

Composing the Narrative - This section is based on the information collection submission made by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OMB No. 1830): Consolidated Annual Report (CAR) for the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006.

There is no form for the narrative. Please write this section as you would any text document, typically using Microsoft Word or some other word processing software. The system also accepts PDF files. The entire narrative report must not exceed 20 pages.

Each state must address in the report all the items below, and to the extent possible, use bullets, tables, and charts to summarize key points of its performance in the past program year (July 1, 2007 - June 30, 2008).

I -Implementation of State Leadership Activities

*Secs. 124(b) and (c) of Perkins IV describe the required and permissible uses of state leadership funds, respectively. Provide a summary of your state's major initiatives and activities in **each of the required areas**, as well as **any of the permissible areas that your state has chosen to undertake** during the program year.*

A. Required Use of Funds:

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

Background (paraphrased from Dr. M. Madden's UAF/CRCO evaluation for this reporting year) "Perkins III began in 1998, the same year the Alaska School Foundation Program was revised to eliminate categorical funding for high school career and technical education (CTE), and "block grant" funds that could be used for CTE with those for special education, gifted and talented and bilingual/bicultural education. Since then the number of students who are served by such programming has fallen from about two-thirds of all students to less than one-half. The decline is even more precipitous in rural areas. Without access to such programs, high school students have little opportunity to develop career and technical skills.

While career/technical education has been disappearing from local high school, it has grown considerably at the post-secondary level, particularly within the University of Alaska system. In the five-year period between Fall 2003 and Fall 2007, enrollment in certificate/degree programs in high demand occupations (as defined by the Alaska Workforce Investment Board) increased 11 percent and in Fall 2007 accounted for 39 percent of total UA enrollments. These increases are due both to the development of new programs and to the increased use of distance education technologies for program delivery."

The five-year planning and data reporting processes required under Perkins IV were used as vehicles to collect information and analyze the local secondary and postsecondary career & technical education programs. In addition two sets of face-to-face work sessions – regional meetings in the fall and a statewide meeting in the winter – and teleconferences were held to clarify common conditions and develop proposals and recommendations. Three separate meetings were held with postsecondary personnel involved with tech prep programs to work toward greater consistency in articulation process, elements and costs as well as identifying opportunities for program coordination.

Forty-three school districts (80%), the Alaska Vocational Technical Center (AVTEC) and the University of Alaska (UA) system submitted five-year plans that met the Perkins IV requirements.

Eleven school districts have chosen to not participate in Perkins during the 2008-2009 school year. The secondary schools in these districts are very small, generally subject to high costs because they are not connected to other communities by road, and suffer high rates of teacher turnover within a three year period. Teachers assigned to a CTE class seldom have adequate technical training, as the school is most concerned about meeting NCLB highly qualified requirements. Philosophically, many of these schools choose to offer one or more exploratory courses in areas of interest, but do not choose to develop a CTE program of study or sequence of courses.

On the other side of the program continuum, over 2000 students earned one or more postsecondary credits through tech programs, and eighteen districts reported technical assessment information for baseline data purposes.

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

The Community and Rural College made a concerted effort to develop, pilot test, and foster quality distance education in the rural, i.e. "off the road system" portions of the state. Two programs, Early Childhood Development, and Health Services succeeded in providing tech prep courses to students in rural areas, and collected many helpful recommendations for future development.

The EED/CTE staff continued to maintain a listserv to facilitate communication among local program coordinators. A program support website was maintained, and E-mails and phone calls continued to be the preferred method of communication with individuals. With the exception of signature sections, local applications and reports were processed through email. Despite the CTE staff offer to serve as the pilot program for a web-based application and report, EED has not yet developed this capacity.

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

Increased attention was paid to improving students' applied academic skills for success in the workplace, in particular applied mathematics, reading, and interpreting information in graphical formats. All secondary schools have been provided with access to the WIN (Worldwide Interactive Network) instructional software that focuses on these skills and can be used for group or individualized instruction. Practicing these skills will also help students pass the Alaska High School Graduation Qualifying Examination and NCLB-required Standards Based Assessments. EED/CTE held approximately 20 in-depth training sessions for teachers and counselors on utilizing the software.

EED/CTE collaborated with local and regional partners to provide sustained professional development activities that support the industry and state standards identified in the revised career & technical education programs of study and related curriculum. Intensive workshops

for school counselors and teachers were woven into the fall Professional Development Conference, with staff from over half the school districts participating in this 4-day training.

In an effort to increase awareness and sensitivity to non-traditional fields, portions of the previously developed “Don’t Flounder – Get Off the Hook” NTO curriculum were incorporated into EED’s online teacher training modules. These modules are available at any time to any teacher or school counselor in the state (see NTO question).

The Alaska Tech Prep Consortium conducted a highly successful statewide workshop that provided technical assistance in developing Career & Technical Education Programs of Study (known in Alaska as CTEPS), utilizing the expertise and materials of South Dakota’s lead consultant. Participants were local teams composed of secondary and postsecondary instructors, counselors, administrators, and/or industry representatives. In one of the three regions, the Tech Prep Consortium Coordinator – a curriculum specialist - followed up with each district’s tech prep program(s) and helped them build a CTEPS for their tech prep program.

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

The EED/CTE program approval process requires local districts to align the industry standards used for their CTE programs to the Alaskan state performance standards and grade level expectations for reading, writing, math and science. This ensures that CTE programs address the same rigorous standards and grade level expectations that are the basis for student assessments required by NCLB and the High School Graduation Qualifying Exam. EED strongly encourages districts to provide assistance to teachers so the teachers can be the key personnel in local CTE curriculum revision. This helps ensure the teachers’ deeper understanding of how the local curriculum is aligned to the appropriate industry standards, the state’s required student performance standards for reading, writing, math and science and the state’s Employability Standards and Cultural Standards. Sample curriculum crosswalks are available on the EED/CTE website and are shared among districts.

The EED continued its joint venture with the Alaska Department of Labor through the Alaska Career Ready Initiative that includes WIN (Worldwide Interactive Network) instructional courseware and nationally recognized ACT WorkKeys® assessments. It is a statewide program to ensure that Alaska students and job-seekers have the basic, or foundational, skills required by post-secondary education and virtually all careers. If a student or job-seeker does not have the required foundational skill levels, the curriculum program provides training that is directly targeted to those skills. In addition, the program provides the means for students and job-seekers to document their foundational skills by earning a "Career Readiness Certificate," which is recognized nation-wide. This program year involved six districts in a pilot program, and approximately 275 high school students participated in the WorkKeys assessments and 162 of them earned a national Career Readiness Certificate at the gold, silver or bronze level.

The Department of Labor has included these foundational workplace skills and the national certification in its Alaska Gasline Inducement Act (AGIA) Training Strategic Plan, which lays the groundwork for preparing Alaskans for high skill, high-wage jobs working on construction, maintenance and operation of a planned Alaskan natural gas pipeline.

EED/CTE also began planning for model CTE Programs of Study (CTEPS) as required under Perkins IV. Some districts began work on developing new programs or refining existing programs to meet the CTEPS guidelines. EED has provided CTEPS models to districts for use in their continued CTEPS development. The CTEPS includes not just the technical courses, but also the academic courses that are necessary for a complete program at the secondary level and moving seamlessly to post-secondary.

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

In prior years, a contractor for the state offered an interesting and popular curriculum for recruitment and retention of the under-represented gender in courses leading to non-traditional occupations. The web-based curriculum, "Don't Flounder, Get Off the Hook", consists of student lessons that take about 60 to 90 minutes each. The lessons are designed to be flexible and include web-based multi media, student projects, discussion and assessment and are adaptable to any career cluster. Teacher and counselor training was developed and piloted both on site and through distance delivery.

During this reporting year, the emphasis keyed on professional development for teachers and guidance counselors to increase their awareness and sensitivity to the issue of non-traditional fields, and provide teaching and guidance resources that are easily accessed. The training materials were adapted into lessons on the EED's e-learning website for teachers. This provides an asynchronous vehicle for school staff to log on at their convenience using local internet access and proceed through the "lessons" and activities. When necessary, documentation of participation may be produced. The e-learning site has proven to be a very helpful resource to local districts, and is used for a variety of state-supported trainings and professional development topics. Programming was completed at the end of the reporting year, and participation will be monitored during the next year.

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

The University of Alaska Workforce Development Office developed a comprehensive listing of UA CTE pathway programs and the location (campus) at which each one is offered (<http://www.alaska.edu/swacad/wp/careerclusters/>). Based on the national work contained at www.careerclusters.org, this provides an excellent resource for districts to begin developing the post-secondary component of their Programs of Study.

Perkins' grantees have continued to work to align to industry standards, and this often forms the basis for the articulations that are possible between secondary and postsecondary institutions. For example, AVTEC's culinary arts program is certified by the American Culinary Arts Federation, and this program is articulated with the University of Alaska Anchorage's culinary arts A.A. degree program. Similarly, the Tanana Valley Campus of the University of Alaska Fairbanks, College of Rural and Community Development, is using its

Perkins grant to align its health sciences and early childhood programs with the national industry standards and state licensing requirements.

The EED's annual local coordinator's workshop invited WIA partners, and in particular those connected with its youth grants, to join educators in discussing the CTE issues facing the state. Evaluations have indicated that participants were pleased with the opportunity to become better acquainted and work toward solving common issues and addressing common goals with their colleagues.

During the past year, the Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB) developed the first phase of the State's strategic training plan for construction of an Alaskan gas pipeline. This work will continue as the major economic development initiative of the state and will affect multiple career pathways.

The AWIB has supported the joint EED-DOLWD Alaska Career Ready initiative, and staff from both departments attended AWIB meetings and provided status updates. EED continued to partner with DOLWD to engage other state agencies, employers, chambers of commerce and economic development councils, trade groups, post-secondary programs, and labor unions in the Alaska Career Ready program.

Coordination with the AWIB continued although both agencies experienced critical, long-term vacancies following retirements of CTE specialists which limited most new program development. Per the request of the AWIB, EED is planning to collaborate on two projects: one to ensure that secondary and postsecondary students have the necessary employability skills to be successful in the workplace; and the second to develop a cost-effective system of student follow-up to determine how successful Alaska's students are in subsequent training and employment. Attendance at AWIB committee meetings, industry-focused meetings, and meetings of vocational education providers has helped to foster the exchange of information within the workforce development system.

7. Serving individuals in state institutions;

During this reporting year, the Hiland Mountain Correctional Center continued and expanded their program as a Certified Testing and Training Facility for Microsoft Office software. This year an additional site, Wildwood Correctional Center, received its certification for testing. Both sites are dual certified for Microsoft Office 2003 and 2007 and IC3.

During the reporting year, 293 inmates completed 2,570 hours of formal classroom instruction; 138 student received course completion certificates; 14 students passed at least one MOS certification exam; 10 earned MOS Specialist Certification, 7 earned MOS Master Certification, and 10 earned IC3 certification.

The MOS program continues its Tech Prep agreement with UAA; participants are aware of the program and know that they can turn their MOS certification into college credit upon their release from Hiland Mountain. However, participants are finding it hard to pay the \$25/credit enrollment fee when the average wage in the institution is \$0.35 to 0.65 per hour.

Hiland Mountain will be implementing the Alaska Career Ready program in the next reporting year.

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

Each eligible recipient was required to describe measures to support successful participation of special populations in vocational education programs, including recruitment, retention, and academic and occupational skills training for high-skill, high-wage occupations. Technical assistance activities and annual report narratives imply the construction cluster has been most successful in reaching special population students.

The Alaska Tech Prep Consortium has identified a concern that low-income secondary students were not enrolling for dual postsecondary credit, or not enrolling in available college courses because of the costs to the student and his/her family. A trial program offered small stipends to low-income applicants to pay for the university enrollment fees for obtaining concurrent university credit. The program has been quite successful, but has also illuminated the need for additional guidance for students and their parents, as anecdotal reports indicate many students appear to have a minimal understanding of their potential benefit from “head start” of postsecondary credits compared to the certainty of rigorous work quality that will be expected from them.

9. Offering technical assistance for eligible recipients.

Technical assistance focused on three major areas during this reporting period.

Data – working in partnership with local district personnel, EED/CTE staff created a major revision to the “All-In-One” Perkins data collection form to one that will collect number of credits per student per pathway. It is designed to take advantage of the EED’s data warehouse that is under development, and simplify administrative data matches using data collected for other programs. The EED’s web-based form was also re-programmed so districts can download their reports.

5-yr plan - .As a result of long-term EED/CTE staff recruitment challenges and the institution of the ACR, the state-level, multi-stepped technical assistance planned this program year was abbreviated, and tech prep coordinators and/or local staff stepped forward to provide advice and assistance. The state staff did provide two sets of face-to-face work sessions – regional meetings in the fall and a statewide meeting in the winter – and teleconferences were held to clarify common conditions and develop proposals and recommendations.

One secondary school district was visited during the fall of the 2007-2008 school year and received technical assistance in CTE curriculum and program development.

ACR – The Alaska Career Ready Initiative assistance was multi-layered. Local pilot sites were provided on-site training for test administrators and for teachers and counselors who may help students with the WIN courseware. Regional training events were held for other interested parties, and EED staff would input batches of student names and id’s for testing purposes, and conduct weekly webinars for most every interested party

B. Permissible Activities Include:

1. Improving career guidance and academic counseling programs;

The Alaska Career Information System (AKCIS) is utilized by schools, job centers, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in Alaska. Through a new sponsorship by the Alaska Commission for Postsecondary Education (ACPE), it is now available to any resident of the state at no charge. The Department of Labor & Workforce Development works with the National Career Information System (NCIS) at the University of Oregon to populate this software package of career guidance information and tools with Alaska-specific labor market and post-secondary training information. The program is web-based and continues to be

enhanced each year. It is aligned with the 16 career clusters utilized in the state as well as with ONET. The ACPE offers onsite and web-based AKCIS users' training to all school district in the state.

Through Memorandums of Agreement, the DOL continued the program of "Career Guides" in four school districts with a special focus on providing awareness and access to apprenticeship programs. EED staff participated in the training of the Career Guides.

The AGIA Training Strategic Plan includes several goals and strategies that incorporate K-12 career guidance, provided in coordination with EED and DOL. EED staff trained WIA youth grantees in using career clusters and pathways for career guidance.

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

The University of Alaska developed a standardized template and protocol for dual credit courses including tech prep programs. This model, now in use for three years, is reviewed and adjusted annually. It is in use at nearly all campuses and has served as a model for agreements at other institutions and with apprenticeship programs.

Alaska statute places the responsibility for curriculum development and adoption on the local school board, and the University also allows great latitude for local campus control of curriculum. This provides the opportunity for local customization of programs and institutional ownership, with the trade-off of time and expertise needed for teachers and administrators to review and approve each program articulation. Both teachers and administrators have expressed increased interest in developing some more standardized programs that cross campus and district boundaries, especially in programs that are clearly based on accepted industry standards.

3. Supporting career and technical student organizations;

The EED provided financial support and technical assistance to the state's career and technical student organizations (CTSOs), through a contract. Five organizations collaborated to hold a common student assessment conference for 447 students and 42 advisors. In addition to the assessments, students participated in over 20 workshops on common topics, and competed for about a dozen scholarships.

New to the state assessment conference this year were four HOSA chapters from around the state. An industry partner, the South Central Area Health Education Center, is providing support for the HOSA state advisor as she develops HOSA chapters in Alaska.

CTSO students also participated in leadership training at a student leadership conference in the fall and another in the winter. The students provided logistical support for CTE teachers and school counselors at the fall Professional Development Conference.

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

The EED/CTE staff participated in Alaska Business Education Compact meetings and supported meetings of the Vocational Education Training Providers (VTEP).

As part of the Alaska Career Ready Initiative, EED and DOLWD partnered to provide educational and informational presentations/meetings for employer groups in Anchorage, Juneau, Fairbanks, and Sitka.

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

The Alaska Tech Prep Consortium served as the lead venue for discussing new courses, focusing on the underserved rural sites and opportunities to examine valid distance delivery. Two postsecondary programs established partnerships with local school districts, and piloted various delivery systems for early childhood and health services. Since support of distance-delivered CTE is one of the most common requests by small, remote schools the recommendations from the third-party evaluator the regional Tech Prep specialist summarize the major issues that have surfaced over the course of this pilot project and are helpful to future planning.

Recommendation 1—Planning: Early pre-planning including top local school district officials as well as university and secondary teaching faculty and support staff should be included in all future distance-delivered CTE programs of study. A central program point person at the university is extremely helpful in setting up and facilitating this planning. This planning should result in a written agreement detailing all aspects of the program.

Recommendation 2—Students: Local school districts should screen participating students to assure that they have the necessary academic skills and have expressed an interest in the career pathway being offered. At registration, all parental permissions must be obtained. Students should be allowed to enroll for credit at the end of the course or else be provided generous withdrawal provisions.

Recommendation 3—Faculty: Both the school district and the university should provide adequate planning and preparation time for participating faculty. This time should be included in workloads and/or receive additional compensation. Professional development in using distance technology, teaching secondary school students and student coaching/mentoring may need to be provided. Some other states have moved to an “e-mentor”—a non-certificated employee—to provide the on-site supervision and mentoring. Program planners should determine if this option is available in Alaska.

Recommendation 4—Courses: Courses included in distance-delivered programs of study need to be carefully selected to account for student academic skill levels and to assure articulation with a certificate or degree. Not all courses in a program of study need to carry dual credit, particularly in the first several years of high school. Courses should be paced to the high school schedule. An alternative is to move to outcomes-based assessment that would allow differing time frames for completing the course and earning credit. Asynchronous courses are being used in other parts of the country and should be considered in Alaska.

Recommendation 5—Practicum/Lab Experiences: Lab experiences need to be initiated early in the course to help student apply classroom learning to real-life situations. Class scheduling at the high school needs to take into account the work routines at the lab sites and the time needed to travel to and from the practicum experience.

Recommendation 6—Tech Prep General Agreement: The current Tech Prep agreement template should be revised to account for the student privacy, student metrics, registration, tuition and other technical issues that have been identified by this pilot project. The regional Tech Prep Specialists can be of great assistance in this effort and the university is encouraged to move these positions from grant funding to a stable funding source.

Recommendation 7—Statewide Course Delivery: CTE program planners should consider developing several distance-delivered programs of study that would be available to any high school in the state. Some of the logistical issues identified in this report could be

circumvented if the distance courses were offered through a body such as the Tech Prep Consortium or a consortium of school districts, using a sponsored course model to access university instruction.

The EED/CTE staff participated in Alaska Business Education Compact meetings and supported meetings of the Vocational Education Training Providers (VTEP).

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

Since the beginning of Perkins III, the EED/CTE staff has worked successfully with four partners in order to collect and report valid and reliable Perkins-related data through efficient and economical methods. The enhanced data requirements of Perkins IV have re-emphasized the importance of each partner:

- Local school districts have worked very hard to provide valid, reliable and timely data on their CTE programs although local capacity varies widely from sophisticated data warehouses and full-time specialists to the local department chair tabulating information from transcripts or teacher grade books. EED/CTE staff has consistently worked with local district staff to develop Perkins-related data collection instruments that allow EED to provide administrative matches with relevant data collected for other purposes. Perkins IV necessitated a complete overhaul of the computer programming and a web site that aggregates and reports data reports by district. Analysis of the local data indicates that the work to build CTE programs of study has resulted in inaccurate application of the CTE concentrator definition. A discussion and operational definition of appropriate technical assessments will also need to be revisited, and data re-worked.
- EED's Assessment Unit is building a unified data collection system and warehouse for the public school K-12 system. It collects, checks, and reports student and staff information related to NCLB; the unique state student identifier enables administrative matches with NCLB assessment and graduation data.
- The University of Alaska's Office of Institutional Research and the Alaska Vocational Technical Center provide postsecondary CTE program participant, concentrator and follow-up data for the majority of postsecondary certificate, credential and degree programs. Short-term training is not included.
- The Department of Labor and Workforce Development Research and Analysis Division cooperates in coordinating administrative matches for employment, postsecondary special populations, etc., and the Adult Education unit provides GED information.

New and continuing challenges include interpretations of FERPA and other data-security legislation and regulation that are placing increasing limitations on how the data may be matched with other sources; follow-up data that requires individual attention to collect; high percentages of students who attend schools outside the state that are prohibitively expensive to follow-up; the continuous attention needed to trouble-shoot new data programming, and delays related to the multiple program deadlines being addressed by partners, i.e. until the deadline is critical, some other deadline needs their attention. For example, the NCLB reporting deadlines occur before Perkins so receive priority attention

by data analysts. This year, this situation promoted validity as the data used as administrative matches for 1S1, 1S2 and 4S1 had been checked for NCLB accuracy. However, it hindered timeliness, as it wasn't available to the EED/CTE Perkins program until early December. Therefore, the school year has half over before it was known whether or not a district needed a plan of improvement and limited the time available to develop and implement an improvement plan.

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

As part of the five-year planning process, EED/CTE staff collaborated with the University of Alaska Anchorage Career & Technical Education Teacher Preparation Program to investigate capacity-building needs for improved programs that will meet the expectations of employers and the marketplace. Two surveys of practicing CTE teachers were conducted; one at the secondary and another at the postsecondary level. Participants were asked about their teaching assignments, professional development interests, and opinions about various delivery options. The responses are being used by the University and the EED/CTE to support commonly needed areas of professional development, and to investigate means to provide unique, low demand training.

Note: The following permissive activities were not emphasized during this reporting year:

- Supporting initiatives to facilitate the transition of sub baccalaureate career and technical education students into baccalaureate programs;
- Supporting public charter schools operating career and technical education programs;
- Supporting career and technical education programs that offer experience in, and understanding of, all aspects of an industry for which students are preparing to enter;
- Supporting family and consumer sciences programs;
- Awarding incentive grants to eligible recipients for exemplary performance or for use for innovative initiatives under Sec. 135(c)(19) of Perkins IV;
- Providing activities to support entrepreneurship education and training;
- Providing career and technical education programs for adults and school dropouts to complete their secondary school education;
- Providing assistance to individuals who have participated in Perkins assisted services and activities in continuing their education or training or finding appropriate jobs;
- Developing valid and reliable assessments of technical skills;
- Supporting occupational and employment information resources.

II. Progress in Developing and Implementing Technical Skill Assessments

Sec. 113(b) of Perkins IV describes the core indicators of performance for career and technical education students for which each state is required to gather data and report annually to the Department. Among the core indicators are student attainment of career and technical skill proficiencies, including student achievement on technical assessments aligned with industry-recognized standards, if available and appropriate. [See Sec. 113(b)(2)(A)(ii) of Perkins IV.] While the Department recognizes that a state may not have technical skill assessments aligned with industry-recognized standards in every career and technical education program area and for every career and technical education student, the Department asked each state to identify, in Part A, Sec. VI (Accountability and Evaluation) of its new Perkins IV State Plan: (1) the program areas for which the state had technical skill assessments; (2) the estimated percentage of students who would be reported in the state's calculation of career and technical education concentrators who took assessments; and (3) the state's plan and timeframe for increasing the coverage of programs and students reported in this indicator to cover all career and technical education concentrators and all program areas in the future. Please provide an update on your state's progress and plan for implementing technical skill assessments with respect to items one through three above.

The EED as the eligible agency does not sponsor nor promote a particular technical skill assessment. Starting with program development under Perkins III it has, however, promoted local program coordination with industry and postsecondary partners to identify and use third-party assessments, licenses and credentials as vehicles to inform program improvement and interagency coordination and as evidence of student mastery. Eighteen school districts reported one or more students' passing a third-party assessment for a total of 234. However, much work is needed to standardize the selection of assessments among providers, and determine how to aggregate vastly differing levels of assessment into a relatively simple data point for reporting purposes.

It is the state's intent to examine and select appropriate technical assessments during the process of developing CTEPS (CTE programs of study), utilizing the combined expertise of the industry advisors, postsecondary faculty and secondary teachers, to identify cost-effective assessments that add value to the student's educational experience and/or the evaluation of the program's effectiveness. EED/CTE staff have participated in the Next Steps Working Group and the Data Quality Institutes in order to build in-state planning capacity. During the 2008-2009 program year, technical assessments will be identified for the areas of administrative support and/or CIOs, construction, and health sciences and a baseline study of technical assessments currently used by postsecondary programs will be completed. Cost of assessments as well as personnel for implementation is a key feature, as only Perkins funds are available to complete these tasks.

III. Implementation of State Program Improvement Plans

Sec. 123(a)(1) of Perkins IV requires each state, that fails to meet at least 90 percent of an agreed upon state adjusted level of performance for any of the core indicators of performance described in Sec. 113(b)(3) of Perkins IV, to develop and implement a program improvement plan, with special consideration given to performance gaps identified under Sec. 113(c)(2) of Perkins IV. The plan must be developed and implemented in consultation with appropriate agencies, individuals, and organizations. It must be implemented during the first program year succeeding the program year for which the state failed to meet its state adjusted levels of performance for any of the core indicators of performance.

Please review your state's accountability data in Part D of this report. If your state failed to meet at least 90 percent of a state-adjusted level of performance for any of the core indicators of performance under Sec. 113 of Title I of the Act, please provide a state program improvement plan that addresses, at a minimum, the following items:

- *The core indicator(s) that your state failed to meet at the 90 percent threshold;*
- *The disaggregated categories of students for which there were quantifiable disparities or gaps in performance compared to all students or any other category of students;*
- *The action steps which will be implemented, beginning in the current program year, to improve the state's performance on the core indicator(s) and for the categories of students for which disparities or gaps in performance were identified;*
- *The staff member(s) in the state who are responsible for each action step; and*
- *The timeline for completing each action step.*

- Not Applicable – Alaska met its required performance levels.

IV. Implementation of Local Program Improvement Plans

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

Please review the accountability data submitted by your state's eligible recipients. Indicate the total number of eligible recipients that failed to meet at least 90 percent of an agreed upon local adjusted level of performance and that will be required to implement a local program improvement plan for the succeeding program year. Note trends, if any, in the performance of these eligible recipients (i.e., core indicators that were most commonly missed, including those for which less than 90 percent was commonly achieved; and disaggregated categories of students for whom there were disparities or gaps in performance compared to all students).

- Data reported for the transition year was compared to the state's Final Agreed Upon Performance Levels (FAUPL), i.e. the Annual Measurement Objectives for No Child Left Behind. For Core Indicators 1S1, Language Arts, and 1S2, Mathematics, this effectively reports students' proficiency on the 10th grade Standards Based Assessment, i.e. a measure of their academic proficiency as they began concentration in a CTE program. The Standards Based Assessment is also incorporated into the state's High School Graduation Qualifying Exam (HSGQE) which must be passed in order to receive a high school diploma. Nine districts did not meet 90 percent of the state performance level in Language Arts, and fourteen districts did not meet the requirement in mathematics. However, only three of these districts did not meet the graduation requirement for Core Indicator 4S1, indicating most students received the assistance necessary to be able to pass the HSGQE and graduate with their class.
- After further analysis, it was determined that the data from the three districts not meeting the target FAUPL for 4S1, graduation rate is valid but not reliable as the three districts are extremely small, and reported a combined total of nine (i.e. 2 + 2 + 5) concentrators who had left school during the reporting year. All of these districts are single-sites, and all schools met NCLB's requirements for AYP in the 2007-2008 school year. None of the schools (or districts) is currently required to develop improvement plans under NCLB. State staff will continue to offer technical assistance to these districts; although district staff were very aware of the personal situations of all nine students and reported that social risk factors were usually the most influential issues leading to a student's failure to graduate on time.

V. Tech Prep Grant Award Information

Sec. 205 of Perkins IV requires each eligible agency that receives a tech prep allotment to annually prepare and submit to the Secretary a report on the effectiveness of the tech prep programs that were assisted, including a description of how grants were awarded in the state. Please provide a description of how grants were awarded during the program year, including a listing of the consortia that were funded and their funding amounts.

Alaska chose to maintain a separate Title II – Tech Prep program because of administrative and technical assistance needs. However, it is not treated as a separate, stand-alone program but as part of a broader vision. Beginning at the turn of this new century, the Alaska Workforce Investment Board articulated a Blueprint for a seamless Alaskan workforce development system that integrates secondary and postsecondary programs with other providers whenever possible to aid students' efficiently attaining their industry-valued certificates, credentials and degrees. This philosophy was the basis for the review of tech prep in Alaska, and the development of a new approach – a statewide tech prep consortium that would coordinate with the initial efforts by various University campuses.

Tech Prep Consortium:

- During the last years of Perkins III, Alaska developed a single statewide Tech Prep Consortium model. The University of Alaska Anchorage's Career & Technical College worked with the state Technical Vocational Education Providers' group to develop a successful competitive application to serve any interested districts across the state. Working within the climate of local control at both the secondary and postsecondary level this statewide consortium evolved. It worked closely with postsecondary tech prep coordinators wherever they could be found. A statewide articulation agreement model has been developed and the UA system, which allows open enrollment, enables successful students to earn concurrent postsecondary credit and transcripts the results. During the development of the Perkins IV State Plan, it was determined by both secondary and postsecondary providers that this model should be continued and it was written into the State Plan.
- During this reporting period, all of Alaska's Tech Prep grant funds were awarded to its single statewide Tech Prep consortium, the Alaska Tech Prep Consortium. The fiscal agent is the University of Alaska Anchorage that supports the Consortium Advisory Board and employs three regional Tech-Prep coordinators, one located in Fairbanks, one in the southeast panhandle, and one in Anchorage. The Statewide Consortium coordinators continue to coordinate with the University and other sponsors' Tech Prep coordinators in an effort to make programs available to more students and administration more efficient.
- Fifty-eight percent of the local school districts provided one or more tech prep programs during this reporting year. A total of 316 articulation agreements for individual courses were reported, primarily with University of Alaska campuses, but also including 22 with the AVTEC, 20 with private institutions, and 16 with apprenticeship programs. Twelve percent of the females taking CTE and sixteen percent of the males in CTE were enrolled in one or more tech prep courses within eleven different career clusters this year. Although rare, one determined student earned his high school diploma and postsecondary technical certificate in the same week.

Please review the accountability data submitted by your state's consortia as described in Sec. 203(e) of Perkins IV. Indicate the total number of consortia that failed to meet an agreed upon minimum level of performance for any of the indicators of performance. Note trends, if any, in the performance of these consortia (i.e., the indicators that were most commonly missed, and number of years the consortia omitted the indicators).

- All performance indicators collected during this transition year were met. The new data collection requirements are being addressed; however, one year of data does not allow trend information at this time.