NSWG Call Summary
NEXT STEPS WORK GROUP

Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education
Division of Academic and Technical Education
Accountability and Performance Branch
Perkins Collaborative Resource Network
http://cte.ed.gov

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The Next Steps Work Group (NSWG) call was held on April 12, 2018, from 2 to 3 pm EDT.

Federal Updates | DATE Staff

Allison Hill from the Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTAE), Division of Adult and Technical Education (DATE) shared the following announcements:

1) State Plan Portal Closing Date

Denise Garland reported that the state plan portal on the Perkins Collaborative Resource Network that was scheduled to close on April 23 has been extended to April 27.

2) Introduction of Deputy Assistant Secretary Craig Stanton

Allison introduced the newly appointed Deputy Assistant Secretary for Management and Planning for OCTAE, Craig Stanton. Craig shared that he is a career official in the U.S. Department of Education (ED) who has worked in a variety of roles within most offices in the agency. His philosophy on education is rooted in his identity as a father: he sees OCTAE's services as essential to helping people and children like his do their best in the world. He is a lawyer by training and former executive coach.

Craig shared insights on the administration's priorities regarding reauthorization of the *Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (Perkins IV)*. The political and high-level leadership at the ED believe strongly in reversing the negative perceptions around career and technical education (CTE) and support a full range of educational options for students, ranging from community colleges to apprenticeships. At this time, Craig does not have information on when and how reauthorization will happen. The

administration believes that House Resolution 2353, passed by the U.S. House of Representatives during the last congressional session, is a good start toward successful legislation. The administration's priorities are 1) ensuring that the legislation allows for flexibility to use federal funds to pay for apprenticeships and other paid work-based learning (WBL) opportunities (the administration is also interested in expanding the possibilities for high school apprenticeships); 2) directing the majority of CTE funding to high schools for high-quality CTE programs aligned to in-demand fields that allow students to work and learn simultaneously; 3) prioritizing CTE offerings leading to STEM and other careers in high-demand fields; and 4) targeting funds so that school districts receive grants large enough to make a difference. The administration has proposed to do this by increasing the share of funds based on child poverty (allowing schools with higher poverty rates to receive larger grants) and by increasing the minimum grant size from $15,000 to $50,000.

Craig concluded by sharing information about a forthcoming report from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) based on results from a Fast Response survey on CTE programs in high schools. The report will provide important data on programs providing CTE in high schools, data about WBL and employer involvement and barriers to offering and participating in CTE programs. This report will be released on April 17.

Allison then handed the call back to Steve Klein of RTI International who thanked Craig for joining the call and shared that he had the opportunity to meet Craig at the Advance CTE spring meeting and was impressed by his energy, ideas, and personality and looked forward to his leadership.

3) Other call announcements

To preface the "Feel My Pain" topic, Steve asked NSWG members to think about the question "What is the biggest challenge, or "pain point," regarding CTE data in your state?" which was to be discussed in the latter half of the call.

Steve introduced Kathy Hughes of Manhattan Strategy Group to speak about the Advancing Equity in CTE Community of Practice (CoP) project she directs for OCTAE. This project builds on previous work that created open source materials to help CTE professionals reduce inequities and barriers to CTE education for students. Two activities are provided by the program to help with this: 1) a virtual CoP (accessible at https://community.lincs.ed.gov/group/advancing-equity) that provides users with opportunities to access resources and have moderated discussions about equity in CTE and 2) the second national Advancing Equity in Adult Community College Career and Technical Education Symposium which will take place July 19 at the ED in Washington, D.C. The symposium will provide an opportunity for CoP members to meet face to face and discuss ways to build capacity for equity advancement in CTE at the secondary and postsecondary levels. Announcements for registration and a call for presentation proposals will be posted on the virtual CoP page on LINCS.

Telling a Story: Strategies for Sharing Data | Nikki Churchwell (ED, Office of Planning, Evaluation, and Policy Development)

Rebecca Moyer of RTI introduced Nikki Churchwell, Education Program Specialist with the ED's Office of Planning, Evaluation, and Policy Development to speak about different ways of presenting data and to share some recent data sharing projects from the ED. Nikki leads InformED, the ED's primary open data initiative intended to create a world-class, open data infrastructure. Specifically, the ED wants to make the data it collects more accessible and usable to the public. One of the ways in which Nikki's team does this is through data stories.

At the inception of InformED, Nikki and her team identified data users and their needs: 1) "data novices," not confident in their own abilities to interpret data who are best served by having clearly outlined key takeaways; 2) "data consumers," more data savvy users able to interpret well-curated data using tools such as well-labeled graphics; 3) "data crunchers," seasoned data users who would prefer to take a spreadsheet of data and do their own analysis to find trends; and 4) "data developers," who use data to create apps and tools that access data through an application programming interface (API). They realized that, while the ED is good at providing data in spreadsheets and APIs for the data crunchers and developers, they wanted to develop a tool to make data more accessible for data novices and data consumers. A data story is a straightforward tool that can easily meet these needs.

Operationalized, a data story is a web page with interactive graphics that walks users through a data narrative with a beginning, middle, and end that uses data to shed light on a policy question. A data story helps make this data both accessible and actionable.

InformED has released three data stories to date; one on access to library materials for students (https://www2.ed.gov/datastory/bookaccess/index.html), another on rates of chronic absenteeism across the country (https://www2.ed.gov/datastory/chronicabsenteeism.html), and a final story on English learners in the United States (https://www2.ed.gov/datastory/el-characteristics/index.html).

Nikki walked the NSWG members through the data story titled "Our Nation's English Learners," focused on the central question "What are the characteristics of school-age English learners in the United States?" Three subtopics are addressed: demographics, geography, and languages spoken. This data story is a narrative with an introduction explaining more about the data context and why English learners are the subject of focus. Graphics in this data story begin with a key

takeaway and provide more information if a user hovers over a specific data point. Each graphic includes notes and sources for users requiring more information and a summary paragraph that reviews additional takeaways from the graph. Graphs include point graphs, bar charts, tables, and maps that are all interactive and show additional information. The end of the story is a summary of key findings with next steps and calls to action. Additionally, there is an endnotes section with notes, definitions, and sources for anyone requiring further information (such as data crunchers).

Nikki answered the following questions.

Q: Is there a page listing all of the data stories that have been created?

A: *They are working toward this, but do not yet have a page ready.*

Q: Is there a way to contact you when people want to look more deeply at the data in these stories?

A: *Stories are based on publicly available data. Sources can be found in the endnotes of the data stories.*

Q: Are the graphs based on dynamic or static data sets?

A: *Right now, they are fed with static data, so these serve as "point in time" pieces of information. Once the data change, the ED will consider repopulating the data story. It is considering updating the data sets for older data stories.*

Q: How are topics selected? If people were interested in doing a data story about CTE nationally, how would they go about doing that?

A: *These data stories are a part of the InformED initiative which has a steering committee made of different members from the office who work with the InformED team to decide on initiatives to increase data access based on agency priorities. Sometimes these are data stories, other times these are other products. Creating data stories is not something that can solely be done by the ED; any entity with data like this could create their own data story. It's a tool, and they encourage*

everyone to think about what data they want to make more available to their constituents.

Feel My Pain: Group Support for Issues Common to NSWG Members | Michael Tinsley (Tennessee Board of Regents)

Rebecca introduced Michael Tinsley, Director of College Initiatives at the Tennessee Board of Regents, to give an overview of common challenges states face regarding CTE data. This list of challenges was collected during Michael's presentation with Katie Graham of Nebraska at the Data Quality Institute (DQI) in November 2017. Topics included issues around sharing labor market data across state lines (collecting and using social security numbers and unique identifiers), databases for secondary to postsecondary transition, pathways or programs of study within *Perkins IV*, and the sharing of best practices around legacy programs.

Rebecca then showed the question for discussion: "What is the biggest challenge or 'pain point' regarding CTE data in your state?" and opened the floor for discussion.

The first "pain point" came from Kimberly MacDonald from North Carolina. She asked for feedback from other states on ways they collect and track data for WBL activities. Joanne Mahony from Michigan shared that CTE instructors track WBL data at the classroom level using "gradebooks" to track the amount of instruction on safety procedures and students' WBL experiences.

The next discussion point came from Lauren Dressen from Oregon. She shared that Oregon is considering streamlining its NCES codes. However, it is concerned that if it uses the National Alliance for Partnerships in Equity's (NAPE) Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) codes and streamlines old codes marked as nontraditional into newer, generic codes with no employment data around nontraditional, it might lose data on past trends. There are some concerns that the current CIP codes do not accurately represent what is taught in the course, but Lauren is concerned about breaking the link between

years in nontraditional data collection. Shinlan Liu from New Jersey shared that when *Perkins IV* was authorized, the state decided to keep the old list of codes for the entirety of *Perkins IV* to run comparisons over time to see progress. NAPE then updated its list and, in asking other states, New Jersey heard that some states were updating their own lists because, once the gender ratio of an occupation rises to over 25 percent, that program is no longer nontraditional. Shinlan wondered if this is the right thing to do or if it is better to keep the original NAPE lists. Steve commented, in response to Lauren and Shinlan's questions, that the real challenge is when a program is moved off the list, it changes the population included in the measure which can affect the trend. This can lead to a decline in performance. He asked OCTAE if it had any feedback or guidance. Jay Savage from OCTAE responded that it is a state-level decision as to what counts as nontraditional—the NAPE lists, U.S. Department of Labor lists, or an internal list developed by each state. However, this does not mean that jobs that are not listed as nontraditional on these lists could not be nontraditional in a particular state. There must be a list of what is considered nontraditional for a state with a source for determining whether it is nontraditional. Changing lists can be risky and problematic for viewing change over time. Each state should decide what works best for the state, but states must also keep an active list with justifications so that choices can be explained to OCTAE and others.

The next "pain point" came from Jean Claude Mbomeda from California who shared difficulties establishing a memorandum of understanding between the state and a third-party organization for data matching. Dave Pavelchek from Washington reported having had that problem and solving it some time ago. Washington now has agreements in place that allow for parts of the data matching process to happen with third-party organizations. Dave did not remember the process for putting these agreements in place but knew they were in place now.

The next "pain point" came from Fidelis Ubadigbo from Iowa regarding required and permissive uses of funds in the upcoming *Perkins V* reauthorization and how this will be applied to quality improvement. Jay suggested that this might be a good topic to address in an upcoming NSWG call. OCTAE does not know what *Perkins V* will do with required and permissive uses of funds, but Jay suspects that addressing gender equity in nontraditional occupations will be a part of the interest in any new legislation. He does not know what kind of data would be reported, but the idea of eliminating disparity between males and females in particular fields is of interest to Congress.

The final challenge was shared by Patrick Bell from Nevada regarding the federal employment data exchange system and whether it will be reimplemented. Jay shared that there is nothing on the horizon regarding this. He believes that it may be addressed at some point given the national attention and interest.

Closing Remarks | Rebecca Moyer

To conclude the call, Rebecca asked OCTAE for any additional updates. Allison asked members to continue to send any questions or "pain points" to OCTAE as part of planning for the DQI. Sharon Miller of OCTAE then shared that at the Advance CTE spring meeting during the week of April 2, she presented draft data from the Consolidated Annual Reports as of December 2017, along with graphs showing trend data. While these data are not ready to be formally released, the data she shared showed a dramatic drop in the performance of states for accountability measures in attainment for English language arts and mathematics. This is an area OCTAE plans to examine; it will speak with accountability specialists a little more, possibly on an upcoming NSWG call, to get some ideas from states who are doing well. Sharon also announced the release of the report containing findings from the NCES Fast Response survey of CTE in public school districts. OCTAE will be hosting a webinar to share these data. The webinar will take place on Tuesday, April 18, at 2 pm EDT; registration is available at https://cte.ed.gov/cal/cte-programs-in-

public-schools-webinar. Rebecca then introduced the topics for the next NSWG call and thanked presenters and participants for joining.

The next NSWG call will be held on June 7, 2018.

NEXT CALL:

June 7, 2018