CTE Data Puts Meaningful Information about Student Pathways in the Hands of Policymakers



Student pathways are becoming increasingly varied. It is more important than ever that students have access to high-quality data that helps them understand how to achieve their goals and that state policymakers have better data to understand if their investments in education and training are meeting the demands of their state's economy. To meet those needs, state leaders must be relentless in pursuing every opportunity to support the availability of meaningful and useful data. The recent reauthorization of the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act is an opportunity for states to provide students, families, and policymakers with the information they need and can trust to make informed decisions that lead to better outcomes.



Perkins Now Requires States to Report Real Student Outcomes

This is the first time that Perkins has been reauthorized since states have developed their Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) accountability plans. States are also prompted to align elements

and timing of their plans for Perkins and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). All of these laws have been reauthorized in a new climate in which each state has the ability to collect data through high-quality statewide longitudinal data systems. As states engage in the hard work to plan how they will hold K–12 and postsecondary career and technical education (CTE) programs accountable for better outcomes, they must take this opportunity to get to *real* preparation, transition, and outcome data for all CTE concentrators (students who choose to focus on CTE coursework in school). **Perkins indicators will require states to develop high-quality data linkages across K-12, postsecondary, and workforce data systems.** When state leaders are successful in breaking down program silos to include the required CTE indicators in the state's broader systems, they will be able to use the information to answer key questions at each stage of a student's education pathway, such as:

- How do CTE concentrators perform on required academic assessments in reading, math, and science?
- Are CTE concentrators' **graduation rates** similar to the graduation rates of their peers?
- Do CTE programs enable CTE concentrators to earn credentials, college credits, or on-the-job experience by the time they graduate from high school?

Perkins provides an opportunity for better alignment with ESSA and WIOA:

ESSA is a federal K–12 education law that supports states' work to provide equal opportunities for all students to be prepared for college and careers. See Opportunities to Make Data Work for Students in the Every Student Succeeds Act.



WIOA is a federal workforce law that supports states' efforts to match job seekers with employment, education, and training so that they have skills that match the needs of employers.
 See How WIOA Performance Data Works.



- After leaving high school, do CTE concentrators **choose college**, **advanced training, a career, or some form of service** (e.g., military, AmeriCorps, Peace Corps)?
- Do CTE concentrators **earn a postsecondary credential** after completing a postsecondary CTE program?
- How many CTE concentrators are **enrolled in nontraditional CTE programs** (e.g., young women in welding programs)?

States must examine equity gaps, which are large differences in performance on any of the required data elements, for the following groups of students:

- major racial/ethnic groups
- individuals from economically disadvantaged families
- individuals with disabilities
- English learners

- individuals of different genders
- migrant students
- homeless individuals
- youth who are in or have aged out of foster care
- military-connected youth
- individuals preparing for nontraditional fields
- out-of-workforce individuals
- single parents, including single pregnant women

States must also report detailed data on pathways students choose by disaggregating data for one of the following:

• CTE program

Career Cluster (groups of CTE programs that require related knowledge and skills)

It's Time for State Leaders to Take Steps to Make CTE Data Meaningful and Useful

Taking advantage of this opportunity to make Perkins data meaningful and useful will require implementing high-quality data systems and going beyond compliance to get students, families, and policymakers the data they need.

States Must Prioritize Linked Data Systems

To have quality information about the success over time of programs that can guide policy and practice, state leaders must ensure that they have the systems and structures in place to produce quality, longitudinal data about student outcomes. Creating necessary, linked data systems requires leadership at the highest levels to prioritize action, and state leaders must take the following essential steps:

Create high-quality data linkages. States must create high-quality linkages, technical mechanisms that enable leaders to share data securely across state agencies, to provide a full picture of student progress through K–12 education and into college and careers and to illuminate real student outcomes.

Establish cross-agency data governance. States must have a strong data governance body that brings all the right people to the table to identify the questions that must be answered about students' success along their various pathways and to ensure that data is kept secure.

Safeguard student data. States must ensure that students and families trust the data by communicating how it will be used in service of student learning and by being transparent about how it is kept private, confidential, and secure.

States Must Make Sure Students and Families Can Access CTE Outcome Data

When it comes to data about CTE programs, students and families are too often left in the dark, and the teachers and leaders supporting them do not have the tools they need to make data-informed program improvements. As states engage in efforts to improve data quality through data linkages, they also must make the data available in ways that lead to improved student outcomes.

Make data easy to find and understand. CTE data must be transparent so that students and families can identify which CTE programs are preparing students for college and careers. States must make CTE data easier to find and understand by including it on state and local report cards alongside other information about school quality and student success, such as information required by ESSA.

Give families the information they need. Students and families must have access to their own data in a secure format, including information about the student's progress through the CTE program and any other information needed to understand steps the student must take to achieve his or her goals. This information must be timely and tailored in such a way that it answers questions and drives action.

Use data in service of student learning. States must ensure that they put high-quality data in the hands of teachers and leaders so they can use it to inform actions that continuously improve outcomes for CTE students. State leaders must invest in professional development that prepares educators to be data literate.

Learn More!

For more about Perkins requirements:

ADVANCE>CTE									HOME CALENDAR	NEWSROOM
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Resources from Advance CTE

Resources from the Department of Education



Roadmap for K–12 and Workforce Data Linkages

For more about linking data systems:

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Roadmap for K–12 and Postsecondary Linkages

Roadmap for Cross-Agency Data Governance



The State of Career and Technical Education: Improving Data Quality & Effectiveness

For more about getting students, families, and educators the information they need:



Show Me the Data provides an analysis of state report cards and the steps states are taking to make data easier to find and use.



Grace's Path to Success provides an illustration of how one student used data at critical decision points to make the career choices that were right for her.

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Teacher Data Literacy: It's About Time and Administrator Data Literacy Fosters Student Success provide detailed information on supporting educator data literacy.



The Data Quality Campaign is a nonprofit policy and advocacy organization leading the effort to bring every part of the education community together to empower educators, families, and policymakers with quality information to make decisions that ensure that students excel. For more information, go to www.dataqualitycampaign.org and follow us on Facebook and Twitter (@EdDataCampaign).