



New State CTE Director Leadership Program

Module 1: Maximizing the Impact of Your State's Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act Allocation

Fall 2017

A Note from the Executive Director

Congratulations on being selected as the State CTE Director!

Taking on this leadership role – especially during this time of renewed interest and support for Career Technical Education (CTE) – is an amazing opportunity and responsibility. We know you have a lot on your plate. There are legislative sessions, budgets, Perkins annual reports and maybe even an impending federal monitoring visit. In short, there are fires to put out and personalities to navigate.

Through all of this, it may feel difficult to find the breathing space to step back, take stock and see the opportunity through the chaos, but I want to encourage you to do just that. Consider using this time as a new State Director to be inquisitive, and – through that inquisitiveness – challenge assumptions, ask questions, and create a path forward that helps more learners in your state find success. That is what we hope to help you do through this program.

In the context of this module, we'll focus on the *Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act* (Perkins). The federal investment in CTE is 100 years old, a strong legacy that should be honored. Sometimes, history can be misinterpreted as the way things *have* to be. Far too often, I visit a state, and someone says “Perkins requires us to do X” or “Perkins doesn't allow us to do Y.” In truth, Perkins is perhaps one of the most flexible pieces of federal education policy but only if you have the understanding and confidence to use it in that way.

During my 24 years with Advance CTE, the law has been reauthorized twice, and we are actively working to get Perkins reauthorized again in the near future. The content and questions within this module are derived from my experience of intimately working to craft the legislative language so that it meets the needs of policymakers and the CTE community alike. This module is also informed by my years of working with and supporting states as they implemented Perkins, with a goal of helping them strive to deliver the highest quality CTE for all learners.

I see my role as being both an advocate for the field but also an advocate for the learners we serve. When you see excellence in action in every corner of the nation and in every type of community, you know it's possible. We hope to inspire and support you as your advocate, partner and critical friend as you chart a path forward for your state that is progressive and fiercely dedicated to equity, access and quality.

Kimberly Green
Executive Director
Advance CTE

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How to Use the Modules

The New State Director Leadership Program is designed to fit the natural learning curve of new State CTE Directors as they explore their state CTE system as well as the policies and decisions that undergird it. To that end, Advance CTE has developed a 12-month curriculum with two in-person meetings, two webinars and intermittent optional phone calls to provide comprehensive supports to these new leaders. The program, with its curriculum, touchpoints and mentorship, is designed to allow new State Directors to access the support they need, when they need it.

This module is part of the 12-month curriculum, which is comprised of recommended and optional components, as reflected in the table below.

New State Director Leadership Program Curriculum	
<i>Recommended</i>	<i>Optional</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act - CTE Programs of Study - Employer Engagement - Data, Accountability and Evaluation - Personnel Review and Intra/Inter-agency Partnerships - Building an Action Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work-based Learning - Other Federal Acts (ESSA, WIOA, HEA) - Student Supports and Programming - CTE Instructor and Administrator Licensure and Supports - Industry-recognized Credentials - Secondary-Postsecondary Alignment

This curriculum is designed to help you be inquisitive about your state’s CTE’s current “state of play,” evaluate the responses and information you gather, see what gaps exist and determine if, how and when you may want to take action. By answering the guiding questions and adding data where appropriate, you will be able to better visualize both where you are currently and where you want to take your state system.

The modules are laid out to help you organize your thoughts and guide effective discussions with your mentor and Advance CTE staff who can help you consider and benchmark your findings, as well as provide resources, support and targeted technical assistance as you work your way through the modules.

Disclaimer: The modules do not constitute or replace legal advice. We encourage you to check with any relevant state and federal guidance and regulatory requirements to ensure compliance. Further, the examples listed within are not endorsements nor should be considered a comprehensive list.

Module Objectives and Pre-Module Survey

Module Objectives

Responsibility for administering the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act (Perkins) is a common thread that runs across all State Directors. You can choose to simply administer the act and ensure compliance. Or you can leverage Perkins to require, incentivize and support positive change to help achieve your state's vision for high-quality CTE.

Through this module, you will:

- Consider how you can use your state's Perkins allocation to advance your vision for high-quality CTE
- Review and analyze your current Perkins state plan and how it reflects your state's needs and vision
- Assess how your state currently leverages the options and flexibility provided in Perkins and determine if prior decisions are still appropriate for your state's needs, priorities and vision
 - Determine if your state is maximizing Perkins' flexible funding options to close achievement and equity gaps and spark innovation at the state and local levels
 - Analyze your state's requirements for local districts and institutions to receive Perkins funding and how those align to your state's priorities
- Access key resources and state examples to assist in deepening your content knowledge
- Identify next steps with a timeline for action and completion

Note: This module draws on the results of a 2017 Advance CTE survey that asked the states a variety of questions regarding Perkins implementation.

Pre-module Survey

To begin this module, please take this brief self-assessment:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/NewSDpre-test>

Getting Started

To help complete this module, you may want to have the following information on hand:

- Your answers to the 2017 Perkins Implementation Survey (provided to you by email from Advance CTE)
- Your current Perkins state plan
- Perkins funding information for the past three years
 - *Funding split between secondary and postsecondary*
 - *State Administration fund*
 - *State Leadership fund*
 - *Reserve fund*
- Accountability metrics as reported in your state's most recent Consolidated Annual Report, submitted to the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Career, Technical and Adult Education

Also consider who you may need to talk to in order to gather information, both inside and outside of your office.

Perkins Refresher (OPTIONAL)

If you want a refresher on the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006, also known as Perkins IV, we recommend using the resources below. If you don't need a refresher, skip to the "Inventory" section.

- Overview of Perkins IV from the Congressional Research Service: [Link](#)
- Another valuable Congressional Research Service report, this one from December 2012, provides a brief background on Perkins and performance under the Act: [Link](#)
- Another useful resource to review is Advance CTE's recommendations for the reauthorization of Perkins: [Link](#)
 - Here is the Advance CTE "[redline](#)" of H.R. 2353, which would reauthorize Perkins and passed the U.S. House of Representatives in July 2017. This document can also be found on Advance CTE's website in the Members Only [section](#)
- Advance CTE fact sheet: "[How the States Use Perkins](#)," based on the 2017 survey of states about Perkins implementation.
- The U.S. Department of Education houses all of its Perkins-related information, guidance and professional development here: [Link](#)

Inventory

Before you start the full module, we encourage you to gather key background information on your state's vision for CTE as well as the current decisions and existing systems undergirding your CTE system. Knowing and understanding the decisions your state has made previously regarding Perkins is critical to making a thoughtful evaluation of whether those decisions are still the right ones for your state's current and projected needs.

You will need to gather information regarding:

- Your state’s vision for CTE
- Your Perkins state plan
- Information on how your state allocates its Perkins resources (i.e. state administration, state leadership, reserve fund etc.)
- Key definitions

State Vision for CTE

Perkins should be used to help you achieve your state’s vision for CTE by helping to build will and momentum and provide supports to locals to ensure equitable access to high-quality CTE.

We strongly believe that it is important for the state vision for CTE to be your North Star. The progress toward the achievement of this vision is evaluated by what your data tells you. The tools you have at your disposal include but are not limited to: strong state policies; formal and informal implementation efforts; monitoring and evaluation practices; federal funding through Perkins and others; and often, state funding. Human capital is another important but often overlooked tool. You – as the State CTE Director – are also one of your state’s strongest assets, along with other key stakeholders and champions for CTE.

At times, these tools may also be barriers to overcome, especially when past practice has become understood as policy or a belief system exists that values the status quo rather advancement.

Answer the questions below in the space provided. While these questions are all optional, we encourage you to capture your thoughts here so that you can easily refer back to them.

	Key Questions	State Response
Your State Vision for CTE	What is your state’s vision for CTE?	
	Is this a shared vision across the system and among stakeholders?	
	Was the vision previously established and you are responsible for implementing?	
	Is the vision supported by a strategic implementation plan that prioritizing funding and policy to close gaps in access, equity and performance?	
	Is the vision open for revision? If yes, what is that timeline?	

While this module will focus on Perkins, all of these decisions should be informed by a clear understanding of how other funding, policies, supports and initiatives may affect the influence and opportunity that Perkins provides.

Perkins State Plan

Simply put, Perkins provides states with a lot of options. This module will help you explore the decisions made by your predecessors, learn why those decisions were made, consider and re-evaluate those decisions and conclude – whether now or sometime in the near future – to chart a new course. If you are unsure where to start regarding your state plan, see [Appendix A](#) for a series of questions will help you gather information regarding the “who, what, how and why” of your state plan.

	Key Questions	State Response
Perkins Governance and Leadership	Who were the key players who were involved in writing your state plan?	
	Is there another state agency/entity that you, as the eligible agency, delegate responsibility and/or oversight for a portion of the Perkins allocation (e.g. the state education agency, or SEA, may share responsibility and funding with the state community college system)?	
	Who are the key organizations that represent and influence CTE in your state?	
	Do you have a process for regularly convening and engaging partner agencies/entities that have governing, programmatic or administrative oversight of CTE?	
	Do you have a process for regularly convening and engaging key stakeholders and influencers in your state?	

Perkins Resources

	Key Questions	State Response
State Administration Fund	How much does your state match for Perkins state administration (max is 5 percent)?	
	Do you share the state administration funds with another agency that has oversight responsibility for implementing Perkins? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If yes, what is your relationship like with that agency? • Do you have an MOU in place that defines the roles, responsibilities and expectations? 	
State Leadership Fund	What are your state’s leadership funds used to support? Do you fund every allowable activity?	
	Is there an intentional strategy behind how these funds are directed?	
	Do you share state leadership funds with another agency that has oversight responsibility for implementing Perkins? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If yes, what is your relationship like with that agency? • Do you have an MOU in place that defines the roles, responsibilities and expectations? 	

Reserve Fund	Does your state set aside any portion of Perkins for a reserve fund? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If yes, what percentage? 	
	How are the funds distributed (competitively, by formula, some other means)?	
	What is the focus of the reserve fund grants?	
	Have the answers to the three questions above changed over time (they can be changed annually)?	

Definitions

	Key Questions	State Response
State Definitions	How does your state define (for or through Perkins): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> High skill: High wage: High demand: 	

Leadership Levers within Perkins to Advance High-Quality CTE

Now that you have gathered a bit of the foundational information and background about your state's CTE system and Perkins state plan, let's shift gears to consider potential untapped or underused opportunities states have within Perkins.

This section will feature three categories of what we are calling "leadership levers":

- **Require** – Things that have to be done in Perkins but there is flexibility in how much your state requires or the implementation approach your state chooses to take.
- **Incentivize** – Opportunities to encourage or reward behavior, policy and/or performance.
- **Support** – Funds and requirements available to states to support shifts in local performance, behavior, etc.

Throughout this section, we will share information and point you in the direction of states that you might want to investigate further. We'll also offer questions that push you to consider how your state is capitalizing the myriad opportunities within Perkins.

Reminder: This module does not constitute or replace legal advice. We encourage you to check with any relevant state and federal guidance and regulatory requirements to ensure compliance. Further, the examples listed within are not endorsements nor should be considered a comprehensive list.

Section 1: Require

The first leadership lever that states can use Perkins is to **require** actions and activities that align with and advance their vision for CTE. In particular, there are three leverage points:

- Program approval and programs of study
- Local plan requirements
- Definitions for high-skill, high-wage, high-demand

In each section, each leverage point will provide a brief overview, then lay out the options and opportunities for state leaders and state examples.

Programs of Study and Program Approval

The federal definition of a program of study can be found in section 121(c)(1)(A) of the law. In many ways, your state's policies for program approval and programs of study form a foundation of your state's CTE system. These policies determine what your state finds *minimally* acceptable for what programs are offered to the learners in your state.

This is a powerful leadership lever that states have at their disposal, which is why we will explore these opportunities separately in another module.

Local Plan Requirements

States have authority over the content and requirements of the plans local eligible recipients must submit to receive Perkins funding. This authority begins with crafting the requirements and template for the local plan, as well as monitoring and evaluating compliance and implementation of the plan. In this section, we will focus on the planning aspects of this responsibility.

Options & Opportunities

While the law lays out the minimum requirements for local plans, states can add additional requirements and/or restrictions. Section 134 (b) begins by stating “***the eligible agency shall determine the requirements for the local plans, except that each plan shall ...***”

This language, in our estimation, creates an expectation that the state will customize the local plan requirements to meet the needs of the state. This may be one of the most significant opportunities for states to influence how every local recipient uses Perkins funding. It is a chance to ensure that the activities funded with Perkins is aligned to your state vision for CTE. It is a place to draw the line on expectations, most importantly on quality, equity and access.

According to Advance CTE’s 2017 survey about Perkins implementation, 11 states require all of their funding to be distributed to programs of study. Remember that the law only requires locals to offer one program of study, so this is a significantly increased expectation imposed by the states.

Another lever for states to consider is putting caps on expenditures (e.g. no more than 10 percent to be spent on equipment) or minimums (e.g. must spent at least 5 percent of professional development).

The list of “use of local required and permissible funds” is long and provides a lot of leniency in terms of how Perkins funds can be spent unless not allowed under the law. You have a similar level of flexibility to put place additional parameters to “frame” the local plan. The parameters can come in a variety of forms – funding caps, funding minimums, additional requirements or provisos, etc.

Of note, a significant change to the local plan would likely require a state plan amendment, which includes significant stakeholder engagement.

State Example

Tennessee, which is one of the states that distributes all of their local funding exclusively to programs of study, offers a local plan guide that requires local eligible recipients to identify goals, action steps and implementation plans. Therefore, the state is looking for intentional alignment among planning, data and fiscal decisions.

[Link](#)

Key Questions: Local Plan Requirements

Answer the questions below in the space provided. While these questions are all optional, we encourage you to capture your thoughts here so that you can easily refer back to them.

	Key Questions	State Response
Local Plan Requirements	<p>Has your state added to the statute’s minimal requirements for the local plan?</p> <p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional requirements? • Setting minimum requirements (e.g. must spent a specific percent or dollar amount on professional development)? • Setting maximum requirements (e.g. can spend no more than a specific percent or dollar amount on equipment)? • Requiring all Perkins funds to be distributed by programs of study? 	
	<p>What is your state’s process for reviewing and approving local plans? What is the monitoring plan?</p>	
	<p>Have you looked across all local eligible recipients to see what they are funding with Perkins resources?</p> <p><i>For example, before Perkins IV some locals spent 90 percent of their Perkins funding on equipment. The question is whether this level of investment is appropriate to achieve your state goals and make progress toward your state vision.</i></p>	
	<p>Do you feel confident that your state’s local plan requirements align to the quality of CTE programs you expect to see from your local education agencies?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If no, what components are you missing? 	

	Does your state have the ability to capture promising practices from local eligible recipients through their local plan submission?	
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Definitions for High-skill, High-wage, High-demand

Perkins makes a lot of references to the terms “high-skill,” “high-wage” or “high-demand.” These terms can be found throughout the law, including in the purposes of the act, state and local plan requirements, state and local uses of funds, and core indicators of performance. However, these terms are left to your state to define.

Options & Opportunities

Because it is your state’s ability to define these terms, that’s where the real opportunity lies. You can define these terms for CTE and Perkins, or you can choose to adopt or align these terms to other efforts/initiatives in states (e.g. state workforce priorities, governor’s economic sector priorities, etc.).

Once you settle on your definition for each term, you need to decide which term you plan to use and in what context. This is not one term but three separate terms, because Perkins includes an “or” not an “and” in the phrase – high-skill, high-wage **or** high-demand. This gives you the flexibility to define and apply one, two or all three terms.

High-skill tends to be the hardest term to define but many states use O-NET (<http://online.onetcenter.org/find/>). There are many measures of high-wage and high-demand. Many states use the Bureau of Labor Statistics to determine high-wage. Most Governors publish demand projections, as do many proprietary labor market platforms.

A few years ago, Advance CTE partnered with the Georgetown University and the National Research Center for CTE to publish a report that shared, state-by-state, labor market projections by Career Cluster®. [Link](#)

In an update of that groundbreaking report, Georgetown with the support of JP Morgan Chase & Co., released “The Good Jobs Index,” in November 2017. The report lays out a state-by-state analysis of the 30 million “good jobs” in the economy that do not require a bachelor’s degree, breaking down the information by industry and education. You can read the full report [here](#) and view the state-specific report [here](#).

State Examples

Michigan defines the three terms, citing national references/resources for each definition. [Link](#)

Nebraska provides the information statewide, as well as by region. Nebraska prioritizes occupations that meet three terms - high-skill, high-wage and high-demand.

[Link](#)

Oregon, in 2007, defined the three terms collaboratively between their Department of Education and State Workforce Board.

[Link](#)

Washington has a report that set high-skill, high-wage targets for the state and different populations between 2008 and 2018.

[Link](#)

Key Questions: Definitions

Answer the questions below in the space provided. While these questions are all optional, we encourage you to capture your thoughts here so that you can easily refer back to them.

	Key Questions	State Response
Definitions	Looking at your state’s definitions of high-skill, high-wage and high-demand, are these definitions shared among multiple state agencies?	
	Is the most accurate and efficient data source being used to support these definitions?	
	Do you use all three terms in concert – high-skill, high-wage and high-demand (like Nebraska)? If not, which do you use and why?	
	How is your state using these terms to prioritize Perkins funding, programs, and state leadership investments?	
	Do you require your local eligible recipients to show labor market alignment as part of their local plan or program approval?	

Section 2: Incentivize

The second leadership lever states can use is to **incentivize** actions and activities that align with and advance their vision for CTE as well as build momentum, support local adoption of policy priorities and encourage attention and focus on vexing challenges such as rural education and non-traditional occupations. This may also be a place and space to promote innovation, fund pilots, scale strategies, or even reward success.

In particular, there are four leverage points provided through Perkins we'd like to call your attention to:

- Reserve fund
- Permitting the pooling of funds at the local level
- Focus of state leadership dollars
- Incentives grants (through state leadership funds)

Reserve Fund

Section 112 of Perkins authorizes states to create a reserve fund. States can choose to set aside up to 10 percent of local Perkins funding to create a reserve fund, which can be distributed to eligible recipients in flexible ways – an alternate formula, a competitive process, by contract, etc.

While the funds must be focused on serving specific population targets (rural areas, areas with a high number of CTE students, and/or areas with a high percent of CTE students), these categories are flexible enough to all you to direct the funds to nearly any purpose, community or population in your state.

Important Reminder: A state's decisions about whether to have a reserve fund, its focus and distribution methodology can change annually.

Options & Opportunities

Increasingly, states are distributing these funds competitively and using the reserve fund as an incubator for innovation. In 2017, 38 states were using the reserve fund for program innovation, with the majority of them focusing on program innovation – incentivizing the development and implementation of programs of study and expanding equitable learner access to these programs of study.

Reserve Fund Policy Goals (2017)

- 29 states: Program innovation
- 24 states: Incentivizing the implementation of programs of study
- 22 states: Expanding learner access to programs of study
- 21 states: Incentivizing the development of programs of study

Note: Duplicated counts

State Examples

California's community college system have used the reserve fund to focus on effective transitions by investing in: outreach/career exploration, articulation, concurrent enrollment, credit by exam and work-based learning.

[Link](#)

Delaware's reserve fund is focused on implementation of statewide programs of study and professional development.

[Link](#)

Kansas uses its reserve fund to “to support special projects focused on development, improvement and/or expansion of CTE programs to address regional or statewide workforce development needs in high skill, high wage, or high demand occupations in critical or emerging industries through a sector based approach.”

[Link](#)

Kentucky is using the reserve funds to “develop a career pathway that includes a four-course sequence at the secondary level and incorporates the corresponding courses at the postsecondary level” and promoting effective use of industry certifications.

[Link](#)

Nebraska used their reserve funds to kick start a statewide effort called reVISION, which incentivized schools to evaluate their career preparation and career guidance systems and receive state support to improve those systems in a way that is tailored to each school's greatest areas of needs.

[Link](#)

Oklahoma is using the reserve fund for a variety of priority areas:

- Supports for students with disabilities to participate in CTE programs: [Link](#)
- Expansion of career development supports: [Link](#)

Texas historically used the reserve fund to reward performance by distributing the funds via a formula but this year, the state changed the focus to distribute the funds competitively, with specific areas of focus including work-based learning, promoting courses and programs of study in high-need areas, etc.

[Link](#)

Key Questions: Reserve Fund

Answer the questions below in the space provided. While these questions are all optional, we encourage you to capture your thoughts here so that you can easily refer back to them.

	Key Questions	State Response
Reserve Fund	<p>If your state sets aside any portion of Perkins for a reserve fund:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the current focus of the reserve fund grants? A focus population? Geographic region? Policy priority? • Has the focus of your reserve fund grants changed over the course of Perkins IV implementation (the decisions can change annually)? • Has it been effective and how do you know? 	
	<p>See page 66 of the 2006 National Assessment of CTE to see how much funding your state dedicated to the reserve fund in 2006 and then again in 2010:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does this compare to your state's more recent decisions? 	
	<p>How has your reserve fund help move the state forward toward the accomplishment of its vision?</p>	
	<p>Are decisions about how to direct your reserve fund informed by data?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does your reserve fund aim to close achievement, equity or opportunity gaps? 	
	<p>Is the reserve fund used to incubate innovation?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If yes, what has your state learned from these investments? • How are you measuring the impact and reach of the reserve fund? • How are you scaling successes? 	

	<p>What are three success stories resulting from your use of the reserve fund option?</p>	
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Permitting the Pooling of Funds at the Local Level

Section (135(c)(19)(c)) permits local eligible recipients to pool a portion of their funds with other eligible recipients for innovative initiatives. This means you can make any number of combinations to pool funds – local secondary and postsecondary partners, secondary and other secondary partners, or postsecondary and other postsecondary institutions. Pooling of funds can also help improve secondary and postsecondary alignment issues.

Local eligible recipients may elect to pool a portion of their Perkins funds with other eligible recipients to deal with vexing issues like:

- Teacher and faculty preparation and professional development
- Establishing, enhancing or supporting systems for accountability data collection and reporting data
- Implementing programs of study
- Implementing technical assessments
- ... and a catch-all – “to support other CTE activities consistent with the purposes of this act.”

Please Note: The pooling option is different than minimal allocation consortia, where locals that do not qualify for enough funding through the formula are required to create a consortium to qualify for minimum funding thresholds of \$15,000 at the secondary level or \$50,000 at the postsecondary level.

Options & Opportunities

We don't have a good way of measuring how many locals are taking advantage of this pooling option but anecdotally and through research conducted by RTI for the national assessment of CTE, we suspect very few are taking advantage of this option. Our 2017 survey of states found that only seven states say they are using state leadership funds to incentivize pooling of funds; this is up from only three states in 2014.

States can use Perkins state leadership funds to provide incentives grants to local eligible recipients that choose to pool their funds. However, we also believe that simply shining a light on this option is something that could benefit many.

Why encourage the pooling funds? This option is about leveraging limited resources to get better quality “product,” pricing, results, and creating economies of scale. It is also one of the formal ways within Perkin where you can encourage working across the silos of secondary and postsecondary CTE to promote alignment of systems and programs of study.

State Examples

Delaware highlights the pooling option in a communication to local grant recipients.
[Link](#)

Georgia school districts banded together and pooled their local Perkins grants to create the Career, Technical and Agricultural Education Resource Network

(CTAERN) - <https://www.ctaern.org/>. CTAERN develops and provides high-quality professional development for CTE teachers statewide. In the 2015-16 school year, the network delivered 366 workshops to nearly 8,000 attendees, achieving an exposure and impact that individual school districts could not reach alone. By pooling resources and aligning professional development efforts, local recipients across the state – including those in rural, suburban and urban locales – can achieve economies of scale and avoid duplication.

Key Questions: Pooling Funds at the Local Level

Answer the questions below in the space provided. While these questions are all optional, we encourage you to capture your thoughts here so that you can easily refer back to them.

	Key Questions	State Response
TITLE	Are any local eligible recipients currently pooling funds in your state? If yes, for what and has it proven effective?	
	Which of these are priorities for your state? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are you maximizing the potential of encouraging pooling of funds? • Why or why not? 	
	Are you encouraging or rewards pooling of funds through state leadership incentive grants?	
	How would you rate secondary and postsecondary alignment in your state? Would pooling of funds help this issue?	

Focus of State Leadership Funds

States are allowed to set aside 10 percent of their state Perkins allocation for state leadership activities. Section 124 articulates the list of required (nine) and permissive (17) activities. States are NOT allowed to use any of their state leadership dollars for any administrative costs (section 112(3)). States must dedicate at least \$60,000 but not less than \$150,000 for services that prepare individuals for non-traditional fields. Finally, your state has the option to dedicate up to 1 percent of the state funding, to be paid for out of state leadership dollars, to serve individuals in State institutions, such as State correctional institutions, and institutions that serve individuals with disabilities. (Section 112(2))

Options & Opportunities

By definition, these resources are to be dedicated to activities that are considered “leadership.” However, the definition of leadership is in the eye of the beholder.

We encourage you to look at the state leadership funds as investments. You are making investments into your system with these dollars to help build capacity, support and reward performance in line with your state vision and accountability targets. The intentionality you bring to how your state makes these investments will influence the return on this investment.

Essentially, your state has two decisions to make:

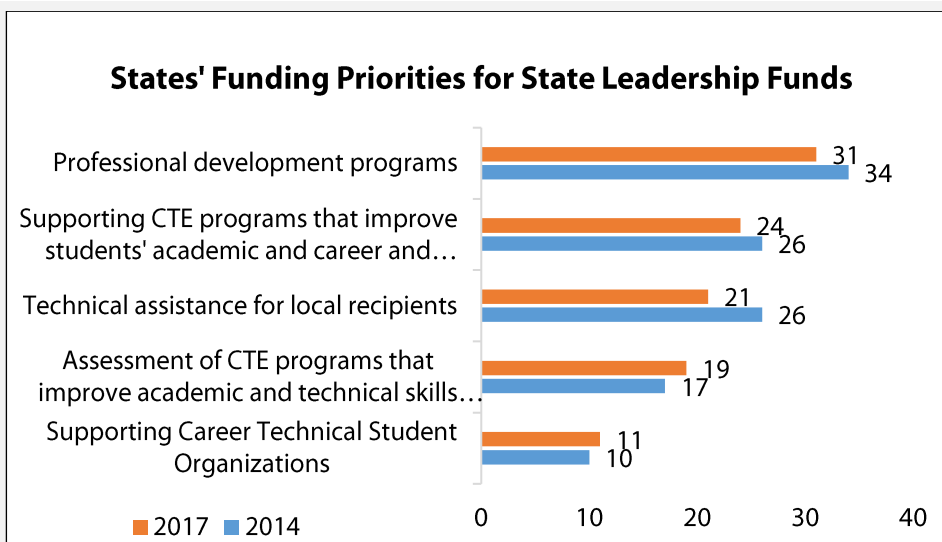
- What activities will you fund with these dollars?
- How much funding will be dedicated to each activity?

While your state must invest in the nine required activities, nothing dictates how much is directed to each activity or all nine activities, in aggregate. There are no parameters for how you interpret and leverage the required activities. And nothing requires you to invest a penny in the permissive activities. They are just that, permissible!

Rather than approaching the list of required and permissive activities as a checklist, we encourage you to create a thoughtful allocation strategy that aligns these investments with your state priorities.

We would encourage you to be very intentional about how you make these decisions and where you dedicate these funds. Don’t feel like you need to lock your state into funding the same activities each and every year. These funds can and should be leveraged to meet state needs. Your investment strategy of how to use these funds should be revisited regularly and possibly changed to best meet your state’s evolving needs.

For reference, our recent survey found that most states spend state leadership funds on nearly all of the permissive activities (which we would not necessarily encourage) but invest most of these resources in four required activities: professional development, supporting CTE programs that improve students’ academic and CTE skills, technical assistance and assessment of CTE programs.



Finally, we would encourage you to consider how you distribute these funds. You can just spend the funds, following state contracting rules (e.g. purchasing curriculum resources, holding a statewide professional development event). You can create mini-grants to locals to incubate innovation or change, support or reward adoption of priorities or recognize performance. A few of those examples can be found below.

However you choose to spend these funds, we encourage you to be intentional in how you use them to demand excellence and ensure more learners are on a pathway to their success.

State Examples

Florida used a portion of its state leadership funds to support non-traditional programming to underrepresented youth in grades 7-12, with a focus on increasing enrollment, retention and placement.

[Link](#)

Kansas awards grants out of its state leadership funds. Check out the link below for the 2017 priority areas.

[Link](#)

North Carolina Community Colleges incentivized each college to create rigorous programs of study (career pathways) that included detailed employer engagement and integrated career advising and work-based learning into the program of study.

[Link](#)

Washington State for Community and Technical Colleges awards competitive grants to encourage the following: replication; industry-based professional development; student leadership; non-traditional training and employment and Innovation projects.

[Link](#)

Key Questions: Focus of State Leadership Funds

	Key Questions	State Response
Focus of State Leadership Funds	What is your theory of change with your state leadership funds? What are you trying to accomplish with these investments?	
	What information/data drives your allocation of state leadership funds?	
	Do you invest any state leadership funds in corrections?	
	How much to you invest in non-traditional education and training - \$60,000 - \$150,000? What does this money go toward and how do you know it is effective?	
	Do you annually review your plan for expenditure of state leadership funds?	
	Do you use any of your state leadership funds to award mini-grants or contracts? Are these distributed competitively or by some formula?	

Incentive Grants (through State Leadership Funds)

Section 124(c)(1) of Perkins allows states to award incentive grants, out of the state leadership funds, to your eligible recipients. The law requires that the awards be based on:

1. Exceeding performance targets;
2. Developing connections between secondary and postsecondary education and training;
3. Adopting and integrating coherent and rigorous content aligned with challenging academic standards and technical coursework;
4. Progress in having special populations who participate in CTE meet local performance targets
5. Other factors related to performance of eligible recipients; **or**
6. Reward eligible recipients that elect to pool funds as described above.

Options & Opportunities In 2017, 12 states reported using some portion of their state leadership funds to award incentive grants. This is an underused option for state leadership funds. This opportunity is often misinterpreted as being just a performance-based incentive. In fact, there are many other things that can be incentivized through the use of this option, another lever at your disposal to encourage innovation and collaboration across systems (#2 and 6), program quality (#1, 3); equity (#1, 4) and the flexible option offered in #5. This is your chance to create a “carrot” to incentive shifts needs in your state.

State Examples **North Carolina** created a competitive grant, with incentive funding to “catalyze pathway implementation and increase positive outcomes for individuals and employers through increased investment in promising pathway practices,” with an expectation that the grant funds would be focused on outcomes not process. [Link](#)

There is also a helpful report by RTI that delves into performance-based funding. [Link](#)

Key Questions: Incentive Grants (through State Leadership Funds)

Answer the questions below in the space provided. While these questions are all optional, we encourage you to capture your thoughts here so that you can easily refer back to them.

	Key Questions	State Response
Incentive Grants (through State Leadership Funds)	Has your state used state leadership dollars to provide incentive grants? If yes, how much and what was the focus?	
	If you are awarding incentive grants, how do those grants align to other investments being made (e.g. reserve funds)?	
	Did you evaluate whether the incentive has been an effective tool for leveraging change/building momentum and support for change?	

Section 3: Support

The third leadership lever that states can use is to **support** actions and activities that align with and advance their vision for CTE. In particular, there are two leverage points provided through Perkins:

- Technical Assistance and Professional Development
- Data and Performance Targets

Technical Assistance and Professional Development

One of the many roles you play as a state leader is to provide support to those in your state who are struggling to deliver high-quality programs of study or achieve performance goals. You can also support targeted special populations to help ensure all learners in your state have equitable access to high-quality programs of study. This support can come in a variety of forms, ranging from providing resources (e.g. curriculum), professional development, and technical assistance. These can all be provided in a variety of forms/platforms – in-person or virtual, for groups versus customized, personalized for a district or a topic, etc. Degrees of intensity of the intervention/support will range from a helping hand to a gentle nudge and progressing to drawing a line in the sand. What is most important is that the technical assistance and professional development is diligently aligned to the state’s vision for CTE and is guided by data and outcomes.

Options & Opportunities

You have a number of pots of funds to support professional development and technical assistance. You can use both professional development and technical assistance as a carrot and a stick. What is most important is that these interactions with local eligible recipients are intentional, guided by your state vision and informed by data and outcomes.

State administration funds (Section 112(a)(3)) can be used for technical assistance, as well as monitoring and evaluation program effectiveness. Both professional development (Section 124(b)(3)) and technical assistance (Section 124(b)(9)) are required activities. However, you have great latitude in what you fund and at what levels.

A lot of things fall into the category of professional development and perhaps this loose interpretation has given permission to funding a lot of gatherings that do not necessarily result in the acquisition of new knowledge or a focus on progress/advancement toward your state vision. This is definitely an area where we would encourage you to do a strong assessment of what activities are funded and evaluate whether these investments are having a positive return.

You may also have other state resources and initiatives to leverage here, for example an annual professional development conference. Since CTE is listed as an area of support through the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), you could also use leadership funds to develop ESSA professional development and other resources. Many states also apply risk assessment models, which may be helpful in prioritizing topics or support for local eligible recipients.

State Examples

Iowa provides virtual technical assistance. Given how much turnover there is at the local level, providing a standing set of resources for new local CTE directors is a passive but valuable resource.

[Link](#)

Given that local CTE director turnover is an increasing issue, many states are investing in local CTE administrators **North Carolina** has a CTE administrator internship program

[Link](#)

Due to limited state staff capacity, **New York** has established a New York State Technical Assistance Center. The center is charged with improving the quality, access and delivery of CTE through research-based methods. Current areas of focus include professional and leadership development for CTE, including a comprehensive guidance model.

[Link](#)

Annually, **Pennsylvania** selects 20 percent of the underperforming Perkins local eligible recipients for on-site technical assistance based on performance criteria.

[Link](#)

- Pennsylvania also publishes an annual technical assistance plan, which locals can choose to participate in: [Link](#)
- This year some of the areas of focus include leadership development and integrating reading, writing and math into CTE (in response to challenges meeting this performance target): [Link](#)

Virginia has a professional development resource page that includes videos, links to administrator training and content-specific training.

[Link](#)

- The state also has a statewide resource center that provides a host of valuable tools, professional development: [Link](#)

Key Questions: Technical Assistance and Professional Development

	Key Questions	State Response
Technical Assistance and Professional Development	Does your state have professional development and technical assistance goals?	
	What is the “root” cause for each of these professional development and technical assistance goals? How effective has this investment been in addressing those “root” causes?	
	How do you determine which local eligible recipients participate in professional development and/or technical assistance?	
	How do you measure the success of professional development and technical assistance efforts?	
	How do you ensure accessibility of the professional development and technical assistance efforts (e.g. virtual versus in-person)?	

Data and Performance Targets

Data, accountability and evaluation will be explored in depth in Module 4. For now, we encourage you to look at the data you have. Become familiar with it, and consider it when making decisions about the priorities you establish for your state – policy, funding and implementation.

Data is essential to ensuring decisions about investments are not made based on legacy, stereotype or assumption. We flag data and performance targets in the category of support because we encourage you to use it in that way. Data can help you identify where support is needed to close gaps in performance, opportunity and access and as such, can help you determine how to prioritize investments, grant priorities, etc. The data can and should track progress (and support improvement plans) but equally as important is its use to ensure consistent, equitable access and results. While many put data and performance accountability in the category of compliance, we choose to think of it as a vital tool that you can use to support local education agencies and postsecondary institutions in achieving your state’s vision for CTE.

Final Reflections & Next Steps

Post-Module Survey

Please take this brief post-module assessment to let us know what you learned and how we can help:
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/NewSDpost-test>

Next Steps

We hope that this module helped you gain a better understanding of Perkins and the decisions made by those who came before you. We hope you feel a bit more confident in your ability to evaluate whether those decisions are fully maximizing the opportunities within Perkins to build will, reward performance, create supports, and advance CTE in your state for all learners.

Most importantly, it is our sincerest hope that you already have a list of concrete actions you will take action as a result of this module. Some may be small steps or changes you can make today while others may require you to build a cohesive plan for more dramatic shifts in the future. Just know that we at Advance CTE stand ready to help as critical friends, content experts, and providers of professional development and technical assistance.

Appendix A: State Plan

Here's a helpful list of questions to ask regarding your Perkins state plan.

Who:

- *Who informed, influenced, and ultimately made the decisions that are now guiding your state plan implementation?*
- *Who manages the implementation of the Perkins grant? Is everyone in the same state agency? Are there multiple agencies implicated? What are the intra-governmental relationships like? Strong? Are there clear roles and responsibilities? Are the existing roles and responsibilities successfully leading your state CTE system?*
- *What stakeholders were at the table? Are they still engaged? Are there good relationships and feedback loops in place?*

What:

- *What decisions were on the table when the state plan was written?*
- *Were some questions/decisions taken off the table to be considered later?*
- *Were those questions/decisions ever resurrected?*
- *Are there new questions that need to be considered?*

How:

- *How were decisions arrived at (consensus, simple majority, negotiations)?*
- *Were there policy guardrails, considerations or limitations that had to be taken into account when these decisions were previously made? Do these still hold today?*
- *What criteria and/or data was used to inform the decisions? Do these still hold?*

Why:

- *Answering all of these questions will hopefully help you uncover why your predecessors made the decisions they made. These insights will help you navigate your path ahead, affirming whether these decisions should stand or be reconsidered.*