

Consolidated Annual Report, Program Year 2013 - 2014 Arkansas

Step 3: Use of Funds: Part A

1. During the reporting year, did your state use Perkins funds to develop valid and reliable assessments of technical skills?

Yes

Arkansas' Career and Technical Education End of Course Assessment System is financed with Perkins funds. Core courses in each of the programs of study are tested each year. Assessments, aligned to our curriculum frameworks and national standards, are developed by curriculum experts and industry leaders. PCG Education provides online hosting and reporting for schools across Arkansas. With this online system, teachers receive immediate feedback on class and individual student performance. The system also provides detailed state level reporting. In our ongoing effort to develop valid assessments, a comprehensive statistical analysis of assessment data is completed yearly. Assessment items not meeting performance, reliability, and quality standards are removed from item banks.

In November of 2013, all areas of CTE (state personnel and teachers) met to revise/create curriculum and assessment items in order to validate technical skills of the CTE students. Revision/new frameworks and assessments were written to stay-up-to-date with the ever changing CTE/workforce skills. The new template for the frameworks incorporated the addition of the Common Core State Standards, Common Career & Technical Core Career Ready Practices, and National Standards. As frameworks were reviewed and revised during the 2013-2014 year, the standards for the previous 3 standards were added

The State of Arkansas has not established common statewide technical skills assessments for any postsecondary career and technical programs. Local Perkins recipients use a variety of third-party assessments but use is not standardized across colleges or across program areas. Unused funds from 2013-14 will be distributed through a reserve fund to have fully aligned programs of study in welding and the creation of common assessments will be part of that process.

2. During the reporting year, did your state use Perkins funds to develop or enhance data systems to collect and analyze data on secondary and postsecondary academic and employment outcomes?

Yes

With the ongoing improvements for the states PCG Assessment System, the state will provide the tools and skills necessary to use the data from our CTE assessments to make effective instructional decisions for all student populations at the local and state levels.

Funds were used for development and production of Perkins accountability reports by the State's longitudinal data system. Analysis of the Associate of Arts in Teaching and all Associate of Science programs were also provided for use in determining whether these programs should remain Perkins eligible.

Consolidated Annual Report, Program Year 2013 - 2014 Arkansas

Step 3: Use of Funds: Part B

1. During the reporting year, how did your state assess the career and technical education programs funded under Perkins IV?

A team of ACE staff makes an on-site visit to each local CTE program on a rotating cycle – approximately 20% of the districts are visited each year. The team reviews the instructional plan and curriculum, classroom and laboratory equipment, instructional materials, and documentation regarding advisory councils and CTE student organization activities. The team makes recommendations and provides technical assistance as needed. The on-site visits also include a discussion with the school administration regarding the definition of approved programs of study, the use of Perkins funds, and the involvement of the school leadership in the decision-making process – particularly within the Perkins consortia. The district's achievement on the Perkins performance indicators is also reviewed and discussed with the administrators.

In addition to the on-site monitoring, a desk audit is conducted on every CTE program each year to ensure that the schools are offering the courses that comprise state-approved programs of study. This annual review includes a check to ensure that the programs each have an active career and technical student organization and that the teachers in programs that have end-of-course technical assessments actually do assess their students. The end-of-course assessments are a reasonable indication of how closely the teacher followed the frameworks for the course (what students should know and be able to do).

Supplemental monitoring over and above the annual compliance review was conducted with ten recipients. Recipients were selected based on risk factors such as size of grant, tenure of coordinator, percent of grant unused, number of amendments, timeliness of requests for reimbursement and improvement plan status, and timeliness of annual plan.

The Department of Career Education (ACE) publishes a CTE status report for each district - basically a school report card for CTE programs each year. The report has been very well received and caused a great number of administrators and teachers to view their programs more objectively. Among the indicators in the report card are several of the core performance indicators for Perkins: academic attainment, CTE skill attainment, graduation, and placement.

The local recipients must provide an annual accountability report prior to receiving Perkins funding for the next year. The accountability report specifies what the local recipient accomplished with the funds during the previous year. Staff members review the accountability reports as part of the annual approval process for Perkins funding in the following year.

Disaggregated data use: The special population group of Economically Disadvantaged is the largest category each year. In the 2013-2014 reporting year the percentage of ED was 55% (up from 50% in 2012-2013) of concentrators/participants in CTE classes. The literacy improvement plan implemented two years ago is not only helping to improve the proficiency for all concentrators – it is also helping all categories of the special populations reported in the CAR. Literacy proficiency for all CTE concentrators improved by 4.44% from 2012-13 to 2013-14 while literacy proficiency for the Economically Disadvantaged students improved by 4.55%. Although the CTE concentrators continue to be lower in Literacy (69.18% for CTE and 72% statewide) than all Arkansas students, the gap is closing. The Limited English proficient CTE students and the Nontraditional Enrollees have experienced similar growth. The Nontraditional Enrollees generally have a higher proficiency on all but one of the performance indicators for 2013-2014. The one indicator that did not meet the 90% threshold was in Nontraditional Completion compared to all CTE concentrators. Geometry scores for CTE concentrators averaged 77%, while the state average was 74%.

State postsecondary level staff conducts comprehensive annual compliance reviews on every campus where Perkins funds are expended. Preparation for these reviews includes analysis of special population performance which is then discussed with local recipients. The discussion also includes ways for improving the collection of special population information that is self-reported by students. Additional site visits for technical assistance are scheduled based upon size of local grant or other factors warranting extra attention. The site visit includes a review of programmatic elements, fiscal controls, review of equipment purchases and discussion of program elements with staff involved with Perkins funded activities. The performance review includes analysis of previous year's results from which state level staff provides technical assistance and guidance for development of future programs. State staff monitors local recipients throughout the year in the areas of programs, data collection, and financial accountability and meets as requested with local Perkins implementation teams. Seventeen regular compliance reviews were conducted in 2013-14.

Supplemental monitoring over and above the annual compliance review was conducted with four recipients. Recipients were selected based on risk factors such as size of grant, tenure of coordinator, percent of grant unused, number of amendments, timeliness of requests for reimbursement and improvement plan status, and timeliness of annual plan

The Arkansas Department of Higher Education (ADHE) reviews all existing programs offered by public postsecondary institutions on a 7-10 year review cycle. CTE program reviews include both local and out of state industry experts that hold licensure or certification in the field.

2. During the reporting year, how did your state develop, approve, or expand the use of technology in career and technical education?

Act 1280 of 2013 for the state of Arkansas stated that all students will be required to complete an online digital learning class prior to graduation. Career Ready 101 Online is the first course provided through CTE to meet Act 1280. Various other CTE courses have been approved by the Arkansas Department of Education to be taught online in accordance with Act 1280.

The partnership with Microsoft and Certiport has enabled CTE students to certify in the Microsoft Office Specialist certification areas. CTE teachers have had opportunities to train (fact-to-face, webinar, etc.) on the Microsoft IT Academy/Certiport concept plus the chance to certify themselves and other school employees with MOS certifications. The number of nationally recognized certifications for students doubled from 2012-2013 to 2013-2014. With the Microsoft IT Academy curriculum offered to the state, ACE has encouraged all schools to share the curriculum with all staff to encourage the use of technology district wide. With these certifications, several students from the state have competed nationally and globally receiving various awards.

The Department of Higher Education (ADHE) also had success with the partnership of the Microsoft IT Academy and Certiport Testing. This was purchased with state leadership funds for three institutions. The license for Academy allowed usage of a DreamSpark account and access to various server and client computer operating systems, including a version of Windows not yet on the market. Many of our students use DreamSpark resources to build their own network study environments as they become more familiar with Microsoft networking and Enterprise Administration. Certiport Testing availability for instructors and students ensures certification in key areas of Microsoft technology. The IT Academy Curriculum prepares students for seven industry certifications with the last one being the Microsoft MCSE

Arkansas is continuing its joint venture with the national SREB Program of Study initiative. Arkansas has selected Advanced Careers: Innovations in Science and Technology as its career pathway to develop through this initiative. Over 40 business and industry, higher education, and secondary leaders have met to develop the pilot curriculum that will begin in grades 9 and 10. Three schools are still involved in this project and have completed the summer teaching training institute, Course 1 (Nature of Science & Technology), and Course 2 (Core Applications of Science & Technology-Fall 2014) school year. Perkins reserve funds continue to support this initiative. Courses 3 and 4 will be completed in 2014-2015.

ACE had been researching the need for revisions to the current pathway of instruction leading to technology competency, as well as the need to offer more direct instruction in keyboarding at the lower levels due to technology skills found in the Common Core State Standards and the student requirements on next generation assessments for those standards. Arkansas Department of Education has been collaborating with ACE in planning for needed revisions based upon the research. There was a reorganization of curricula for the technology usage of the students. This change in curricula was optional for the 2013-2014 school year. It included moving keyboarding instruction down to the lower grades and adding new courses to the secondary curriculum. These new courses will enhance and refine the technology skills needed for the implementation of Common Core State Standards and will have a very positive impact on the education of all Arkansas students. It would then add higher rigor and relevance to the secondary students. An implementation plans were sent in and approved by the ACE staff for those LEA's that wanted to implement the new classes for the 2013-2014 school year. The International Society for Technology in Education standards were used as a resource to this change in instruction.

At the postsecondary level, approximately twenty-nine percent of basic grant funds were used to purchase equipment for use by students in the classroom to prepare them for the level of industry technology they will encounter upon employment. Program areas with significant investments included allied health, multimedia, welding, HVAC, robotics, industrial technology, electrical, and automotive. Additionally, investments were made in computer labs, notebooks, interactive learning systems, and web-based instruction to enhance the technical infrastructure of instructional delivery systems.

Many institutions provided industry specific technology for their CTE programs. Additionally, blended courses utilized Blackboard and online student services. Examples of equipment in a specific CTE area are the medical carts for simulation training for nursing. Other simulators include Sim people or manikins for patient instruction. Tablets were utilized by instructors.

In Machining, 3D printers allowed the Computer Aided Design classes to print prototypes, keeping them at the cutting edge of machining technology. iPads were purchased to allow paramedic students to practice documentation on patients and for enhancing entrepreneurial programs. Funds were also used to equip a Mechantronix lab to replicate an industrial work floor.

3. During the reporting year, what professional development programs did your state offer, 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? On what topics?

During the 2013-14 school year, a joint initiative with the Department of Career Education, the Arkansas Department of Education, and the Southern Region Educational Board continued – the Literacy Design Collaborative and the Math Design Collaborative. Since Literacy is a focus of our Perkins state improvement plan, we are focusing our description on the Literacy Design Collaborative in this report. The Literacy Design Collaborative offers a viable implementation strategy to schools and districts striving to implement the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and increase the college and career readiness of students. This strategy addresses both the need for increased student achievement and the development of a more collaborative learning-centered culture. The Literacy Design Collaborative (LDC) has the potential to simultaneously build the capacity of both students and teachers. The LDC framework helps improve student ability to read and write by scaffolding reading, writing, and content with tiered assignments. Individual tasks can be made simple or complex by varying the task demand, with up to three tiers of difficulty. The teaching task, which is both relevant and rigorous, engages students in subject specific reading, research, and writing and requires the application of content knowledge to a new scenario. The LDC framework is not a one-day event, but a multi-day extended system that helps students develop literacy skills to address rigorous content. College and career readiness is critical for today's high school students. However, a gap exists between current levels of high school achievement and the demands of college and the work world. LDC focuses on a critical piece of the achievement puzzle with its focus on high quality collaboratively developed assignments aligned to the Common Core. The goal for this initiative is that all teachers will be responsible for the instruction of literacy and not just the English Language Arts teacher. Through this process a team of teacher leaders will be trained to go back to their respective schools and train other teachers in their discipline to implement LDC as an instructional strategy to increase literacy scores and to close the achievement gap. ACE has supported LDC and MDC through state staff involvement and state leadership funds for professional development. In addition, several district/school level CTE leadership and teachers have begun participation in one or both of the Collaboratives. Our goal with Arkansas Department of Education had been to have all high schools implementing LDC as our literacy improvement strategy; however, at this time only one third of the schools are in full implementation. Our goal is move all schools to this strategy, but there is not a state mandate that school districts must participate in a particular program, which has hampered the implementation statewide.

ACE staff provides inservice training opportunities for CTE teachers during the summer months – much of which is specific to the technical area taught. Companies that had partnered (Microsoft, Certiport, WISE, etc.) with CTE also provided necessary professional development opportunities that were arranged with the CTE staff.

New teachers are provided with inservice training on using the CTE program frameworks (what students should know and be able to do). The frameworks incorporate the national standards, and the student competency testing program is directly tied to these frameworks. As new standards are published from the various national projects, the frameworks are updated, along with the competency tests, and teachers are provided with training.

ADHE met with several professional development coordinators from college campuses to identify needs. In order to serve various schedules—particularly adjunct personnel—a plan for an online, on-demand professional development portal was developed. Three colleges currently serve as pilots using the portal during the 13-14 year. The portal features on-demand webinars with assessments.

ADHE convened college career development advisors and provided them with technical assistance on working with postsecondary students to increase employment opportunities. Reference material was provided for use in improving the skills of staff working with students prior to graduation and to develop longer term strategies for job placement services offered by the colleges.

Funds were used for certification of instructors in their CTE program area. This increased their skills and knowledge for improved instruction and also equipped them to administer assessments leading to nationally recognized certifications for students in their occupational area. Program areas included welding, construction technology, and hospitality.

4. During the reporting year, how did your state provide 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?

The Razorback Solar Boat Summer Program was provided to the non-traditional students in Arkansas. Funds were used to improve the opportunities and services to Arkansas students, particularly in grades 10-12; to promote interest in STEM concepts in alternative energy, solar energy, mechanical engineering, electrical engineering, and an application of mathematics. Priority was given to students who are a part of an underrepresented population in engineering (females, minorities, first generation college students, etc.). Eighty participants were able to attend the program with the funding provided.

The Summer Engineering Camp for Girls was another way the state provided preparation for non-traditional fields. Funds were provided to improve CTE opportunities and services to Arkansas students, grades 8-9, to promote interest in engineering and reduce the stereotype that engineering is a field mainly for males. This program hopes to encourage young females to pursue collegiate careers in engineering or other STEM related occupations, in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics; and to reduce the stereotype that these fields are mainly for males. The Engineering Girl Camp for rising 8th and 9th grade girls was made available to nontraditional students in Arkansas. Forty seven students were able to attend the program with the funding provided

The Arkansas STEM Coalition's is partnering with ACE and ADHE to expose more females to the available STEM careers using state leadership. The planning stages of STEM Leadership for Girls in Grades 10-14 in Arkansas has 6 objectives ranging from establishing advisory committees at four year colleges to implementing workshops with STEM learning activities using science learning strategies and new technologies to take girls into the outside world to observe, measure, calculate, form hypotheses, and share information. These workshops will include STEM learning activities using science learning strategies and new technologies to take girls into the outside world to observe, measure, calculate, form hypotheses and share information. Project components include role-model speakers, materials and/or stipends for teachers and high school counselors and college advisors and classroom instructional materials and supplies.

A narrative report of the findings of this plan will be submitted to ACE and ADHE at the end of the 2014-2015 reporting year.

The state was a member of NAPE (National Alliance for Partners in Equity, Inc.) and used their resources as needed to develop technical assistance activities. Postsecondary recipients targeted funds to increase nontraditional awareness, enrollment and completion. Funds were used for promotional materials and staff salaries to work directly with nontraditional students.

ADHE provided technical assistance to high school and postsecondary programs to increase awareness of strategies for the recruitment and retention of females into STEM, manufacturing and the skilled trades. Campuses also host events such as Teen Girls Day where teen girls identified as needing encouragement to pursue higher education are invited to a day on campus and exposure to technical careers.

5. During the reporting year, how did your state provide support for programs for special populations that lead to high skill, high wage and high demand occupations?

The continuation of the Jobs for Arkansas' Graduates (JAG) is the secondary program that is designed especially for special population students enrolled in CTE programs. The program encourages at-risk youth to achieve high school graduation. Along with academic support, JAG also provides work-based learning experiences that will lead them to further education and training and rewarding careers. Perkins Special Needs funds of about \$193,000 were used to provide grants to support the local program activities and projects.

Last year, 2,553 students were in the senior and multi-year JAG programs. The top 10 barriers faced by the students (and each student has multiple barriers) are listed below (in order):

Lacks marketable occupational skills that are in demand in the local labor market

Having inadequate or no work experience

Economically disadvantaged as defined by public assistance, TANF, or free lunch

A past record of excessive absences as verified by school officials

Lacks motivation or maturity to pursue education or career goals

Needs transportation to and from work or school

Basic skills deficient

Mother does not work

Low academic performance

Did not pass the state proficiency exam

The JAG program in Arkansas continues to be one of the nation's top dropout prevention and postsecondary transition programs – serving young at-risk students. For the eighth consecutive year, the Arkansas JAG program received the highest 5 of 5 in national recognition of the fact that 95% (up from 90%) of the Arkansas JAG graduates either enrolled full-time in a postsecondary institution or gained full-time employment.

A student's maximum length of enrollment in the program is two years (four years if in an alternative classroom environment), depending on the application of the model. JAG may be utilized as a related option (up to one unit of credit) in any program of study. It is not a stand-alone program of study or career focus/major.

While National JAG asks that elements of their career association (National Career Association) be included in the curriculum, Arkansas requires the program specialists to provide support to the students and advisors in the student's career focus career and technical student organization. JAG students are strongly encouraged to hold membership in the student organization that represents their chosen career focus/major area. The program specialists assist the JAG students in the activities of their chosen CTSO.

The JAG model requires 12 months of follow-up after graduation, which means monthly contact with participant beginning the month of June following graduation and at least six contacts with the participant's employer/school/military recruiter. The success of the program is clearly seen in the results of the 12-month follow-up of the students.

Another program that supports economically disadvantaged students in CTE, and that is funded in part with local Perkins funds, is the Arkansas Works college and career coaches. Since 2010, the Arkansas Works program has provided college/career planning services to 49 school districts in the state's 21 poorest counties. The purpose of the coaches program is to assist students (all from families who are TANF eligible) to develop college and career plans, prepare for postsecondary education, apply for financial aid, make connections between education and careers, and transition to postsecondary education. Those 21 counties have seen an average increase of 21.85% in the college-going rate, .68% increase in the average ACT score, 32% increase in the number of students in the senior class applying for financial aid, and an average decrease of 5.03% in the remediation rate for those students entering college.

For students with physical disabilities in CTE programs, state funds are used to purchase adaptive equipment -- such as one-handed keyboards, iPads, Braille readers, etc. The items remain at the school until the student graduates and then the equipment is re-located as needed. A fund of \$50,000 is set aside for this purpose each year.

At the postsecondary level, efforts continue to increase the quantity and quality of special population activities. Technical assistance and training made local coordinators more aware of how this information will be used for program improvement and coordinators worked with local college staff to improve collection and reporting methods.

Because the single largest special population category is economically disadvantaged and because many of the other special population categories are also under-resourced, addressing issues of poverty continues to be a focus of postsecondary Perkins activities. ADHE has chosen the Bridges out of Poverty model as a means to address issues that often challenge economically disadvantaged students in their efforts to attain a credential and prepare for targeted occupations. ADHE recognizes that special population students require resources beyond what can be provided by the college and that broader community involvement is required. In partnership with the Arkansas Career Pathways Initiative (CPI) and local colleges, presentations and poverty simulations have been provided to college staff and community leaders to better link students to community resources.

6. During the reporting year, how did your state offer technical assistance for eligible recipients?

The 15 Consortia program coordinators and single LEA coordinators attended various meetings (email and face-to-face) to discuss the different types of programs/activities that have been successful in their consortia area for all areas including non-traditional and sub populations. The consortia, as well as the state, compiles a list of professional development needs for the state.

Two times a year the state provides a Perkins administrator and federal grants management meeting. This meeting is for all school administration and fiscal agents that deal with Perkins funds in both secondary and higher education. The state Perkins indicators are discussed and information is given on trends in the CTE area. Michael Brustein with Brustein & Manasevit Attorneys at Law presents on federal funding and the progress of Perkins reauthorization.

A Perkins Reference Manual for local coordinators is published to give each recipient a quick reference guide to the frequently asked questions for CTE. Technical assistance is given to consortia members and individual LEA's as requested. The local recipients and consortia members have designated ACE staff for various programs as liaison's to be their advocate when needed. ACE staff members are on call to visit and present for support as needed. ACE has an open door policy for assistance to all of the state recipients.

Postsecondary state staff members provide a variety of technical assistance opportunities. Workshops are held in the fall to focus on accountability and in the spring to focus on program improvement. Annual workshops are held for new coordinators and new chief academic officers and fiscal managers. Annual compliance visits are used to provide technical assistance to coordinators and other campus administrators and staff involved in Perkins funded activities. State staff participates in local Perkins team planning meetings to provide guidance as annual plans are developed. Training sessions are held with campus data staff to review reporting requirements and with fiscal staff to ensure compliance. Webinars are used to address specific grant management areas on an as-needed basis. The Perkins website, the Perkins Accountability Portal, and the Perkins Handbook also provide technical assistance support. Coordinators from both secondary and postsecondary met jointly to discuss common issues such as programs of study, meeting needs of industry, changes in state legislation, regional advisory boards, and preparation for upcoming changes in fiscal oversight requirements.

7. Serving individuals in state institutions

Part I: State Correctional Institutions

Amount of Perkins funds used for CTE programs in state correctional institutions:

39153

Number of students participating in Perkins CTE programs in state correctional institutions:

100

Describe the CTE services and activities carried out in state correctional institutions.

Services/activities: Two institutions received grants: (1) The Arkansas Department of Community Correction provided welding programs at the Southeast Arkansas Community Correction Center for adult females and the Southwest Arkansas Community Correction Center for adult males. (2) The Southeast Arkansas Regional Juvenile Treatment Center at Dermott implemented a work readiness program for incarcerated youth

Part II: State Institutions Serving Individuals with Disabilities

Amount of Perkins funds used for CTE programs in state institutions serving individuals with disabilities:

74885

Number of students participating of Perkins CTE programs in institutions serving individuals with disabilities:

130

Describe the CTE services and activities carried out in institutions serving individuals with disabilities.

Services/activities: Two state institutions received grants to improve their CTE programs: (1) The Arkansas School for the Blind, a state-supported school for public school age children with visual impairments, purchased computers and JAWS software for one of the CTE programs and provided professional development to the CTE teachers. (2) The Arkansas Career Training Institute, a postsecondary institution operated by the Arkansas Department of Rehabilitation Services, made technology improvements to the Welding, Graphic Communications, Culinary Arts, Cosmetology, and Certified Nurse Assistant programs.

8. During the reporting year, did your state use Perkins funds to support public charter schools operating career and technical education programs?

No

9. During the reporting year, did your state use Perkins funds to support family and consumer sciences programs?

Yes

Arkansas' Family and Consumer Science (FACS) programs are supported by 1) expanding and improving public knowledge and understanding of the advantages of a FACS education, 2) promoting partnerships with post-secondary education and community stakeholders, 3) by advocating and encouraging meaningful leadership for both teachers and students, 4) promoting higher standards of educating students and training teachers, and 5) recognizing and honoring individual contributions to the field of Family and Consumer Science education. The focus on literacy in the classroom using MAX Teaching Strategies and the Literacy Design Collaborative model is encouraged as a means to promote student achievement in the classroom, in a career, and in life. The use of Perkins funding to support the addition of current, relevant technologies and curriculum to promote CTE skill mastery while integrating Common Core State Standards is strongly encouraged. It is the goal of the state staff to provide relevant and rigorous standards with meaningful links to college and career readiness that result in a pathway to a family-sustaining wage

10. During the reporting year, did your state use Perkins funds to award incentive grants to eligible recipients for exemplary performance or for use for innovative initiatives under Sec. 135(c)(19) of Perkins IV?

No

11. During the reporting year, did your state use Perkins funds to provide career and technical education programs for adults and school dropouts to complete their secondary school education?

No

13P. During the reporting year, did your state use Perkins funds to provide assistance to individuals who have participated in Perkins assisted services and activities in continuing their education or training or finding appropriate jobs?

Yes

All Perkins recipient colleges provide career placement services and ten of those colleges used Perkins funds to supplement existing services. Services included career coaches and career development facilitators, career fairs and other employment preparation activities, use of technology programs to link students to potential employers and resume preparation, and creation of internship programs.

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Arkansas

Step 3: Use of Funds: Part C

1. During the reporting year, how did your state provide 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 department continues to provide many resources and funds to assist Career Academy development in Arkansas. In conjunction with Arkansas Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (AASCD), the department provided funds for those schools interested in beginning a career academy to attend the Arkansas Career Academy Conference which was available for school teams to further plan for implementation of career academies. For those school districts wishing to implement career academies, planning grants were made available. The planning grants for Career Academies would include \$10,000 for planning phase, \$30,000 for implementation phase, and \$10,000 for demonstration phase. In the 2013-2014 year, around \$200,000 was provided for planning Career Academies and over \$200,000 was provided for the implementation of Career Academies

Arkansas's High Schools That Work initiative is recognized as a school improvement model used by schools that have been identified as in academic distress by the Arkansas Department of Education as well as being used by high performing districts. ACE continues to provide funding for assessments and program improvement activities and data in-service for schools to better use results from the HSTW assessments. The reporting year 2013-2014 was a assessment year for HSTW and ACE continued to support this endeavor by funding the cost of each HSTW site assessment process. The current cost is \$44 per test, with ACE paying for 60 assessments per HSTW site. There are 48 HSTW sites in the Arkansas HSTW network.

Through the integration of the Literacy Design Collaborative (LDC) in the CTE and academic curriculum, ACE has aided academic and technical skills for all students in Arkansas. LDC is a task-based system that aligns Common Core State Standards for Literacy, Content Area Academic Standards, and formative assessment with instruction around a common assignment. The system is comprised of tasks, nodules, and courses. LDC uses a common literacy framework that helps teachers embed quality literacy tasks and instruction into their course work. The framework combines reading and writing with content in any course or curriculum. This strategy addresses both the need for increased student achievement and the development of a more collaborative learning-centered culture. This model can be used with all disaggregated categories of students including Special Education students. The state was placed on a Literacy Improvement Plan for the 2013-2014 school year. The state met its target for Literacy for the 2013-2014 data collected for this report. The number of individual State Improvement Plans in Literacy decreased from 28 (201-2013) to 10 (2013-2014). The state feels that the increased focus on Literacy with the LDC model helped the state and individual recipients to achieve its 90% of its state adjusted level of performance for the 2013-2014 year. The individual state improvement plans for five of the six indicators dropped from an average of 25% in 2012-2013 to 9% in 2013-2014.

One area of ACE revised their curriculum to encourage the use of Common Core and its impact on secondary students. This impacted the secondary students by adding several courses that stressed higher rigor and relevance while disseminating prior courses down to lower grades. This was the case in the area of Business and Marketing. With this achieved, the Business and Marketing area was able to add additional classes with higher rigor and relevance to the curriculum frameworks.

In discussion with business and industry, the Career Development area revised its curriculum to include those "soft" skills that business and industry had indicated were needed in the current work force. The Career Ready 101 curriculum is a result from those discussions with business and industry.

National certifications have been stressed by business and industry to the state level as a “step-up” for the applicant with the added skills that the certifications will definitely add to the job seeker’s portfolio. Certifications for Arkansas CTE students are listed below (but not limited to):

- *Adobe Certified Associate (several areas)
- *ASE Automobile (several areas)
- *Career Readiness Certificate
- *CAN Certified Nursing Assistant
- *First Aid/CPR/AED
- *Microsoft Office Specialist/Expert (several areas)
- *OSHA 10 hour
- *WISE Financial Literacy

Over 3,312 certifications were achieved in 2013-2014.

Post-secondary campuses host academic learning centers where Perkins funded staff tutor students and promote independent and effective learning. Additionally, many Perkins funded Student Success Coordinators act as tutors and mentors, improving and maintaining retention, student success, exam scores and technical skill attainment.

At several campuses, CTE courses are required to embed general learning objectives. There are many examples of AAS degrees that required general education core courses. These courses are used as a foundation for the occupational curricula to support or build upon the basic technical concepts of the program. Technical program improvements at one college improved stackability of the CP>TC>AAS in the areas of engineering technician, network systems administration, construction technology and automotive service technology.

One institution used Perkins funds to redesign its website to be more CTE friendly and improve the ease with which CTE students can access career path information and find critical information needed to make informed career path decisions.

2. During the reporting year, how did your state support 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.

The EMSI Labor Market Analysis website was utilized beginning the 2013-2014 school year. The Department of Workforce Services helped ACE acquire a 10 site license to aid DWS, ACE, and the Arkansas Economic and Development Coalition to coordinate the same data for all concerned parties. With this system, ACE was able to disseminate employment data for the consortia and single LEA for the state. This information was used extensively in the development stages of the regional advisory committees. With the use of this system we will help build a better workforce and improve the economic conditions in the regions of Arkansas.

ACE along with ADHE is helping to organize Regional Business and Industry Advisory Councils among secondary and postsecondary education institutions and cooperatives, state agencies, economic developers, and employers to improve alignment between training and jobs thereby closing the skills gap and improving the economy as well as the transition in education to employment for CTE students.

With leadership from state legislators and input from business and industry, efforts are being pursued that will better align education and job training programs. No policy changes have emerged as yet but a foundation has been built for consideration in upcoming legislative sessions. Perkins secondary and postsecondary staffs were actively involved in this process.

Business and Marketing staff partnered with the Arkansas Economic Federation and Connect Arkansas both subsidiaries of Arkansas Capital Corporation a venture capital group who has been partnering with Governor to increase E-Commerce in Arkansas. We partnered with them to provide curriculum in schools to teach additional Entrepreneurship Education and E-Commerce training. In addition, the Business and Marketing section continues to provide Microsoft IT Academy training through their statewide partnership in order to make industry certifications available to Arkansas students. The staff is also partnering with WISE (Working in Support of Educations) and DECA to provide WISE Financial Literacy certifications to students at the state leadership conference.

FACS state staff has partnered with the National Restaurant Association and the University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service to provide ServSafe training and certification for FACS teachers and students. Partnering with the Arkansas Dietetics Association and post-secondary institutions, a new Dietetics Program of Study will be offered in the 2015-16 school year. Arkansas' FCCLA organization supports Share Our Strength: No Kid Hungry, as part of the National FCCLA Outreach project to end childhood hunger in America. Through an ongoing partnership with the U.S. Rice Federation and the Arkansas Rice Federation, FACS teachers are offered chef training and curriculum for classroom enrichment, while FCCLA's ongoing partnership with the Rice and Diaper Depot continues to provide much-needed financial and material support

3. During the reporting year, did your state use Perkins funds to improve career guidance and academic counseling programs?

Yes

Since 2008, over 500 Career Development Facilitators (CDFs) have been trained in the state. CDFs are spread throughout state's secondary schools and postsecondary institutions, Workforce Development Centers, and the Arkansas Rehabilitation Services system. Some of the secondary and postsecondary schools use a portion of their local funds for the CDFs and others are being funded through the Walton Foundation in Northwest Arkansas.

Arkansas high schools are increasing participation in the Arkansas Career Readiness Certificate program with greater numbers. During the 2013-2014 reporting year, 11,245 students have logged 11,054 hours completing 6,901 pretests and passing 7,020 lessons. Twenty nine schools participated in the CRC program. Upon completion of the curriculum at a satisfactory level (level four or above) students may take the ACT WorkKeys assessments to earn the Arkansas Career Readiness Certificate at no cost to the school or student. Over 300 students achieved the Gold status in the Career Readiness Certificate for the 2013-2014 school year.

One area of Arkansas Works is the Kuder Navigator system. It is an online system that students/parents can utilize: 1) Career Planning; 2) Interest Inventories; Review Clusters, Pathways, & Careers; Postsecondary school information; and Job Seeking Tools. This portfolio can be viewed or updated at any time in the student's or parent's career timeline. My e-Portfolio is a tool that the user has to create a resume and cover letter that can be utilized and update at any time. Kuder Navigator is a great life-time tool that enhances the student's transition from school to work to career. The Kuder site is introduced to the students in the state of Arkansas at the eighth grade. The interest inventories and resumes are updated at various stages in the CTE secondary classes and are discussed during the Career Action Planning that takes place in the secondary schools. All students (and parents) are encouraged to use this system for their career updates.

At the postsecondary level, ADHE staff became certified to provide career development facilitator training and certification and the infrastructure needed to offer training was developed. Using Perkins state leadership funds in collaboration with a separate Department of Labor program, twenty four college staff have begun a nine-month training program and will complete in April 2015. A second class will begin in May 2015. Successful program completers will be awarded National Career Development Association certification.

4. During the reporting year, did your state use Perkins funds to establish agreements, including articulation agreements, between secondary school and postsecondary career and technical education programs to provide postsecondary education and training opportunities for students?

Yes

ADHE used state leadership funds to align programs of study in accordance with Perkins requirements. In choosing initial programs, consideration was given to nontraditional and high skill/wage occupations with Engineering, Automotive and Welding being chosen. Concurrent and articulated credit will be a part of the alignment process. These initial programs are pilot projects with the expectation of expansion to additional programs in future years.

5. During the reporting year, did your state use Perkins funds to support initiatives to facilitate the transition of sub baccalaureate career and technical education students into baccalaureate programs?

No

6. During the reporting year, did your state use Perkins funds to support career and technical student organizations?

Yes

Our CTSO membership in Arkansas continues to be strong under the leadership of our state advisors and staff – with a portion of the salary and support coming from Perkins funds. The 2013-14 membership of our organizations is as follows:

DECA – 2,010

FBLA – 13,714

PBL - 636

FCCLA – 8,928

FFA – 14,041

HOSA – 1,600

Skills USA – 4,300

Technical Student Association - 946

Several of our state CTE staff members hold national and state leadership positions in both student organizations as well as teacher associations: Sandra Porter, on the Board of Directors for the Career Academy Coalition; Marion Fletcher, National Treasurer of the FFA Organization and FFA Foundation; Jim Brock, President of DECA Board of Directors, Ray Henson, President of the Arkansas Career Development Association, State Division Leader of the National Career Development Association and Executive Director of the Arkansas Career Guidance Association; Barbara Dimon, National board member of the Partnership for Careers in Law, Public Safety, Corrections and Security; Dave Fisher, President-Elect of the Arkansas ACTE; and Dr. Cheryl Wiedmaier, chair of Policy Statement #94 for the Policies Commission for Business and Economic Education, member of the Communications Committee for Delta Pi Epsilon, and secretary for the Business Education Digest Foundation; Starlinda Sanders, ACTE Board Member, Guidance and Career Development

7. During the reporting year, did your state use Perkins funds to support career and technical education programs that offer experience in, and understanding of, all aspects of an industry for which students are preparing to enter?

Yes

The JAG program and work-based learning programs in various areas involve the student's interaction between business/industry. The students demonstrate on-site the competencies needed for the business/industry to which they are preparing to enter.

Several program areas have internship opportunities for the students to gain the hands on skills needed to experience the aspects of industry for which the students are preparing for. The following areas have internships: Business & Marketing, Agriculture, Skills (medical); and JAG.

Several Career Academy grants were given to recipients within two areas: 1) planning stages; and 2) implementation stages of career academies in their schools. In the belief that the success of academy students is due to the network of support that they receive from teachers, mentors, and business people that help them set long term goals and stay on a clear path. Career Academies are comprised of a group of students that takes classes together for at least two years and is taught by a team of teachers from different disciplines. They also provide college preparatory curriculum based on a career theme that helps students see relationships and connections between academic subjects and their application in the real world of work and a specific career pathway. And they develop partnerships with employers, the community, and colleges which draw upon their resources and increases opportunities for students to engage in internships and work-based learning and provides adult mentors to motivate students and spur achievement.

8. During the reporting year, did your state use Perkins funds to support partnerships between education and business, or business intermediaries, including cooperative education and adjunct faculty arrangements at the secondary and postsecondary levels?

Yes

ACE along with ADHE is helping to organize Regional Business and Industry Advisory Councils among secondary and postsecondary education institutions and cooperatives, state agencies, economic developers, and employers to improve alignment between training and jobs thereby closing the skills gap and improving the economy as well as the transition in education to employment for CTE students. The advisory councils are being implemented on a cycle that aligns with the technical assistance visits for the state. These councils will help regionalize the business/industry needs for that area of the state using the local economic data. The consortia members are assisting ACE in the planning and implementing of these council meetings. Not only are business/industry invited to attend the meetings but any postsecondary institutions in the regional area.

9. During the reporting year, did your state use Perkins funds to support the improvement or development of new career and technical education courses and initiatives, including career clusters, career academies, and distance education?

Yes

In the August of 2013, Debra Mills, a CORD consultant, presented a two day training for the ACE state staff. The state staff each received a copy of the book prior to her presentation to discuss within their areas. Her topic centered around the book, "The Career Pathways Effect, Linking Education and Economic Prosperity". The presentation was titled the "Lead/Succeed Series". The basis for the workshop lies in two important documents: 1) NASDCTEC's Reflect, Transform, Lead: A New Vision for Career Technical Education, a collection of five guiding principles to propel CTE forward, and 2) the U.S. Department of Education, OVAE's Programs of Study Design Framework, 10 components to promote consistency in implementation of programs of study at the state and local level. The state staff did a lot of reflection and self-assessment on the implementation and importance of career pathways. Also included was a Building Program of Study workshop that included discussion on the 10 components to promote programs of study.

Perkins Reserve funds were distributed to recipients for various areas for 2013-2014. The list included the implementation of the following: program of study; Career Academies; advanced career innovations; and additional Mobile Application Development programs.

10. During the reporting year, did your state use Perkins funds to provide activities to support entrepreneurship education and training?

Yes

Working In Support of Education (w|se), an educational not-for-profit, improves the lives of young people through programs that develop financial literacy and readiness for college and careers. Our Initiatives are built on five pillars – relevancy, real world experiences, strong partnerships, volunteerism, and evaluation. Perkins funds were used to take teachers to the Money Power Conference in New York City. The teachers who participated on the trip agreed to support the w|se Financial Literacy as a national certification for students.

Funds were used to revise the frameworks for both the FACS and Business/Marketing finance classes. Teachers, along with state staff, in the two areas were brought together along with a WISE certified consultant to come up with a joint finance class that would be used as a concentrator course that could be used as a FACS or Business/Marketing credit. The joint effort by both areas to educate the secondary students in building that financial literacy that would help foster business and social entrepreneurship. The class will also prepare students for college and the global workplace.

11. During the reporting year, did your state use Perkins funds to improve 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?

Yes

The Career Development Facilitator training was offered to teachers, counselors, and administrators. This training provides individuals with relevant skills and knowledge to assist others in planning careers and obtaining meaningful work. Funds were provided to those individuals to complete the training and return to their school to share their knowledge to better prepare our students in identifying their career choice.

CTE teachers, administrators, counselors, and staff were given the opportunity to attend the Arkansas CTE Leadership Academy. The focus of this academy was to inform the participants of the need for career and technical education and those skills that a leader should strive to have and to in turn, teach others. The more the academy participants understand the CTE concept and mission, the better the CTE message to the students and stakeholders will be received and embraced.

12. During the reporting year, did your state use Perkins funds to support occupational and employment information resources?

No

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Step 4: Technical Skills Assessment

Provide a summary of your state's plan and timeframe for increasing the coverage of programs entered above.

Enter the number of students assessed for technical skill attainment, and the total number of CTE concentrators reported for the program year. The percent of students assessed for technical skill attainment will be automatically calculated.

Population	Number of Students in the Numerator	Number of Students in the Denominator	Percent of Students Assessed
Secondary Students	-9	-9	100
Postsecondary Students	-9	-9	100

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Step 8: Program Improvement Plans

Extension Requested?

No

Required Program Improvement Plans

Directions: Your state has failed to meet at least 90% of the state adjusted level of performance for the core indicators of performance listed in the table below. Please provide a state program improvement plan addressing the items found in the column headings of the table below.

Core Indicator	Disaggregated categories of students for which there were quantifiable disparities or gaps in performance compared to all students or any other category of students	Action step to be implemented	Staff member responsible for each action step	Timeline for completing each action step
5P2	Both males (16.82%) and females (19.91%) were below state target of 22.25%. Whites (18.02%) and Blacks (18.78%) make up 92% of nontraditional completers, both of which are below state target. Economically Disadvantaged (21.38%) represent 35% of nontraditional completers and Single Parents (18.12%) represents 14% both of which were below state target. Compared to PYE13 results, there were drops in performance in gender, race and special populations with the exception of Unknown race and Displaced Homemakers. The top four largest recipients saw drops in performance from PYE13 which accounts for the state's failure to reach goal.	Postsecondary state staff will provide technical assistance webinars to introduce the Bibliography and will provide professional development sessions for all postsecondary coordinators. The Bibliography will be discussed on compliance reviews with colleges that are in improvement plan status for 5P1 or 5P2 and with five largest Perkins recipients.	Monieca West	05-01-15
5P2	Both males (16.82%) and females (19.91%) were below state target of 22.25%. Whites (18.02%) and Blacks (18.78%) make up 92% of nontraditional	Postsecondary recipients will also have access to the STEM Resources for Instructors Bibliography which has been purchased by the state (also	Monieca West	06-30-15

Core Indicator	Disaggregated categories of	Action step to be implemented	Staff member	Timeline
	<p>completers, both of which are below state target. Economically Disadvantaged (21.38%) represent 35% of nontraditional completers and Single Parents (18.12%) represents 14% both of which were below state target. Compared to PYE13 results, there were drops in performance in gender, race and special populations with the exception of Unknown race and Displaced Homemakers. The top four largest recipients saw drops in performance from PYE13 which accounts for the state's failure to reach goal.</p>	<p>described in 4S2 IP). The Bibliography will provide college faculty and support services staff with activities to determine female preferred learning styles and strategies on identifying female role models.</p>		
5P2	<p>Both males (16.82%) and females (19.91%) were below state target of 22.25%. Whites (18.02%) and Blacks (18.78%) make up 92% of nontraditional completers, both of which are below state target. Economically Disadvantaged (21.38%) represent 35% of nontraditional completers and Single Parents (18.12%) represents 14% both of which were below state target. Compared to PYE13 results, there were drops in performance in gender, race and special populations with the exception of Unknown race and Displaced Homemakers. The top four largest recipients saw drops in performance from PYE13 which accounts for the state's failure to reach goal.</p>	<p>Both secondary (4S2) and postsecondary (5P2) are in improvement plans. The nontraditional set aside project described in 4S2 will impact postsecondary local recipients. The project includes summer camps focused on recruiting females into STEM and other nontraditional occupations and includes professional developed for college faculty to increase retention and completion of females in these areas.</p>	Sandra Porter, Monieca West	06-30-15
6S2	<p>The largest special population of students is Economically Disadvantaged. The performance of those students dropped from 30.29% to 21.10%. The percentage for females completing a CTE program</p>	<p>Nontraditional setaside project: A project proposed by the STEM Coalition of Arkansas has been funded from the state's nontraditional setaside funds. This project has six objectives ranging from establishing</p>	Sandra Porter	06-30-15

Core Indicator	Disaggregated categories of	Action step to be implemented	Staff member	Timeline
6S2	The largest special population of students is Economically Disadvantaged. The performance of those students dropped from 30.29% to 21.10%. The percentage for females completing a CTE program dropped from 53.79% to 41.73% this year.	Local Resources Project: In November, the state purchased the STEM Resources for Instructors Bibliography for all secondary and postsecondary CTE instructors. The Bibliography contains ready-made classroom activities that are designed to appeal to female learning styles and to assist with identifying female role models and associations. The Bibliography has over 100 entries and provides information by school level, program type, and career pathway. This resource is published by the National Institute for Women in Trades, Technology and Science and contains information pertinent to other pathways besides STEM. Additional training on this resource will be provided for all Perkins coordinators in the Spring of 2015.	Maria Swicegood	03-31-15

Local Program Improvement Plans

SECONDARY: 32 (48%) of the Perkins recipients were required to file an improvement plan for Nontraditional Completion based on the 2013-14 data – compared to 22 of the recipients in 2012-13. Because of the large drop in performance, we believe that the data for 2013-14 for nontraditional completion is an anomaly. Under Perkins IV, the lowest performance has been 26.30%. The last time the performance dipped lower than this year was in 2001-02 under Perkins III.

POSTSECONDARY: 13 of 21 postsecondary eligible recipients are in an improvement plan for 1 or more core indicators; 6 are in one indicator area and 7 are in two areas. This is a decrease from 10 recipients in PYE13.