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;

The annual planning and data reporting processes required under Perkins IV were used by the Alaska Department of Education & Early Development Career & Technical Education Unit (EED/CTE) as mechanisms to collect information and analyze the status of local secondary and postsecondary career & technical education (CTE) programs.

Forty-three school districts, the Alaska Vocational Technical Center (AVTEC) and five campuses within the University of Alaska (UA) system completed the Perkins IV requirements and requested participation in the reporting year. All recipients reported one or more approved CTE Programs of Study (CTEPS). 2807 secondary students were enrolled in tech prep classes for concurrent credit, a 40% increase from the previous program year, and 23 districts reported technical assessment information for baseline data purposes, a 28% increase from the prior year.

On the other side of the program continuum, eleven school districts chose 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 are not in a position to develop a CTE program of study or sequence of courses.

Following a review of program documentation, five school districts, representing 12% of the districts participating in Perkins, were monitored via site visitations by EED/CTE staff. All aspects of CTE programs and facilities were observed and evaluated, and staff worked both on site and afterwards with local district staff to interpret CTE program evaluation results, and provide technical support to improve existing CTE program components and design strategies to resolve any compliance issues found during site visits. All questions were resolved.

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

The development of distance delivered CTE courses and programs continues to be a priority in Alaska, to mitigate the barriers of limited instructor resources and vast distances in the approximately two-thirds of Alaska school districts that are considered rural and are not connected to any road system.
University of Fairbanks (UAF), Tanana Valley Campus developed and conducted a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) distance course for rural districts, with the didactic portion being distance-delivered and the clinical portion being completed by bringing students into Fairbanks. The success of this class led to UAF creating a full time faculty position to teach CNA and establishing Tech Prep courses in Introduction to Healthcare Professions and Medical Terminology as foundation classes in rural districts for the distance CNA class. These classes also allow dual credit for students in other Health Science CTEPS through UAF.

The UAF-Community and Rural College (CRCD) continued its efforts to 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. UAF-CRCD also conducted 2 summer intensives in Health Sciences in rural districts, to build student interest and increase high school recruitment efforts in Health Science CTEPS and Health Science nontraditional fields (NTFs).

The Alaska Vocational Technical Center (AVTEC) developed distance-delivered instruction and testing in Applied Technologies, Maritime Engineering, Culinary Arts, and Medium/Heavy Truck-Related Studies.

The Alaska Tech Prep Consortium continued to evaluate infrastructure and develop rural capability to access distance-delivered Tech Prep courses. It utilized its Alaska website to catalog all distance-delivered CTE classes and programs.

The EED/CTE staff continued to maintain a statewide listserv to facilitate communication among local CTE program coordinators. A program support website was maintained. With the exception of signature sections, local applications and reports were processed through email. CTE staff has offered to serve as the pilot program for a total web-based application and report; however EED has not yet developed this capacity. EED/CTE is in the process of developing the databases that will support a web-based process.

EED/CTE staff continue to facilitate communication between districts and distance delivery course providers to reduce barriers in distance delivery, including strategies that use reduced bandwidth to better serve districts with limited connectivity; scheduling of distance-delivered programs that better match the high school class schedule; and developing infrastructure to assist multiple small districts to provide student participants in the same virtual classroom, where individual districts lack the student population to meet distance class enrollment requirements.

EED/CTE staff worked with Alaskan representatives of PowerSchool® Student Information System (SIS) software, the SIS program used by 60% of participating Perkins school districts, to develop a CTE overlay that can be used by districts to extract student data required for Perkins data collection. The CTE overlay was completed and released to districts via a statewide PowerSchool® update in April 2009, in time for Perkins data collection for 2008-09. EED/CTE staff will continue to work with Perkins districts and SIS representatives to improve CTE data collection capabilities in Alaska school districts to further improve the validity and reliability of CTE data collection for Perkins reporting requirements.

EED/CTE staff completed professional development that increased their capability to deliver instruction and technical support to Perkins districts through creating online presentations that can be accessed at any time on the state CTE website, and working within “virtual classrooms” to deliver professional development to local district CTE staff and administrators in real time over the internet.
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;

Attention was focused this year on recruitment, training and skill enhancement for CTE instructors. University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA), Career and Technical College continued to develop CTE instructor curriculum and conduct courses for both new and experienced CTE instructors, and continued to develop its Master’s program in Career and Technical Education. During the regular school year 198 participants were provided with CTE-specific instruction in instructional practices, content area expertise, and workforce development. Its summer program provided training for an additional 22 participants.

All secondary schools have been provided with access to the WIN (Worldwide Interactive Network) instructional software that focuses on the academic foundation 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 16 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, as well as CTE administration and program improvement in the February CTE Coordinators’ Work Session.

EED/CTE conducted several workshops that provided technical assistance in developing Career & Technical Education Programs of Study (known in Alaska as CTEPS). A common CTEPS template for use by school districts was developed with input from district representatives, and disseminated to school districts and interested CTE staff.

EED/CTE staff developed and piloted a distance-delivered course through the University of Alaska Anchorage on Developing Career Planning Strategies in K-12 curriculum, using components of several online sites provided by State EED at no charge to all Alaska districts and residents, including the Alaska Career Information System (AKCIS). As a result of this class, five Alaska school districts were recruited to pilot career development activities for students in their districts using different modalities that reflected the diverse resources, delivery models and needs of the wide range of both rural and urban Alaska school districts.

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 No Child Left Behind and the High School Graduation Qualifying Exam.

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 foundational skills required for post-secondary education and
virtually all careers. 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.

EED/CTE contracted to research and align specific career development activities available to all Alaska school districts through the Alaska Career Information System (AKCIS) with Alaska Academic Content Standards, American School Counselor Association (ASCA) standards, Alaska Employability Standards, and National Career Development Association (NCDA) standards, to provide a foundation to integrate career development activities within academic and CTE curriculum.

EED/CTE began a joint venture with secondary, postsecondary and industry partners that is continuing in SFY 10 to establish and support science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) academies in the four largest school districts, and increase NTF recruitment.

EED/CTE continued to work with individual districts, providing sample lesson plans showing math concepts incorporated into Construction, Culinary Arts, Health Science, Manufacturing, and Transportation CTE course sequences, to demonstrate integration of academic and CTE program elements. EED/CTE is preparing to sponsor pilot of the research-based Math-In-CTE curriculum programs in 2 school districts, and is evaluating the potential for additional pilots in Reading-In-CTE and Science-In-CTE programs for districts in the future.

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;

Nontraditional fields (NTF) recruitment and retention continues to be a challenge in Alaskan rural school districts, which have limited local CTE resources and programs. In these rural districts, local demand most often directed existing CTE resources into programs in construction, transportation, or computer applications. As a result, most NTF participants in these districts are female, and have few available female mentors working within the region. Most of these districts, although physically large, have very small student populations at individual school sites, meaning NTF students don’t have many NTF peers in their individual CTE courses. NTF students achieve respectable “participant” numbers, but many don’t continue with the required classes in the sequence to become “concentrators”.

Efforts are ongoing to increase NTF enrollment, by actively recruiting NTF mentors, conducting summer “intensive” CTE sequences of one to eight weeks to develop student interest, both male and female, in NTF areas in Construction, Health Sciences, and Early Childhood Education, and provide an adequate pool of NTF students in rural areas so that upper level NTF students maintain a sufficient group of peers and mentor support to continue in rural CTE programs.

EED/CTE is also working with a variety of postsecondary and private sector stakeholders to develop STEM curriculum and STEM academies at regional centers in the state, as well as developing rural outreach, to increase interest, education and skill attainment in other NTF areas that are high skill and high wage to increase options and opportunities for all students in NTF areas.

EED/CTE contracted to have the "Don't Flounder, Get Off the Hook", an Alaskan developed NTF curriculum and supporting website, updated and links verified and/or reestablished, which included provisions for site maintenance for an additional two years.

As a response to Alaska NTF data, EED/CTE conducted a survey of CTE stakeholders to determine what resources and projects were either in development or in place to support NTF recruitment and retention in both CTE education and the Alaska workforce. EED/CTE has awarded grants to four organizations to develop and deliver NTF projects that directly support NTF recruitment at the
secondary and postsecondary level, as well as NTF projects that provide training and certification for NTF careers at the state women's correctional facility. These NTF projects are stand-alone, but they will also serve as pilots to develop models of NTF activities to be replicated in other areas in the state.

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 fourteen UA CTE pathway programs and the campus at which each 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.

EED/CTE worked with CTE stakeholders to increase secondary/postsecondary linkages with the University of Alaska system. Due to the nature of different education environments in different Alaska regions, issues in rural vs. urban K-12 education delivery, and differences in infrastructure in the three main University of Alaska campuses, and 10 satellite campuses, while work was done trying to coordinate and standardize procedures where possible, much time was also spent working with specific partners to develop local solutions and education alignments between secondary and postsecondary partners.

UA Southeast (UAS) worked on deepening its Construction CTEPS with southeastern Alaskan school districts, and developed a partnership with the US Forest Service to coordinate construction of wilderness cabins by secondary and UAS students in the Construction CTEPS as the US Forest Service begins to replace 73 cabins in the Tongass National Forest.

UA Fairbanks (UAF) Bristol Bay Campus worked to leverage local funding resources to provide no cost coursework to 265 high school students in the Southwest Alaska region, and also developed driver’s training classes for secondary students. Driver’s training isn’t available in many of the villages served by UA BBC, but a driver’s license is a necessary requirement for many of the construction and other occupations available in the region.

UAF-CRCD entered into a partnership with Interior Alaska Area Health Education Center (Interior AHEC), a Federally funded organization that is designed to recruit students for the health care professions, to develop programs and infrastructure to recruit residents from rural villages into healthcare professions, to help meet the needs of underserved and under-represented populations in rural Alaska.

AVTEC partnered with the UA system to align its technical programs, which are designed to be stand alone and lead to specific certifications, with UA curriculum to offer students University credit as well as AVTEC program completion, and create pathways where students can obtain specific certifications and training at AVTEC to meet specific occupational goals, but gain the ability to work toward additional education and University certificates or degrees in the future as their educational and career goals evolve.

The Alaska Workforce Investment Board (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.
The filling of an education specialist position at DOLWD, working directly under the AWIB director, has increased the ability of EED and DOLWD to work together to better align the CTE goals of the state with the workforce development goals of DOLWD. In addition, a new state Apprenticeship Coordinator position works with the AWIB, EED/CTE, local school districts and employers to expand the opportunities for school to registered apprenticeships.

7. Serving individuals in state institutions;
Hiland Mountain Correctional Center continued and expanded their program as a Certified Testing and Training Facility for Microsoft Office software. In the reporting year two additional sites, Wildwood Correctional Center and Anvil Mountain Correctional Center, received certification for testing. Both new sites are dual certified for Microsoft Office 2003 and 2007 and IC3. During the reporting year, 37 inmates passed at least one MOS certification exam; 13 earned MOS Specialist Certification, 1 earned MOS Master Certification, and 22 passed IC3 level tests.

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 implemented the Alaska Career Ready program. In the reporting year discussions were begun between EED/CTE and Nome Youth Correctional Center to develop a career planning curriculum for its clients. EED/CTE is continuing to provide resources and training for staff to implement the curriculum, to evaluate the program and possibly recommend it for implementation in other Alaska correctional facilities.

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 CTE programs, including recruitment, retention, and academic and occupational skills training for high-skill, high-wage occupations. Technical assistance activities and annual report narratives indicate the construction cluster has been most successful in reaching special population students. EED/CTE evaluated data contained in program recipients End-Of-Year reports to identify barriers to postsecondary education and career attainment in special populations, and prioritized the most significant barriers for mitigation efforts in the reporting year.

Lack of funding was specifically identified as a barrier to seeking postsecondary education training and credits in rural districts with large economically disadvantaged student populations, even when postsecondary credit opportunities are available in their secondary CTE curriculum and dual credit can be obtained at significantly less cost.

UAF- Bristol Bay Campus used Perkins funding to leverage other regional funding sources and provide no-cost coursework and dual credit for 265 high school students in the region, developing infrastructure and procedures that can be used as a template in other rural areas to mitigate barriers to postsecondary education in economically disadvantaged populations.

Multiple strategies to address barriers to NTF populations have been implemented, including developing short term “intensive” sessions in NTF careers to develop student interest and provide opportunities for skill development, recruitment of NTF mentors to support NTF students in rural areas, and development of additional NTF pathways for all students, including Health Science and STEM pathways.
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.

EED/CTE staff redesigned reporting documents so that districts will report end-of-year accomplishments and support the next year’s Perkins funding request on one inclusive form, to streamline the reporting process and assist EED/CTE staff in evaluating past performance with CTE program requests.

Five school districts were visited during the fall of the 2008-2009 school year and received direct technical assistance in CTE curriculum and program development. Twenty-four additional districts received individual technical assistance through direct contact by phone and/or multiple electronic interactions.

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 input batches of student names and id’s for testing purposes, and conduct weekly webinars for interested districts and staff.

CTE Program of Study (CTEPS) - EED/CTE staff, working with input from local CTE coordinators and staff, developed and released a CTEPS template that illustrates all secondary and postsecondary components and outcomes in a manner that clarifies the CTEPS for CTE staff, parents and students, and can be used as a model for students to build individualized CTEPS that address their specific career interest and education plan. EED/CTE staff worked with staff in 23 school districts to use this template to illustrate the districts’ current CTEPS, and worked to develop additional postsecondary opportunities with districts and DOLWD, specifically including apprenticeships as additional pathway opportunities for students.

In addition to two sets of face-to-face work sessions – regional meetings in the fall and a statewide meeting in the winter – teleconferences were held to clarify common conditions and develop proposals and recommendations. Four 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.

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 in Alaska. Through a 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 DOLWD 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 Alaska Gasline Inducement Act (AGIA) Training Strategic Plan includes several goals and strategies that incorporate K-12 career guidance, provided in coordination with EED and DOLWD. EED staff trained WIA youth grantees in using career clusters and pathways for career guidance.

EED/CTE developed and delivered an effective distance class in Developing Career Planning Strategies that will be repeated on an annual basis. EED/CTE staff developed plans with 5 local districts to pilot sequences of career planning activities in the areas of student self-assessment, employability skills, and education plan development utilizing different mechanisms of program delivery, i.e., delivery in advisories by all teaching staff, delivery by counselors only, asynchronous delivery of activities for distance-delivered curriculum, and delivery in urban, rural single site, and rural multiple small site settings. Professional development and technical support will be provided to district staff by EED/CTE during the year, and each pilot program will be evaluated as part of a larger state initiative to develop career development programs for adoption by other Alaska school districts.

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 registrars developed a standardized template and protocol for dual credit courses including tech prep programs. This model 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 has contracted for financial support and technical assistance to the state’s career and technical student organizations (CTSOs). Four organizations collaborated to hold a common student assessment conference for 227 students and 26 advisors. Another CTSO, SkillsUSA, held a separate conference due to scheduling conflicts, with 111 students and 17 advisors. In addition to the assessments, students participated in over 30 workshops on common topics, and competed for 27 scholarships from postsecondary education institutions and industry partners, more than double the number of scholarships offered the previous year. In addition, the University of Alaska Fairbanks supports leadership training and a state conference for the state FFA chapters.

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.

In addition to contracted CTSO support, EED/CTE staff provided additional technical support and professional development workshops to both CTSO adult advisors and CTSO student participants.
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). EED/CTE staff participated in initial meetings held by the Alaska Process Industries Career Consortium to seek ways to support stronger STEM programs at the high school level, including potential career academies.

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;**

In the preceding year, the Alaska Tech Prep Consortium evaluated two postsecondary programs that established partnerships with rural school districts, and piloted various delivery systems for early childhood and health services. The recommendations developed over the course of this pilot project were addressed in continuing partnerships in the reporting year:

- **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.

  Planning for distance-delivered postsecondary programs in the reporting year included much more preplanning between secondary and postsecondary staff, and progress was made in developing improved infrastructure for program development and delivery.

- **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.

  Information was provided to local staff to help them better inform and evaluate potential students in these pilot programs. A new UAF-CRCD course was developed as a prerequisite for rural students to prepare them for continuing certificate-level classes in the Health science curriculum. In one pilot, Introduction to Health Occupations and Medical Terminology were also added as prerequisite classes for continued participation in the distance-delivered Health Science program.

- **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.

  Strategies are being developed at both the secondary and postsecondary level to address this recommendation, including providing staff with specific opportunities to improve their skills in using technology for content delivery, classroom management, and student support in distance-delivered programs.

- **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.

  Programs have been modified from Year 1 to accommodate differences in pace of delivery and scheduling in secondary and postsecondary environments. It is now recognized that some foundation classes for program success can be delivered locally or on an asynchronous schedule, and do not necessarily need to be dual credit classes to prepare a student for postsecondary program success.
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 has been addressed to take into account the work routines at the lab sites and the time needed to travel to and from the practicum experience. Program scheduling has been modified to integrate lab experience earlier in the schedule, instead of providing it after the didactic portion of the program has been presented.

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.

This issue continues to be addressed in discussions between EED/CTE, secondary and postsecondary staff.

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.

EED/CTE is providing program support, through several funding categories, to develop and evaluate distance-delivered CTE programs for eventual statewide delivery.

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

Local school districts have continued to work diligently to provide valid, reliable and timely data on their CTE programs. Local capacity varies widely, from sophisticated data warehouses and full-time data specialists to situations where the local department chair is tabulating information from student transcripts or teacher grade books. The burden of data gathering and reporting requirements has been identified by some districts as the primary reason for choosing to not apply for Perkins’ funding.

EED/CTE 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 the web site that aggregates and reports data reports by district. This work continues to refine the data collected to describe programs of study, associated technical assessments and tech prep.

EED’s CTE Unit is working with the Assessment Unit to coordinate with the state’s unified data collection system and warehouse for the public school data. 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 NCLB reporting responsibilities promoted Perkins’ validity as the data used as administrative matches for 1S1, 1S2 and 4S1 had been checked for NCLB accuracy.

Timeliness of data availability continued to be a challenge, however, as neither secondary nor postsecondary data staffs were available to process the CTE administrative data matches until early December due to multiple other program deadlines. As a result, local school districts have limited time to develop and implement an improvement plan.

A new effort has begun to coordinate data collection and aggregation across state agencies which is addressing challenges associated with interpretations of FERPA and other data-security legislation and regulation. Memoranda of Understanding are being developed with the expectation of increased data reporting efficiencies. 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’s Research and Analysis Division cooperates in coordinating administrative matches for employment, postsecondary special populations, etc., and the Adult Education unit provides GED information.

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**

After evaluating the results of two surveys conducted of secondary and postsecondary CTE instructors during the previous year, EED/CTE worked with University of Alaska, Career and Technical College (UAA-CTC) to provide resources and conduct credited professional development courses for both new and experienced CTE instructors. Classes were developed and taught in the areas of CTE class instruction, content area expertise, and workforce development. During the reporting year, UAA-CTC reported 198 participants in its CTE instructor courses over the school year, and an additional 22 participants in its summer program.
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 provide nor require specific technical skill assessments. Its policy and procedures have, however, promoted the identification and use of third party assessments that add value to the student’s educational experience and assist in the communication between program providers. They are selected in coordination with industry, secondary and postsecondary partners. Industry-supported third-party assessments, licenses and credentials are preferred as vehicles to inform program improvement and interagency coordination and as evidence of student mastery. Future emphasis will address processes 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. Cost of assessments as well as personnel for implementation is a key feature, as only Perkins funds are available to complete these tasks.

During the reporting year, EED/CTE continued to examine available third party assessments, grouping appropriate assessments by career cluster and pathway, and provided technical support to districts to assess district program appropriate technical assessments, along with required equipment and instructor certifications required to administer assessments. The state has chosen to participate in the NOCTI offer for minimally funded states, and contracted for a set amount of assessments that are being allotted to secondary and postsecondary providers. At the end of the reporting year, 30 of the 44 participating districts (68%) reported having third party assessments in place within their CTE programs, and plans for the following year include additional third party assessment capability being sought by additional districts, both by increasing local CTE program and instructor capabilities, and by utilizing third party test managers to administer assessments.

Currently, the majority of participating districts utilize third party assessments that are administered by outside sources who charge for the assessment administration, instead of attempting to develop customized technical assessments. Although using a recognized, industry-validated third party assessment increases reliability and value to students, it has an effect on reported CTE program data. Districts with limited funding most often choose to assess only upper level students who have demonstrated mastery of the skills to be assessed, since districts generally pay for the cost of the third party assessment. This reduces the number of students reported, and increases the percentage of students who successfully pass the technical assessment, as opposed to a district that routinely assesses all of its CTE students with a standardized technical assessment.

With these caveats in mind, twenty-one school districts (a 17% increase over the previous year) reported one or more students’ passing a third-party assessment, for a state total of 288. This
represents 29% of all CTE graduates, an increase of 23% over the previous reporting year. While this represents significant improvement, EED/CTE continues to work with local districts to identify and implement valid, reliable third party assessments to both assist students in demonstrating CTE competencies and provide a tool for evaluating district CTE program delivery.
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.

The targets for two related core indicators were not met: 6S2, Secondary Nontraditional Completion, and 5P1, Postsecondary Nontraditional Participation.

A two step process followed the analysis of data. First, all sub-recipients were invited to recommend solutions to improve the recruitment and retention of nontraditional students. Secondary, grant applications were solicited for activities that would address barriers to NTF students that were identified through analysis of NTF student data of Perkins participants in the reporting year and the year previous. Conditions of grant applications were that all identified activities supported development and retention of NTF students in NTF occupations identified as high demand by the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD). Four applicants were selected, and grant awards will be issued in early January, 2010 for immediate implementation. In addition, a contract was issued to revise and support the web-based NTF exploratory program, “Get Off The Hook” (discussed in the first section of this report). Don Levine, CTE Specialist, is responsible for this process.

Hiland Mountain Correctional Center- funding to provide short term Construction trades training and certifications for women preparing for release in the state’s only female correctional facility. The grant includes funding for 1 Math in the Construction trades class, 1 40-hour Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response (HAZWOPER) course, 2 9-hour North Slope Training Cooperative (NSTC) Unescorted/H2S Module, and 1 Traffic Control Technician (Flagger) certification course. The program has the potential to reach 120 inmates per year, and will integrate with current personal and career counseling programs

University of Southeast Alaska, Ketchikan Campus- UAS-Ketchikan will recruit young women 16-20 years old from communities in Southeast Alaska for 2 intensive summer programs for women that explore NTF careers. Both programs will include both didactic and hands-on activities, and be staffed by female mentors who will also co-instruct. The first program will explore the fields of Marine Transportation, and will be called “Boating without the Boys”. The second program will be in the field of Computer Networking, and will be called “CISCO Networking Discovery”. Both exploratory programs will articulate into existing UAS-Ketchikan certification programs in Marine transportation and computer Networking, and will be taught by UAS-Ketchikan staff. The programs are designed to support 50 female students per year.
University of Alaska, Fairbanks/College of Rural and Community Development (CRCD) - UAF-CRCD will recruit and provide training and support for 10 males from villages in rural Alaska to complete college credit and certification in NTF Health Science occupations. This NTF activity will be aligned with current distance-delivered Health Science programs currently being piloted by UAF-CRCD in rural Alaska school districts.

Northwestern Alaska Career and Technical Center (NACTEC) - Recruitment for high school girls for 2 2-week intensive courses each year in Welding (identified as a high priority/high demand occupation by the Alaska DOLWD. Students will be recruited from rural villages in Northwest Alaska and will be housed in NACTEC housing facilities during the classes. Students completing the course will qualify for 3 college credits through the Tech Prep program with University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF). Classes will be staffed with identified female mentor welder who will assist in class instruction. This activity has the potential to reach 40 rural Alaska students per year.
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 Core Indicators 1S1, Language Arts, and 1S2, Mathematics, and 4S1, Graduation Rate, are determined by the state’s approved Annual Measureable Objectives for No Child Left Behind. As a result, 1S1 and 1S2 report 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. Seven districts did not meet 90 percent of the state performance level in Language Arts, and one district did not meet the requirement in mathematics. However, only two 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. All Perkins’ underperforming districts are also identified on the state’s Title I District Improvement List as Level 3 or 4. EED/CTE staff is developing a working relationship with the EED’s Alaska System of School Support, to ensure the supports provided to their target schools are also provided to the local CTE program. Consistent with statewide results, the most frequently underperforming core indicators were the nontraditional fields.

A continuing challenge is the small number of CTE concentrators reported by the majority of Alaskan school districts; 15 of the 41 participating districts reported 5 or fewer concentrators in the reporting year compared to 14 in the previous year although only 50% were the same districts. These small numbers, though valid, pose statistical issues and confidentiality barriers for publicizing program results. In keeping with protocols developed for NCLB, district data will show “met” or “not met”, but provide no number or percentages in order to ensure student confidentiality. Two years of Perkins IV data is now available to note trends. Districts may access raw data on the EED secure website with their identifier and password. State staff will continue to offer technical assistance to these districts.

Local recipients are required to review their prior year data during their application process for re-allocation funds, and prioritize the use those funds to plans to improve any area that resulted in a core indicator that failed to meet at least 90 percent of an agreed upon local adjusted level of performance. Now that two years of Perkins IV data is available, future annual applications will be required to consider the historical trends of the participant, concentrators and core indicator data and include strategies to address underperforming accountability measures.
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 related to improving the tech prep services to students and schools. As planned, the Tech Prep activities are closely coordinated with secondary and postsecondary CTE efforts, and serve as an essential partner in networking and improving CTE programs across the state. 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 with the secondary CTE programs.

Alaska Tech Prep Consortium:

- 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-nine percent of the local school districts provided one or more tech prep programs during this reporting year. A total of 301 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. Over eighteen percent of the females taking CTE enrolled in one or more tech prep courses within eleven different career clusters this year, a 53% increase over the previous program year. Almost eighteen percent of the males in CTE were enrolled in one or more tech prep courses within eleven different career clusters this year, an annual increase of 12%. In total, including tech prep and other dual credit classes, 3460 Alaska CTE students (22% of students enrolled in CTE classes) earned 9450 postsecondary credit hours during the reporting year.

- During the reporting year, one of three tech prep coordinator positions was vacant for a substantial amount of time. That position has been filled, and at the time this report was filed, there are an additional 6 school districts (14% of participating districts) with no previous history of tech prep agreements who are actively working with tech prep coordinators to establish tech prep agreements and dual credit opportunities for their students.

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. Postsecondary placement information is not yet available as individual identifiers for tech prep students weren’t collected until the beginning of Perkins IV.