Law, Public Safety, Corrections and Security to promote and support the Law, Public Safety, Corrections, and Security Career Cluster (LPSCS). Staff worked directly with the consortium and individual members to advance the programs and pathways of the career cluster. Further meetings to enhance and improve approved vocational-technical education programs in this career cluster took place during the year.

One-Stop Conference – The OVTCIP sponsored an exhibit during the annual State Employment and Training Council (SETC) One-Stop conference in Atlantic City, NJ. The booth showcased a variety of programs and services offered for students and adult learners to support vocational-technical education programs and training.

Special Education – The OVTCIP established and maintains a collaborative partnership with the DOE Office of Special Education to strengthen its relationship with the special education community as well as to improve and expand opportunities for special education students to access general education services and vocational-technical education opportunities. Examples of this ongoing collaboration included: inclusion of special education teachers and transition coordinators (IDEA) in the required training for placing and supervising students in work-based and community-based structured learning experiences; inclusion of special education teachers and transition coordinators in state apprenticeship and vocational-technical education conferences and activities; staff participation in civil rights and IDEA monitoring of LEAs; and, assistance in developing monitoring instruments of LEAs regarding special education students' access to structured learning experiences and vocational-technical education program.

1.7 Serving Individuals in State Institutions

Juvenile Justice Commission – The JJC, the DOC, and the DHS participated in the required non-collegiate training for coordinating structured learning experiences. Numerous educators, including vocational-technical education teachers, are now authorized to place and supervise students in agency-based as well as work-based structured learning experiences for credit. Vocational and technical education teachers from JJC and the DOC also participated in various professional development activities sponsored by the OVTCIP, including the annual apprenticeship and Generation Next conferences.

2. Permissible Activities

The DOE provided leadership in nearly all of the permissible areas cited in Section 124(c)(1)-12).

Permissible Use 1: Technical assistance of eligible participants

The staff of the OVTCIP provided ongoing technical assistance to eligible recipients throughout each of the secondary and postsecondary vocational-technical education program areas, including Tech-Prep and apprenticeship programs. Staff members assigned to review of Perkins grantee applications consistently provided technical assistance to grantees for adherence to the requirements of the Act and state code and statute.

Vocational-Technical Education Program Review Process – The Vocational-Technical Education Program Review Process implemented by the OVTCIP ensures that high quality vocational-technical education programs are established by LEAs and other agencies in NJ, which can then be supported and enhanced with available Perkins funding. The OVTCIP has continued responsibility for the Vocational-Technical Education Program Approval Process, associated reviews, research, and correspondence. Additionally, the OVTCIP continually assists program approval applicants in new proposed program review and development. An analysis of the Program Approval Process for possible changes/revisions has continued and recommendations were made for updates/changes in the submission and review process.

Structured Learning Experiences/Work-Based Training – The OVTCIP continues to develop resources for LEAs, institutions, private schools for the disabled, unions, and employers regarding participation in various structured learning experiences, including experiences which focus on career awareness and exploration, cooperative education, paid and unpaid employment, volunteer activities, as well as vocational assessment and evaluation for special education students. New resources posted this year include: Examples of Common Hazardous Occupations; Worksite Safety and Health Evaluation Guide; and the Guidance Manual for Incident Reporting Form for Vocational-Technical Education Programs and Structured Learning Experiences. In addition, the OVTCIP added the following resource weblinks: Youth Rules for Positive and Safe Work Experiences; USDOL, Employment Standards Administration Wage and Hour Division; "Youth 2 Work" Teen Worker OSHA Resources; Occupational Safety and Health Administration; and NJ Child Labor and Regulations. These and other materials are available on the DOE website at www.nj.gov/njded/voc/sle/.

Vocational-Technical Education Safety and Health Updating Contract - During the FY05, contract period, the lead fiscal agent, the Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences Institute (EOHSI) at the University of Medicine and Dentistry of NJ, School of Public Health, was charged with responsibility for setting up and delivering the OSHA-10 plus 2 training course as well as the OSHA 501 and 511 Trainer courses. Additionally, EOSHI representatives continued to provide a series of classes that outlined how to set-up and administer a student training plan for all cooperative education teachers, as well as chair a Safe Schools Task Force that reviewed and proposed recommendations for students who are employed by the Food Services Industry.

Permissible Use 2: Career guidance and counseling

Workshops and seminars for counselors and educators throughout the state have focused on the role of the counselor and the DOE's Standards for Career Education and Consumer, Family and Life Skills. New Jersey school counseling initiatives including resources listed on OVTCIP's website assist districts in developing and implementing comprehensive career guidance and counseling programs for grades K-12 as required by N.J.A.C. 6A:8-3.2. Building upon the work in prior years to develop model programs that meet the CCCS and the National Standards for School Counseling Programs, OVTCIP has partnered with the NJ School Counselor Association to continue development of a State Model Framework for School Counseling Programs.

A project to determine the effectiveness of electronic portfolios to assess student attainment of DOE's Standards for Career Education and Consumer, Family and Life Skills was completed in collaboration with the Heldrich Center. Meetings were held in collaboration with the Center for Occupational and Employment Information (COEI), NJ School Counselor Association, Non-Traditional Career Center, and the Heldrich Center to discuss the adaptation and customization of the America's Career Resource Network (ACRN) Parental Brochures to NJ audiences.

Career Education Requirements for All Students - The OVTCIP participated in the planning, development, and proposal of new provisions under N.J.A.C. 6A:8 Standards and Assessment for Student Achievement. The revised graduation standards include a new requirement of a minimum of five credits in career education and consumer, family, and life skills, or vocational-technical education effective with the 2004-2005 grade nine class. In addition, Option 2 of the graduation requirements permits district boards of education to meet part or all of the graduation credit requirements using curricular activities and programs that involve in-depth experiences linked to the CCCS. Such curricular activities and programs may include: interdisciplinary or theme-based programs, independent study, co-curricular or extra-curricular activities, magnet programs, student exchange programs, distance learning opportunities, internships, community service, or other structured learning experiences. As part of the required training for supervising structured learning experiences, teachers learn how to satisfy this requirement by planning and documenting structured learning experiences to meet this standard.

Permissible Use 3: Linkages between secondary and postsecondary vocational-technical education

Opportunities for collaboration and articulation between secondary and postsecondary vocational-technical education programs were available through a number of DOE initiatives in FY05. For example, agreements were established under the Tech-Prep grant program to provide postsecondary education training opportunities under Title II, and through the DOE's state maintenance of effort funds.

Permissible Use 4: Cooperative education programs

Support for cooperative education programs continued through the basic grant to county vocational-technical schools and LEAs. In addition, the SBOE adopted new language under N.J.A.C. 6A:9, Professional Licensure and Standards, permitting all certified vocational-technical education teachers to supervise vocational-technical education students in cooperative education programs within their area of endorsement without obtaining additional certificates or licenses. All such teachers must complete the required non-collegiate training on federal and state labor laws, the OSHA 10 General Industry Certificate training, and designing and implementing student training plans.

Permissible Use 5: Vocational student organizations (Perkins State Vocational Education Aid/matching funds)

Support for vocational student organizations (VSOs) continued through state matching funds for Perkins. Seven VSOs were provided with funds through grants to LEAs for administrative services to operate the organizations. NJ's VSOs are: DECA-for marketing education students; FBLA-PBL- Future Business Leaders of America-Phi Beta Lambda; FFA-for agricultural students (FFA is a vocational student organization co-sponsored by the NJ Department of Agriculture and the DOE); FCCLA-Family, Career, and Community Leaders of America; HOSA-Health Occupations Students of America; TSA-Technology Student Association; and, SkillsUSA/VICA-for trade and industrial education students.

VSO, Agricultural Education, and FFA Grants - These grants are expended in support of vocational education in NJ. Vocational Student Organizations (VSOs) are an integral part of vocational and technical education instructional programs. These organizations provide students with the opportunity to enhance their occupational, employability, and leadership skills through a variety of activities, such as conference, award programs, and competitive events. Activities are conducted at the local, state and national levels. VSO programs and competitive events reflect current standards and competencies for the occupational education programs that they serve. Teachers infuse the organization's activities into the instructional programs, enhancing the real world connection to the academic studies.

VSOs are a valuable tool for implementing the CCCS. The organizations are co-curricular and provide professional development opportunities for teachers and advisors as part of their activities. FY05 represented year 5 of 5 of the VSO continuation grant program. Funding totaled \$800,000 for the VSOs, \$180,000 for the Agricultural Education Development Initiative and \$165,000 for the FFA (inter-agency agreement between the Department of Agriculture and the DOE).

On February 15, 2005, the NJ State Senate and General Assembly honored NJ's VSOs and urged the public to participate in Vocational-Technical Education Week during the month of February. A joint legislative resolution, sponsored by Senator Madden and Assemblymen Smith and Mayer was signed by the President of the Senate and Speaker of the General Assembly. Activities on February 15th were conducted in partnership with the LWD and the AFL-CIO. The resolution commended NJ's VSOs and acknowledged vocational-technical education as a significant component of the educational system in the state. It attested to the integral role played by VSOs in promoting leadership, personal growth and career success among their members while instilling in them the values and ideals of citizenship, volunteerism, patriotism and cooperation.

Permissible Use 6: Public secondary charter schools offering vocational-technical education

Public charter schools were provided with Perkins grant notices and vocational-technical education program approval information necessary for operating vocational-technical education programs. Of particular note in this regard is NJ's chARTer-TECH High School for the Performing Arts, which applied for and received Perkins funds in FY05 for its performing arts programs. The chARTer-TECH High School, originally chartered by the DOE in 1998, is committed to public arts and advanced technology education. Academic and artistic subjects are integrated throughout the curriculum, and all five artistic majors (*i.e.*, vocal music, instrumental music, theatre arts, dance, and TV and film) are approved vocational programs eligible for Perkins funding. The curriculum offers community-based performance and apprenticeship opportunities.

Permissible Use 7: Training in all aspects of an industry

Support for vocational-technical education programs that offer experience in, and understanding of, all aspects of an industry for which students are preparing to enter was provided using state and federal vocational-technical education funds. Eligible applicants for grant awards were required to list in their applications the local objectives, activities and assessment tools that would be met or used in order to meet this required state goal.

Permissible Use 8: Family and consumer sciences education

The OVTCIP initiated a new project in collaboration with Rutgers University to engage a defined cohort of students from pilot schools in a process of utilizing an electronic portfolio design to develop educational and career plans and document attainment of the indicators in the Career Education and Consumer and Family Life Standards. Rutgers University will be leading this initiative in conjunction with a national research project and provide the related technical assistance to these schools. New Jersey CCCS for Career Education and Consumer, Family, and Life Skills identify specific skills that students will develop in order to make informed decisions regarding their future education and careers. These skills relate to career awareness, planning and preparation; employability skills; critical thinking; self-management; interpersonal skills; character development and ethics; consumer and personal finance, and safety. It is often difficult to determine a student's understanding and mastery of these particular skills by traditional assessment methods.

As noted previously in this report, the OVTCIP participated in the planning, development and proposal of new provisions under N.J.A.C. 6A:8 Standards and Assessment for Student Achievement. The new graduation standards include a new requirement of a minimum of five credits in career education and consumer, family, and life skills, or vocational-technical education effective with the 2004-2005 grade nine class. The SBOE revised the CCCS to include new content standards for Technological Literacy and Career Education, and Consumer, Family and Life Skills. Perkins funding was used to support the planning and development of the new content standards, and OVTCIP staff played an integral role in the process. Additionally, workshops and seminars for counselors and educators throughout the state have focused on the role of the counselor and the DOE's Standards for Career Education and Consumer, Family and Life Skills.

Also, as noted previously, a project to determine the effectiveness of electronic portfolios to assess student attainment of DOE's Standards for Career Education and Consumer, Family and Life Skills was completed in collaboration with the Heldrich Center.

Permissible Use 9: Education and business partnerships

Support for education and business partnerships continued throughout all vocational-technical education program areas. The OVTCIP continued an agreement with Cisco Systems and a partnership with the Automotive Youth Educational Systems (AYES). The latter initiative provides students who are interested in careers in the automotive industry with an opportunity to gain experience in automotive

dealerships. This initiative continues the OVTCIP's efforts to secure structured learning experience opportunities as required as required under the CCCS.

The OVTCIP continued its collaboration with the LWD's Division of Wage and Hour Compliance to review and update the list of prohibited occupations and prohibited equipment for minors working in NJ. To accomplish this objective, the OVTCIP convened a task force of representatives of business, labor unions, occupational safety and health professionals and organizations, educators, insurance representatives and state and federal wage and hour, safety and education representatives to review the regulations and make recommendations to the OVTCIP and the LWD. Recommendations have been completed for the construction industry and a new task force was convened for the food service industry.

Structured Learning Experiences - The structured learning experiences may be paid or unpaid and may include, but are not limited to: cooperative education; apprenticeships; internships; school-based experiences; volunteer activities; community services; job shadowing; and membership in VSOs. All students in all career clusters are eligible to participate in structured learning experiences to meet graduation requirements.

Permissible Use 10: Curriculum improvement and development

Support to improve or develop new vocational-technical education courses continued with the NJDOE's efforts to apply both Perkins and state matching funds to efforts that will improve the quality and availability of vocational-technical education in the state. Technological change in business and industry requires ongoing improvements in equipment and technology, new courses to prepare people for new and emerging occupations, updated curricula, customized training as requested by business and industry, and extensive innovative vocational-technical education programs. The Extraordinary Standards Incentive Program provided a one-time \$10,000 stipend to secondary and postsecondary vocational-technical education programs whose graduates achieved the extraordinary standard on national or state certification or licensing examination.

Perkins grants fund curriculum improvement and development programs on both secondary and post secondary levels. School districts fund staff members, curriculum consultants and other experts to explore new methods of instruction. Teachers, administrators, and guidance personnel are provided professional development activities to address the need for new and revised curriculum. Activities included: professional development workshops, registration fees and travel to specific programs to address curriculum issues, purchase of new technology and equipment to deliver and improve instructional content.

Permissible Use 11: Programs for adults and school dropouts to complete secondary education

New Jersey continues to provide vocational-technical education programs that enable adults and school dropouts to complete their secondary school education. Funds were awarded to the DOC and to LEAs offering programs leading to high school completion and receipt of a state-issued high school diploma.

Permissible Use 12: Job and postsecondary education placement

Assistance to students in finding an appropriate job and continuing their education was provided to students in vocational-technical education programs who were prepared to enter employment in a variety of occupations or who intended to pursue further training. Performance levels are found in the charts provided as part of the CAR submission.

3. Core Indicator Related Activity

The OVTCIP staff responsible for working directly with the agencies consistently compared LEA data with the state performance standards during technical assistance workshops, and during telephone and written communications. If the eligible recipients did not show evidence of reaching the state standards, the OVTCIP staff members advised the agencies on activities that could be implemented to help reach the standard.

The following provides examples of specific activities undertaken to support the achievement of each core indicators:

Core Indicator 1: Student attainment of challenging State established academic and vocational-technical skill proficiencies.

Activity: The OVTCIP participated in national activities such as those of the National Skill Standards Board Institute and the Career Cluster Initiative.

Outcome: Grants were made to enable LEAs and community colleges to upgrade existing vocational-technical education programs to meet the standards established by nationally recognized organizations. Assistance was provided to LEAs and community colleges to support their efforts to meet industry skill standards and upgrade existing vocational-technical education programs, and to meet the standards established by nationally-recognized industries, including expanding the use of technology. Industry certification was offered in a variety of vocational-technical education program areas.

Budget: Figures not available at this time; the DOE requested a 30-day extension on the submission of its FSR forms.

Core Indicator 2: Student attainment of a secondary school diploma or a postsecondary degree or credential.

Activity: The DOE administered Tech-Prep Education, as well as continued to support the YTTW Partnership Program, and the the NJ School Counseling Initiative.

Outcome: Outcomes included participation in the state's WIB councils, expansion of the number of first time apprenticeship sponsors, and assistance to local school-to-apprenticeship linkages grant programs. Note: Responsibility for the YTTW Program was transferred to the LWD in FY04.

Budget: Figures not available at this time; the DOE requested a 30-day extension on the submission of its FSR forms.

Core Indicator 3: Placement in, retention in, and completion of postsecondary education or advanced training, placement in military service, or placement or retention in employment.

Activity: New Jersey supported the educational and training pursuits of more than 56,000 county/community college and adult vocational education students during FY05. The Tech-Prep Education and YTTW grant programs, as identified previously in this report, were instrumental in ensuring success in placement, retention and advanced training.

Outcome: The initiatives provided opportunities for seamless transition to postsecondary education and advanced training opportunities.

Budget: Figures not available at this time; the DOE requested a 30-day extension on the submission of its FSR forms.

Core Indicator 4: Student participation in and completion of vocational-technical education programs that lead to nontraditional training and employment.

Activity: The OVTCIP provided funding to support a Statewide Nontraditional Career Resource Center.

Outcome: Through a competitive grants process, Rutgers University was selected to operate the Statewide NCRC. Center staff and DOE staff worked to create new models and strategies to accomplish statewide goals and objectives. The focus of the NCRC has been on building collaboration between the education and workforce development communities to help increase awareness of 7th through 12th grade students regarding opportunities in nontraditional careers. Among the services offered by the NCRC, and

supported through Perkins funding, are: a speakers' bureau, an informational expert network, a mentor program, and a variety of student resources. Special events are offered throughout the year, and have included: conferences on nontraditional roles for women, as well as a variety of presentations, career fairs, and career exploration days.

Budget: Figures not available at this time; the DOE requested a 30-day extension on the submission of its FSR forms.

c. Implications for Next Fiscal Year/State Plan

In striving to meet the state's goal of continuous improvement, the DOE will continue to provide leadership as required by Perkins in Section 124. The OVTCIP will continue and expand its efforts to enhance school counseling and guidance by launching an initiative to enhance the delivery of career systems. This will align with the Career Education and Consumer, Family and Life Skills Standards, which were recently adopted by the SBOE. The process of contracting with institutions of higher education and professional organizations to provide professional development programs to K-12 educators will continue.

State matching funds will be applied to continuation of other FY05 projects, including funds to county vocational-technical schools, which provide career and technical training to adults but are not eligible to receive federal funds under the Pell Grant formula stipulated in the Perkins Act.

Federal funds will continue to be distributed to local secondary and postsecondary vocational-technical education programs as required by Section 131, in keeping with DOE procedures.

The OVTCIP will maintain an active role in the development of quality-based processes within the DOE. Its intent is to execute practices that support consistent delivery of career education and vocational-technical education programs to secondary and postsecondary students and adults through a voluntary process of performance excellence. Consistent with federal legislation as stated in the Workforce Investment Act, OVTCIP employees will participate in a series of activities to address all aspects of continuous improvement including the tracking of customer satisfaction measures.

II. Program Performance

a. State Performance Summary

Current data indicate that secondary and postsecondary vocational-technical education programs either met or exceeded the negotiated levels of performance for nine out of nine indicators. Tech-Prep students have exceeded all performance measures for each indicator.

b. Definition of Vocational Concentrator and Tech-Prep Students

Threshold level of vocational education: A threshold level of vocational-technical education is defined as a program/sequence of courses or instructional units that provides an individual with the academic and technical knowledge/skills/proficiencies to prepare that individual for employment and/or further/advanced education.

Secondary: New Jersey defines threshold level of vocational-technical education as enrollment in the final level of an approved vocational-technical education program.

- Vocational participant: A student who completed at least one course within an approved vocational-technical education program.
- Vocational concentrator: A student who completed at least two-thirds of a sequence of courses within an approved vocational-technical education program after successfully completing previous coursework receiving at least a minimum passing grade.

- Vocational completer: A student who completed a sequence of courses within a state-approved vocational-technical education program that provides an individual with the academic and technical knowledge/skills/proficiencies to prepare the individual for employment and/or further/advanced education.

Postsecondary: The threshold level is defined as matriculated in an approved vocational-technical education program and enrolled in one or more vocational-technical educational course.

- Vocational participant:
Collegiate: A postsecondary student who is enrolled in an Associate in Applied Science (AAS) or certain Associate in Science (AS) programs, or related credit generating certificate programs.
Adult: A postsecondary student who is enrolled in an approved vocational-technical education program.
- Vocational concentrator:
Collegiate: A postsecondary student who is matriculated in an Associated in Applied Science (AAS) or certain Associated in Science (AS) programs, or related credit generating certificate programs, and who is enrolled in, or has successfully completed one college-level course and was enrolled full-time in the fiscal reporting year.
Adult: A postsecondary student who is enrolled in one or more vocational-technical course in an approved vocational-technical education program.
- Vocational completer:
Collegiate: A postsecondary student who completes an Associate in Applied Science (AAS) or certain Associate in Science (AS) programs, or related credit generating certificate programs.
Non-Collegiate: A postsecondary student who completes the required postsecondary program of study.

Tech-Prep Secondary Definition:

A Tech-Prep program of study is a credit-based transition program. Students enrolled in a Tech-Prep program of study (a coherent sequence of three or more courses) earn college credits (or dual credits) for one or more courses they complete during high school as a result of a written commitment developed between a secondary and a postsecondary institution (usually a community college) called an articulation agreement. A Tech-Prep program: combines, at a minimum, two years of secondary education (*e.g.*, junior and senior years) followed by a minimum of two years of postsecondary education; strengthens the applied academic component of vocational and technical education through the integration of academic and vocational and technical instruction; builds student competence in mathematics, science, and communications by providing students with a coherent sequence of courses that promotes both academic and vocational knowledge and skills; provides academic and technical preparation for careers in one of 16 different broad industry areas (career clusters) such as (but not limited to) Engineering Technology, Health Science, Business and Economics; and leads to an associate degree or baccalaureate degree, or a certificate in a specific field of study that leads to high skill, high wage employment.

Tech-Prep Postsecondary Definitions:

Tech Prep Postsecondary Concentrator: A student who has completed the secondary portion of a recognized Tech-Prep program of study and has enrolled in the postsecondary portion of that program of study. A Tech-Prep student has earned college credit while in high school for completing one or more courses of the program of study articulated with a postsecondary institution.

Tech Prep Completer: A student who has enrolled and completed both the secondary and the postsecondary portion of a recognized program of study and has received an appropriate postsecondary degree or certificate.

Tech Prep Status:

Tech Prep Participant: A secondary student who is taking a course that is a component of a Tech-Prep program of study (a coherent sequence of three or more courses) for which the student may or may not

earn college credit, and who does not intend to complete the program of study, or pursue a postsecondary degree or certificate.

Tech Prep Concentrator-Secondary: A student who is enrolled in a Tech-Prep program of study (a coherent sequence of three or more courses) for which the student earns college credit for one or more of the program courses, and intends to complete the program of study and pursue a postsecondary degree or certificate.

c. Measurement Approaches and Data Quality Improvement

State measurement approaches and performance levels have been designed to be objective, quantifiable and measurable. The VEDS program has been upgraded and expanded. New Jersey has utilized additional sources for data, including NJ's 11th grade statewide assessment, the NJ Fall Enrollment Report and NJ School Report Card. Additionally, results of industry certification/licensure examinations, student performance on NOCTI's Job Ready tests, NJ's Vital Educational Statistics—Enrollment Table, NJ's Unemployment Insurance records and national vocational-technical data were utilized. Postsecondary collegiate data has been compiled using college data reports. The OVTCIP has required LEAs and postsecondary institutions to submit data on students, with the results to be aggregated at the state level. Baseline data has been established.

To improve data quality on accountability, the following steps were taken: Tech Prep State Coordinator completed an analysis of the data; more detailed instructions for using the computer application system to report vocational education data were added for users to address questions from previous years; and, after receiving the data submitted by local districts, more detailed edit checks of the data were conducted; if the data were found to be inaccurate or not logical, the district was instructed to make corrections.

The following Core Indicators, specified in the Act, have been adopted in NJ: student attainment of challenging State-established academic and vocational/technical skill proficiencies; student attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, proficiency credentials in conjunction with a secondary school diploma, or a postsecondary degree or credential; student placement in, retention in, and completion of postsecondary education or advanced training, placement in military service, or placement or retention in employment; and, student participation in and completion of vocational-technical education programs that lead to nontraditional training and employment.

Core Indicator 1: Student attainment of challenging State-established academic and vocational-technical skill proficiencies.

For secondary students, this academic subindicator has been identified: student score on the statewide High School Proficiency Assessment (HSPA) administered to all students in grades 11/12.

Numerator: # of vocational concentrators who passed the assessment and who left secondary education in the reporting year; Denominator: # of vocational concentrators who left secondary education in the reporting year.

- The vocational subindicator is the student score on a licensure/certification examination, for those fields in which licensure or certification is required; industry-endorsed competency examination; or a state-recognized test as indicated by the National Skill Standards Board Institute (NSSBI), which is a membership foundation that represents communities of interest related to the development and use of industry skills requirements, skills assessment for learning or selection, and certifications.

Numerator: # of vocational concentrators who have passed licensure/certification or industry competency exam or state-recognized exam and who have left secondary education in the reporting year; Denominator: # of vocational concentrators who have left secondary education in the reporting year.

For postsecondary students, this academic subindicator has been identified: student GPA for students enrolled in A.A.S., certificate or specific A.S. programs.

Numerator: # of full-time, college-level students who enrolled in postsecondary vocational-technical education programs and attained a 2.0 GPA or greater; Denominator: # of vocational concentrators meeting a threshold level in postsecondary vocational-technical education programs in the reporting year.

- The vocational subindicator is the student score on a licensure/certification examination, for those fields in which licensure is required; industry-endorsed competency examination; or a state-recognized test as indicated by the NSSBI.

Numerator: # of postsecondary vocational concentrators who have passed licensure/certification, industry competency exam or state-recognized exam and who have left program participation in the reporting year; Denominator: # of postsecondary vocational concentrators who sat for a licensure/certification, industry competency exam or state-recognized exam and were leavers in the reporting year.

Core Indicator 2: Student attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, a proficiency credential in conjunction with a secondary school diploma, or a postsecondary degree or credential.

For secondary students, these subindicators have been identified: (1) issuance of a state-endorsed diploma; (2) granting of a diploma through passing the GED examination; and, (3) proficiency credential in conjunction with a secondary school diploma.

Numerator: # of vocational concentrators who attained a secondary school diploma or its recognized state equivalent and who left secondary education in the reporting year; Denominator: # of vocational concentrators who left secondary education in the reporting year.

For postsecondary students, this subindicator has been identified: postsecondary degree or credential/completion certificate.

Numerator: # of postsecondary vocational concentrators who attained a degree or certificate, or who transferred to a higher credential program; Denominator: # of vocational concentrators who were leavers in the reporting year.

Core Indicator 3: Placement in, retention in, and completion of postsecondary education or advanced training, placement in military service, or placement or retention in employment.

For secondary and postsecondary students, these subindicators have been identified: (1) placement in, retention in, and completion of postsecondary education or advanced training; (2) placement in military service; and, (3) placement/retention in employment.

Placement: Numerator: # of vocational completers and who were placed in postsecondary education or advanced training, employment and/or military service in the first two quarters after leaving an education program; Denominator: # of vocational completers who attained a school diploma or its recognized equivalent, a degree or a certificate and left education in the reporting year.

Retention: Numerator: # of vocational completers who attained a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent and who left secondary education in the reporting year and who were retained in postsecondary education or advanced training, employment and/or military service; Denominator: # of vocational completers who attained a school diploma or its recognized equivalent, a degree or a certificate and who were placed.

Core Indicator 4: Student participation in and completion of vocational-technical education programs that lead to nontraditional training and employment.

The 1998 Current Population Survey (CPS) nationwide census information from the Bureau of Labor Statistics was utilized to identify nontraditional occupations. Occupations listed in the CPS for which the percentage of women employed was at or below 25 percent were considered to be nontraditional for women, and occupations for which the percentage of women employed was at or above 75 percent were considered to be nontraditional for men. The national list of nontraditional occupations was then “cross-walked” to or matched against NJ approved occupation program CIP codes.

For secondary and postsecondary students, this subindicator has been identified: participation in and completion of identified nontraditional programs.

Participation: Numerator: # of students in under-represented gender group who participated in a nontraditional program in the reporting year; Denominator: # of students who participated in a nontraditional program in the reporting year.

Completion: Numerator: # of students in underrepresented gender group who completed a nontraditional program in the reporting year; Denominator: # of students who completed a nontraditional program in the reporting year.

d. Effectiveness of Improvement Strategies in Previous Program Year

Local data reports to the state on the programs of eligible recipients were measured against the performance indicators using the VEDS information system. Other sources of data were analyzed and employment information was ascertained on program completers by using a unified accountability system, which includes data from other state agencies.

An interagency work group was developed to determine common data elements and indicators that will be used to evaluate all programs. The OVTCIP worked with the SETC and member agencies of state government to develop our unified plan accountability system, which includes: (1) a cross-agency accountability data collection system based on the Indicators of Performance as listed in WIA Titles I and II and Perkins III; (2) a vendor/provider directory; and, (3) a consumer report card.

Non-duplication of programs is ensured through the WIBs, which must endorse the districts' Perkins Act Multi-Year Plans and Annual Spending Plans and the establishment of local vocational-technical education programs. In addition, in areas of the state where Tech-Prep consortia are located, the existence of articulated programs ensures non-duplication.

e. Improvement Strategies for Next Program Year

The goal is to update the definitions of concentrators and completers, and for each of the core indicators for consistency with uniform definitions to be decided upon at the federal level. This will allow New Jersey to ensure that its data collection and reporting is clear and accurate in all cases.