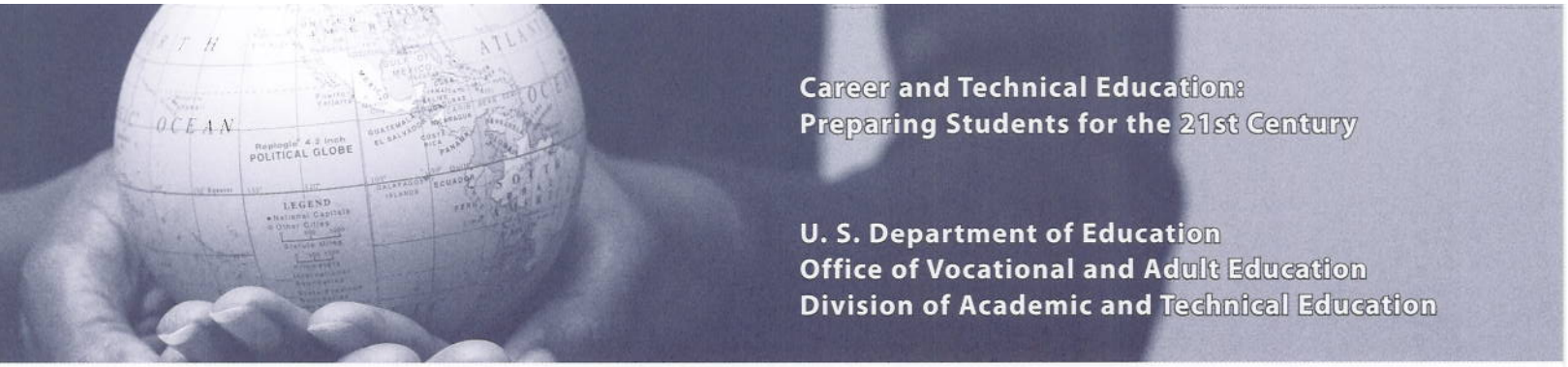

Improving Program Accountability

Congress made accountability for results a central focus of the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (Perkins IV), setting out new performance accountability requirements for states and local programs. These requirements were established "to assess the effectiveness of the state in achieving statewide progress in career and technical education, and to optimize the return of investment of Federal funds in career and technical education activities."

Under Perkins IV, each state is required to report annually on 13 core indicators of performance (see inset) for all students, as well as disaggregated data on the performance of students in special population categories described in the law, as well as gender, race, and ethnicity.

Perkins IV also requires each state to report on the effectiveness of their tech-prep programs, and, therefore, each state must report data for tech-prep students by each sub-indicator separately, as well as 11 other indicators described in the law.

The Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE) funds several ongoing initiatives to help states develop and implement accountability systems that yield valid, reliable, and complete data on the progress of career and technical education students:

- **Data Quality Institutes** – These annual institutes bring together state teams comprised of state career and technical education directors and their accountability staff to improve the quality and consistency of the definitions and measurement approaches that states use to report data on the Perkins IV core indicators of performance.
- **Next Step Work Group (NSWG) Conference Calls** – OVAE holds monthly calls with state career and technical education directors, secondary and postsecondary accountability staff, and other interested individuals to discuss emerging issues in Perkins IV accountability.
- **Individual Technical Assistance to States** – OVAE offers customized technical assistance to states on Perkins IV accountability issues. Up to eight states are selected to receive technical assistance each year through an application process conducted each fall.

Perkins Core Indicators of Performance

Secondary Level:

- Academic attainment in reading/language arts and mathematics
- Technical skill attainment
- Secondary school completion
- Student graduation rates
- Secondary placement
- Nontraditional participation
- Nontraditional completion

Postsecondary Level:

- Technical skill attainment
- Credential, certificate, degree completion
- Student retention or transfer
- Student placement
- Nontraditional participation
- Nontraditional completion

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Web Site *Perkins Collaborative Resource Network (PCRN)* – http://www.cte.ed.gov
OVAE – http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ovae/pi/cte/index.html#acct
National Association for Career and Technical Education Information (NACTEI) – http://www.nactei.org