

**Annual Performance Report
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
2004-2005 Narrative**

Executive Summary

The Pennsylvania Department of Education, Bureau of Career and Technical Education (BCTE) prepared this Annual Performance Report for FY 2004-2005. At the state level, activities centered around the Bureau's continuing mission to work with local education agencies (LEAs) to provide leadership, guidance and technical assistance that would help the LEAs prepare all individuals for skilled employment.

Through the Bureau's statewide Performance Accountability System, staff continue to provide leadership to assist schools in meeting the measures and standards that focus on student enrollments; student completion of approved programs; achievement of rigorous academic and occupational skills; increased student enrollment; completion of nontraditional skills training and placement into higher education, employment and/or the military; and emphasis placed on students completing advanced academic courses. Programs supported through these funds also addressed ways to better meet the measures and standards.

The accuracy and validity of the data collected and submitted for this report also continue to be priorities. Staff worked both internally, throughout the Department of Education and with other state agencies and organizations to review data collection procedures and to make improvements where appropriate. Manual and computerized edits were completed to correct any mistakes before results were finalized.

As a result of an audit conducted in September 2005 by the US Department of Education, a corrective action plan was formulated. It is attached to this report.

Narrative

I. Program Administration

a. Report on State Administration

In FY 2004-2005, approximately \$41.7 million in Perkins Act sub-grants were distributed to 172 sub-grantees. These sub-grants were made to 51 postsecondary and 121 secondary institutions. These figures include 86 Career and Technical Schools and three intermediate units. Three of the secondary institutions were charter schools. In addition, \$4.325 million of Tech Prep funds were distributed to 17 LEAs.

In the administration of these projects, BCTE sought to comply with the provisions of numerous state and federal laws, as well as the goals, objectives and activities outlined in the State Plan for

Vocational and Applied Technology Education for 1999-2004 including FY 2004-2005. In addition to the Carl D. Perkins Act, other laws which influenced the administration of these career and technical education projects include statutes of the Pennsylvania Legislature, especially Title 24-Education; regulations of the State Board of Education, especially Chapter 4; regulations of the U.S. Department of Education, namely Title 34, Code of Federal Regulations, Parts 76, 80, 81, 400 and 403; and OMB Circular A-128. This report is required by 34 CFR 80.40 and is produced in accordance with guidelines in OMB Circular 1830-0503.

b. Report on State Leadership

The Perkins Act authorizes funding for state programs and state leadership activities. The three required areas are professional development activities, curricula development, and monitoring of programs receiving financial assistance under the Act. Other programs funded in Pennsylvania are Career and Technical Education Student Organizations, data collection, and promotion of partnerships among businesses, education, industry, labor, and governmental agencies.

The Act also authorizes funding for secondary, postsecondary, and adult programs, specifies use of a formula for the sub-grants to LEAs, and lists legal requirements for associated expenditures. Eligible recipients may only use funds to improve career and technical education programs that include full participation of special population students.

Results of these program activities are documented in Final Performance Reports submitted at the end of each fiscal year.

The selection of these projects for funding was directed by requirements of the Perkins Act, the State Plan, and the priorities of BCTE. For 2004-2005, \$432,000 Perkins Act funds supported 17 projects. A brief summary of selected projects follows.

Columbia Montour AVTS-\$65,000

This grant helped the school to improve and strengthen the academic and vocational components by curriculum development. It built on last year's use of lap tops to improve math and reading test scores

Indiana County Technical Center-\$10,500

The school used the funds to focus on the integration of academics with the vocational curriculum.

Penn College (North Campus)-\$60,000

The institution used the funds to promote health occupations in the Northern Tier of Pennsylvania. In addition to the development of a LPN curriculum, the school sponsored two career day health care fairs that attracted 235 students.

Pittsburgh Tissue Engineering-\$40,000

A program was designed to orient 50 high school students from the Pittsburgh area to careers in biotechnology. Students were introduced to high tech high wage job and educational opportunities.

Susquehanna County CTC-\$70, 000

Funds were used for curriculum updates, professional development, and equipment updates.

Temple University (three grants)-\$73,000

Temple University received three separate grants in the areas of English as a Second Language (ESL) Development (\$15,000), Cooperative Education (\$18,000), and a pilot program (\$40,000) for 25 instructors in nanofabrication technology.

Greenwood SD-\$25,000

The Vision for Pennsylvania Agricultural Education project has developed a comprehensive program planning and curriculum development handbook to assist local educational agencies in developing new programs and update existing programs to meet the needs of their community.

Schuylkill Technology Centers-\$30,000

The Schuylkill Technology Center applied for the Federal Vocational-Technical Education State Leadership Funding Grant to expand their marketing program in order to assist in the advancement of Schuylkill County's economic opportunity in the logistics field for all citizens.

c. Implications for Next Fiscal Year

Many of Pennsylvania's activities are ongoing from year to year. Adjustments are made to the administration of programs as necessary. Information gathered from the projects funded in this fiscal year will be applied to future activities and used to identify successful practices to share. The results of the funded research will also be analyzed and disseminated.

Additional improvements are included in the corrective action plan resulting from the 2005 federal Perkins monitoring findings.

Pennsylvania's Corrective Actions That Address Federal Monitoring Findings

State	Findings	Corrective Actions	Dates	
			II. Target	Closed
Pennsylvania	Pennsylvania did not provide evidence of an appropriate assessment conducted to satisfy all requirements of section 124(b)(1) of the Perkins legislation.	Pennsylvania agrees with the findings and has begun to address the finding. Staff assignments have been changed. The current special populations committee will continue to meet and address the needs of staff working with special populations and the Department will continue to support the professional organization of special populations paraprofessionals. The BCTE will work with the Bureau of Special Education to conduct a needs assessment.	April 14, 2006 (A status report will be submitted to USDE along with a revised state plan.)	
	Pennsylvania currently allocates Perkins III funds to secondary sub-recipients using population data that is not in accordance with the requirements of the Perkins III legislation.	Pennsylvania agrees with this finding. The current census data has been incorporated into the flow through funds formula.	April 14, 2006 (On 12/22/05, BCTE notified BIS to load the 2002 census data into the secondary formula.)	
	Pennsylvania did not properly allocate Perkins III funds to secondary recipients as required by the Perkins III legislation, but instead established arbitrary and excessive funding floors for certain recipients.	Pennsylvania agrees with this finding. Pennsylvania has changed the flow through formula to remove the arbitrary rural component. Schools will be encouraged to join local consortia. Reserve funds will not be set aside for this class of schools.	April 14, 2006 (On 12/22/05, BCTE notified BIS to remove the rural adjustment run from the secondary formula.)	
	Pennsylvania currently allocates Perkins III funds to postsecondary sub-recipients using inappropriate Pell grant counts.	Pennsylvania agrees with this finding. The current Pell data has been incorporated into the flow through funds formula.	April 14, 2006 (On 12/12/05, BCTE notified BIS to include the updated Pell data received from Data Services into the postsecondary formula for 2006-2007.)	

State	Findings	Corrective Actions	Dates	
			II. Target	Closed
	<p>While Pennsylvania has an annual application in use for the allocation of Perkins III funds to eligible secondary recipients, the local application does not address the elements required by the current federal legislation. Specifically, Perkins III requires a detailed set of descriptions and assurances for the local application, covering all aspects of the applicant's program, with particular attention given to the scope of local program, local accountability issues, and the needs of special populations.</p>	<p>Pennsylvania agrees with this finding. The state plan and application guidelines for use by local entities have been revised to reflect this finding. Local entities both secondary and postsecondary will need to submit an annual plan that addresses all components of 134(b).</p>	<p>April 14, 2006 (The revised state plan will be submitted. The state plan includes the application guidelines, which will reflect the revised submission requirement.)</p>	
	<p>Upon review of Pennsylvania's accountability system, it was noted that postsecondary Tech Prep data was missing from the state's 2004 consolidated annual report. Additionally, the state failed to report 1S1 data for Tech Prep students. As a result, there is a reasonable concern that the Tech Prep data is not complete, accurate, or reliable, as required by the Perkins III legislation.</p>	<p>Pennsylvania agrees with this finding. Fall of 2005, the data collection forms were revised to incorporate collection of the required data. This is the pilot year of the data collection for the required Tech Prep data. By fall 2006, local entities will have adjusted their data collection systems and complete, accurate and reliable Tech Prep data will be collected, analyzed and findings prepared for submission in the 2006 CAR.</p>	<p>April 14, 2006 (A status report will be submitted to USDE along with a revised state plan.)</p>	

State	Findings	Corrective Actions	Dates	
			II. Target	Closed
	Upon review of Pennsylvania's accountability system, it was noted that the state failed to report disaggregated data for gender, ethnic background, or special populations for core indicators 1P1 and 1P2, as required by departmental guidance and the Perkins III legislation.	Pennsylvania agrees with this finding. Currently, postsecondary institutions self report their data via the e-Grant system. The current data collection system does not capture disaggregated data for special populations students. BCTE is working with Data Services to develop a postsecondary data collection system similar to the secondary CATS system to adequately report disaggregated data for special populations students.	April 14, 2006 (A status report will be submitted to USDE along with a revised state plan.)	

II. Program Performance

a. State Performance Summary

Of the 23 sub-indicators, Pennsylvania failed to meet the negotiated performance level in four, one at the secondary, two at the postsecondary, and one at the adult level. At the secondary level Pennsylvania is transitioning from a generic norm-referenced approach to a more rigorous criterion-referenced framework to assess student occupational competency. 1S2.

Postsecondary students tend to enroll in occupational programs to upgrade skills needed for their particular place of employment. Local employers often sponsor these short, focused programs to meet their specific human resource needs. As a result, students generally complete the target module and leave the program. We continue to work to revise and modify this measure to stress self-contained modules instead of full-length programs characterized by CIP Codes. As necessary, numerators, denominators and standards of performance will be adjusted this coming year. 2P1.

Also at the postsecondary level, Pennsylvania's total placement rate was 92.63% of all who responded to the placement survey. This represents 48% of the graduates surveyed. Although the placement rate of 92.63% was less than the 92.74% final agreed upon level, the performance is still above the state ceiling of 90%. 3P1.

At the adult level, Pennsylvania failed to meet the performance level on student enrollment in nontraditional programs. There are very small numbers of males and females enrolled in programs leading to non-traditional employment. These small numbers tend to exaggerate percentage changes in the participation sub-indicator. Pennsylvania is in the process of streamlining the identification of career and technical education participants and concentrators. We shall then analyze the data to determine factors that influence participation. 4A1.

b. Definition of Concentrator and Tech Prep

A concentrator at the secondary or postsecondary level is defined as a student who has an occupational declaration form on file, is enrolled in an occupationally specific state approved career and technical education program, and who has completed at least 50% of that program in terms of program length and competencies.

The Tech Prep definition is unchanged. It specifies that the student be enrolled in a program that:

- a. combines, at a minimum, 2 years of secondary education with a minimum of 2 years of postsecondary education;
- b. integrates academic and career and technical education instruction, utilizing work-based and worksite learning where appropriate and available;
- c. provides technical preparation in a career field;
- d. builds student competence in academics and workplace skills through applied, contextual academics, and integrated instruction in a coherent sequence of courses;
- e. leads to an associate or baccalaureate degree or a postsecondary certificate in a specific career area; and
- f. leads to placement in appropriate employment or further education.

c: Measurement Approaches and Data Quality Improvement

<u>Sub-Indicator:</u>	1S1 Attainment of Academic Skills (Academic Attainment)
Baseline Year(s):	of 4 most recent years 1996-1997, 1997-1998, 1998-1999, 1999-2000
Measurement Approach:	State Academic Assessment System
Numerator:	Number of 11 th grade career and technical education students reaching the state-defined threshold level of career and technical education and who score at or above the Basic level on the state tests.
Denominator:	Number of 11 th grade career and technical education students reaching the state-defined threshold level of career and technical education who are tested by the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA).
Data Quality Improvement:	All students taking the PSSA test are now being classified by gender, special populations, ethnicity and tech prep categories. For increased validity, we are examining how career and technical education students are identified in the state assessment system and revising collection procedures as appropriate.
<u>Sub-Indicator:</u>	1S2 Attainment of Occupational Skills (Skill Attainment)
Baseline Year(s):	1996-1997, 1997-1998, 1998-1999, 1999-2000
Measurement Approach:	National/State Standards and Assessment Systems

Numerator: Number of career and technical education students who successfully achieve competency levels at or above the Basic level on the NOCTI Job Ready Assessments or achieve competency on other PDE approved tests.

Denominator: Number of career and technical education students who complete the NOCTI Job Ready Assessments or other PDE approved tests.

Data Quality Improvement: Pennsylvania is continuing to review and approve additional industry recognized occupational tests to be used to evaluate occupational competency. Reviews and updates of NOCTI assessments are also ongoing. We communicate with NOCTI regarding the data elements and file format required. In addition, we have developed criterion-referenced scores using groups of related Pennsylvania employers. We hope to complete the establishment of scores on all NOCTI assessments utilized.

Sub-Indicator: **2S1 Diploma/Credential (Completion)**

Baseline Year(s): 1999-2000

Measurement Approach: State/Local Administrative Data

Numerator: Number of students who enrolled in career and technical education programs at the 11th grade or above who completed all program requirements and received diplomas in the graduation year.

Denominator: Number of students who enrolled in career and technical education programs at the 11th grade or above and whose class was scheduled to graduate in the graduation year.

Data Quality Improvement: We continue to provide assistance and training to schools to improve their data collection procedures and to update program requirements.

Sub-Indicator: **2S2 Credential Attainment (Diploma)**

Baseline Year(s): 1996-1997, 1997-1998, 1998-1999, 1999-2000

Measurement Approach: National/State Standards and Assessment Systems

Numerator: Number of career and technical education students who successfully achieve competency levels at or above the Competent level on the NOCTI Job Ready Assessments or achieve competency on other PDE approved tests.

Denominator: Number of career and technical education students who complete the NOCTI Job Ready Assessments or other PDE approved tests.

Data Quality Improvement: Pennsylvania is continuing to review and approve additional industry recognized occupational tests to be used to evaluate occupational competency. Reviews and updates of NOCTI assessments are also ongoing. Communication with NOCTI occurs regarding the data elements and file format required.

Sub-Indicator: **3S1 Placement**

Baseline Year(s): 1996-1997, 1997-1998, 1998-1999, 1999-2000

Measurement Approach: State-Developed, School-Administered Surveys/Placement Forms

Numerator: Number of respondents to the PDE follow-up survey who were reported as a) employed; b) pursuing additional education or training; or c) in the military.

Denominator: Number of respondents who returned a useable PDE follow-up survey.

Data Quality Improvement: We continue to search for ways to increase the percentage of useable surveys that are returned. A web-based method is being evaluated to determine if there is a significant return on investment on such implementation.

Sub-Indicator: **3S2 Placement and Retention**

Baseline Year(s): 1999-2000

Measurement Approach: Matching Unemployment Insurance (UI) Records

Numerator: The number of career and technical education program completers who were placed in employment and who were reported as continuing to be employed.

Denominator: The number of career and technical education program completers who were placed in the initial survey and returned a usable follow-up survey indicating that they were employed.

Data Quality Improvement: We continue to partner with the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry regarding the data elements and file format required.

Sub-Indicator: **4S1 Participation in Nontraditional Programs (Participation)**

Baseline Year(s): 1999-2000

Measurement Approach: State/Local Administrative Data

Numerator: Number of nontraditional career and technical education students enrolled in career and technical education programs in the reporting year.

Denominator: Number of career and technical education students enrolled in nontraditional career and technical education programs in the reporting year.

Data Quality Improvement: Pennsylvania continues working to increase the number of males and females enrolled in non-traditional programs so that small changes in numbers do not exaggerate percentage changes.

Sub-Indicator: **4S2 Completion in Nontraditional Programs (Completion)**

Baseline Year(s): 1999-2000

Measurement Approach: State/Local Administrative Data

Numerator: Number of nontraditional career and technical education completers.

Denominator: Number of completers of nontraditional career and technical education programs.

Data Quality Improvement: Pennsylvania continues working to increase the number of males and females enrolled in non-traditional programs so that small changes in numbers do not exaggerate percentage changes. We maintain a staff member dedicated to this area.

Sub-Indicator: **5S1 Completion of advanced academic courses (Advanced Academics)**
Baseline Year(s): 1996-1997, 1997-1998, 1998-1999, 1999-2000
Measurement Approach: State/Local Administrative Data
Numerator: Number career and technical education students reaching the state-defined threshold level of career and technical education and who complete at least 3 advanced academic courses.
Denominator: Number of career and technical education students reaching the state-defined threshold level of career and technical education who complete their programs and graduate.
Data Quality Improvement: All students who complete program are now being classified by gender, special populations, ethnicity and tech prep categories. For increased validity, we are examining how career and technical education students are identified in state assessment system and revising collection procedures as appropriate.

Sub-Indicator: **1P1 Attainment of Academic Skills (Academic Attainment)**
Baseline Year(s): 1999-2000
Measurement Approach: Academic Grade Point Average
Numerator: Number of occupationally specific students who perform at or above the 2.5 grade point average in career and technical education programs' academic courses for which grades were received during the reporting year.
Denominator: Number of occupationally specific students receiving grades in academic courses during the reporting year.
Data Quality Improvement: Revisions and modifications are continuing to stress self-contained modules instead of full-length programs characterized by CIP code. In addition, we are working with the community colleges to determine a more accurate method of data collection.

Sub-Indicator: **1P2 Attainment of Occupational Skills (Skill Attainment)**
Baseline Year(s): 1999-2000
Measurement Approach: Occupational Grade Point Average
Numerator: Number of occupationally specific students who perform at or above the 2.5 grade point average in career and technical education programs' occupational courses for which grades were received during the program year.
Denominator: Number of occupationally specific students who received grades in occupational courses during the program year.
Data Quality Improvement: Revisions and modifications are continuing to stress self-contained modules instead of full-length programs characterized by CIP code. In addition, we are working with the community colleges to determine a more accurate method of data collection.

Sub-Indicator: **2P1 Diploma/Credential (Completion)**
Baseline Year(s): 1999-2000
Measurement Approach: State/Local Administrative Data
Numerator: Number of postsecondary occupationally specific students who complete the program and receive a degree, certificate, or other formal award in the reporting year.
Denominator: Number of occupationally specific students who enrolled in programs in the reporting year.
Data Quality Improvement: Revisions and modifications are continuing to stress self-contained modules instead of full-length programs characterized by CIP code. In addition, we are working with the community colleges to determine a more accurate method of data collection.

Sub-Indicator: **3P1 Placement and Retention**
Baseline Year(s): 1996-1997, 1997-1998, 1998-1999, 1999-2000
Measurement Approach: State-Developed, School-Administered Surveys/Placement Forms
Numerator: Number of respondents to the PDE survey who were reported as employed, pursuing additional education or advanced training, and/or in the military.
Denominator: Number of respondents who returned a usable PDE follow-up survey.
Data Quality Improvement: Revisions and modifications are continuing to stress self-contained modules instead of full-length programs characterized by CIP code. We continue to search for ways to increase the percentage of useable surveys that are returned.

Sub-Indicator: **3P2 Placement and Retention (Retention)**
Baseline Year(s): 1999-2000
Measurement Approach: Matching UI Records
Numerator: Number of postsecondary completers who were placed in employment and who were reported as continuing to be employed.
Denominator: Number of postsecondary career and technical education program completers who were placed in employment in the initial survey and complete and return a usable follow-up survey.
Data Quality Improvement: We continue to partner with the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry regarding the data elements and file format required.

Sub-Indicator: **4P1 Participation in Nontraditional Programs (Participation)**
Baseline Year(s): 1996-1997, 1997-1998, 1998-1999, 1999-2000
Measurement Approach: State/Local Administrative Data
Numerator: Number of postsecondary non-traditional occupationally specific students who enrolled in career and technical education programs in the reporting year.
Denominator: Number of postsecondary occupationally specific student enrollees in non-traditional programs during the reporting year.

Data Quality Improvement: Pennsylvania continues working to increase the number of males and females enrolled in nontraditional programs so that small changes in numbers do not exaggerate percentage changes.

Sub-Indicator: **4P2 Completion in Nontraditional Programs (Completion)**
Baseline Year(s): 1996-1997, 1997-1998, 1998-1999, 1999-2000
Measurement Approach: State/Local Administrative Data
Numerator: Number of non-traditional completers of occupationally specific programs in the reporting year.
Denominator: Number of occupationally specific students who complete non-traditional programs in the reporting year.

Data Quality Improvement: Pennsylvania continues working to increase the number of males and females enrolled in non-traditional programs so that small changes in numbers do not exaggerate percentage changes.

Sub-Indicator: **1A1 Attainment of Academic Skills (Academic Attainment)**
Baseline Year(s): 1999-2000
Measurement Approach: Academic Grade Point Average
Numerator: Number of adult students who achieve at or above a 2.5 grade point average in academic courses for which grades were received during the program year.
Denominator: Number of adult students receiving grades in academic courses during the program year.

Data Quality Improvement: Revisions and modifications are continuing to stress self-contained modules instead of full-length programs characterized by CIP code.

Sub-Indicator: **1A2 Attainment of Occupational Skills (Skill Attainment)**
Baseline Year(s): 1999-2000
Measurement Approach: Occupational Grade Point Average
Numerator: Number of adult students who achieve at or above the 2.5 grade point average in occupational courses for which grades were received during the program year.
Denominator: Number of adult students who received grades in occupational courses during the program year.

Data Quality Improvement: Revisions and modifications are continuing to stress self-contained modules instead of full-length programs characterized by CIP code.

Sub-Indicator: **2A1 Diploma/Credential (Completion)**
Baseline Year(s): 1996-1997, 1997-1998, 1998-1999, 1999-2000
Measurement Approach: State/Local Administrative Data
Numerator: Number of adult students who complete program competencies and receive a certificate, diploma, or other formal award in the reporting year.

Denominator: Number of adult students who enroll in adult programs during the reporting year.

Data Quality Improvement: Revisions and modifications are continuing to stress self-contained modules instead of full-length programs characterized by CIP code.

Sub-Indicator: **3A1 Placement and Retention**

Baseline Year(s): 1996-1997, 1997-1998, 1998-1999, 1999-2000

Measurement Approach: State-Developed, School-Administered Surveys/Placement Forms

Numerator: Number of respondents to the PDE survey who were reported as employed, pursuing additional education or advanced training and/or in the military

Denominator: Number of respondents who returned a usable PDE follow-up survey.

Data Quality Improvement: We continue to search for ways to increase the percentage of useable surveys that are returned.

Sub-Indicator: **3A2 Placement and Retention (Retention)**

Baseline Year(s): 1999-2000

Measurement Approach: Matching UI Records

Numerator: Number of adult completers who were placed in employment, and who were reported as continuing to be employed.

Denominator: Number of adult career and technical education program completers who were placed in employment in the initial survey.

Data Quality Improvement: We continue to partner with the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry regarding the data elements and file format required.

Sub-Indicator: **4A1 Participation in Nontraditional Programs (Participation)**

Baseline Year(s): 1996-1997, 1997-1998, 1998-1999, 1999-2000

Measurement Approach: State/Local Administrative Data

Numerator: Number of adult nontraditional students who enrolled in career and technical education programs

Denominator: Number of adult career and technical education students who enrolled in nontraditional programs.

Data Quality Improvement: Pennsylvania continues working to increase the number of males and females enrolled in nontraditional programs so that small changes in numbers do not exaggerate percentage changes.

Sub-Indicator: **4A2 Participation in Nontraditional Programs (Completion)**

Baseline Year(s): 1999-2000

Measurement Approach: State/Local Administrative Data

Numerator: Number of nontraditional adult completers of career and technical education programs in the reporting year.

Denominator: Number of adult career and technical education students who completed occupationally specific nontraditional programs in the reporting year.

Data Quality Improvement: Pennsylvania continues working to increase the number of males and females enrolled in nontraditional programs so that small changes in numbers do not exaggerate percentage changes.

d: Effectiveness of Improvement Strategies in Previous Program Year

Staff of the Bureau of Career and Technical Education began a statewide initiative of program approval to strengthen vocational offerings.

The Governor's strategy of preparing for high tech high wage employment was implemented.

The Pennsylvania Department of Education has established a data council to review outcomes and reduce duplication.

The state Tech Prep advisory committee initiated the production of a document designed to improve methods used to collect data on Tech Prep programs and students.

The administration of Perkins was regionalized to facilitate technical assistance.

The following describes additional measures that were taken for specific sub-indicators:

1S1 Attainment of Academic Skills: All academic tests results were also subjected to both computerized and manual edits at the state level. A technical review committee meets periodically to address specific issues relating to the development of the test construction, test administration, scoring, and reporting. Advisory committee members rate the quality and alignment of the test with Pennsylvania's academic standards. Other issues addressed include addressing of bias and reliability through analysis of test data. These have been completed, with positive impact on student performance. Several projects are ongoing to identify and implement ways to increase students' PSSA scores.

1S2 Attainment of Occupational Skills: A technical committee was formed to review issues relating to identifying reasons for lack of statewide testing participation and to address those career and technical education programs that do not have a NOCTI identified test or other PDE approved test. Discussions were held with the testing contractor to explore the feasibility of developing tests for those areas not covered under the existing system. Committee activity is ongoing. Additional industry-recognized occupational tests were reviewed for inclusion on the PDE approved test list.

1S2 Attainment of Occupational Skills and 2S2 Credential Attainment: Funded projects included those that addressed revisions and updates to NOCTI tests, the integration of standards and applications of new technology. These activities will help students better attain occupational skill proficiencies and credentials. There should also be a positive impact on student placement.

1A1 Attainment of Academic Skills; 1A2 Attainment of Occupational Skills; 2A1 Diploma/Credential; 3A1 Placement and Retention; and 3P1 Placement and Retention:

Work is continuing to implement the results of a technical advisory committee comprised of Department of Education staff and local adult occupational education coordinators representing the geographic areas of the state. This work relates to identifying reasons for lack of statewide testing participation and to identifying alternative methods for measuring academic attainment. These measures are in the process of revision and modification to contain instructional modules instead of full-length programs defined by CIP codes. Numerators, denominators, and standards of performance will be adjusted as well. Reviews are ongoing.

1P1 Attainment of Academic Skills and 1P2 Attainment of Occupational Skills: A technical advisory committee comprised of Department of Education staff and local postsecondary administrators representing the geographic areas of the state met to review issues relating to the reliability and validity the academic grade point average and the occupational grade point average.

2S1 Diploma/Credential: Staff members provide assistance and training to schools to update program requirements and to integrate standards.

4S1, 4P1 and 4A1 Participation in Nontraditional Programs and 4S2, 4P2 and 4A2 Completion in Nontraditional Programs: Pennsylvania works to identify programs that have been successful on these measures and to share their best practices with others. We continue to review materials we develop and those from outside sources for nontraditional representation.

All review activities are still ongoing. Since their implementation has been short in duration, their impact on student performance may not be realized for two to three years.

e: Improvement Strategies for Next Program Year

In addition to the numerous activities described in previous sections, Pennsylvania has been participating in other ongoing activities that relate to all of the sub-indicators. For example, the Pennsylvania Department of Education has continued on a vigorous review and approval process of vocational programs throughout the state.

They have followed-up their regionalization effort with the appointment of a statewide Perkins coordinator. There is a new strategy for targeted technical assistance visits.

A Tech Prep handbook is now being used to improve data collection.

Curriculum development grants are being awarded with emphasis on aligning career and technical education activities with high school reform efforts with a focus on increased academic rigor and alignment with Pennsylvania academic and industry-recognized standards. Equipment grants encourage modernization.

Updated census figures are being used to create a new allocation process.

A federal list of nontraditional programs has been adapted. A statewide Governor's initiative to focus on high tech, high wage jobs is being vigorously pursued.

Sub-Indicators 1S1, 1P1, 1A1 Attainment of Academic Skills: We are working with the Bureaus of Assessment and Accountability, Curriculum and Academic Services, Special Education, and Postsecondary Services regarding specific elements. In several instances, changes will be made to clarify what data is being requested especially as it relates to appropriately identifying the career and technical education students. Various activities and professional development opportunities are ongoing to increase the integration of academic skills into career and technical education and to raise scores on the state academic assessment. In addition to current improvement strategies, BCTE is aligning with PDE's Strategic Plan, JOB Ready PA, and federal NCLB efforts to address school improvement activities in the career and technical educational setting to enhance performance by integrating academics and curriculum development of sufficient scope and sequence to impact on the academic content areas within occupational programs. In addition, BCTE is proposing the Bureau of Information Systems (BIS) sets up a postsecondary data collection and reporting system, much like the current secondary CATS system.

Sub-Indicators 1S2, 1P2, 1A2 Attainment of Occupational Skills: We will continue to work with NOCTI to update the assessments that are used to access occupational skill attainment. In addition, we continue to review industry-recognized occupational tests that could also be used. Also, BCTE has initiated a system-wide program approval process within all secondary programs to target the inclusion and development of high skill, high wage programs to meet regional and state economic development and trend shifts in the job market. Industry-based certification assessment tools are being developed to provide even greater diversity and specialization in industry certifications of graduating students seeking specialized high priority occupations.

Sub-Indicators 1S1 Attainment of Academic Skills, 1S2 Attainment of Occupational Skills, 2S2 Credential Attainment: In order to improve and more accurately reflect student performance, we have already requested and received approval for 2003-2004 to adjust the measurement definitions for these sub-indicators. BCTE's program approval process, streamlining definitions of concentrators and completers, obtaining industry certification at the proficient level, along with changes in sub-indicators during subsequent years will enable students to spend sufficient time and effort in approved CTE programs leading to relevant industry certifications, postsecondary training, and entry into the regional job market.

Sub-Indicators 2S1, 2P1, 2A1 Diploma/Credential: To help increase program completion, we provide assistance and training to schools as they revise or update their programs. The Tech Prep advisory committee has assisted in creating a document to enhance data collection efforts. The Governor's initiative to focus on high wage, high skill jobs should motivate more students to become completers,

Sub-Indicators 3S1, 3P1, 3A1, 3S2, 3P2, 3A2 Placement and Retention: Perkins guidelines are being revised to emphasize the responsibilities of the grant recipients with regard to follow-up and analysis of retention and employment data.

Sub-Indicators 4S1, 4P1, 4A1, 4S2, 4P2, 4A2 Participation and Completion in Nontraditional Programs: Funded single parent/displaced homemaker programs include provisions for training in nontraditional occupations. The Bureau will begin using the federal list of nontraditional programs.