

# Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Act: Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment

One of the most significant changes introduced in the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Perkins V) is the new comprehensive local needs assessment (CLNA). The purpose of the CLNA is to support data-driven decision-making and to more closely align planning, spending and accountability activities under Perkins V. The results of the local needs assessment form the foundation of the local application and drive spending decisions around improving quality and closing equity gaps. The strengths and weaknesses identified in the local needs assessment should seamlessly connect to the strategies and activities outlined in districts’ and colleges’ local applications.

## What Information Must Be Included in the CLNA?

At a minimum, the CLNA must report on the following information:

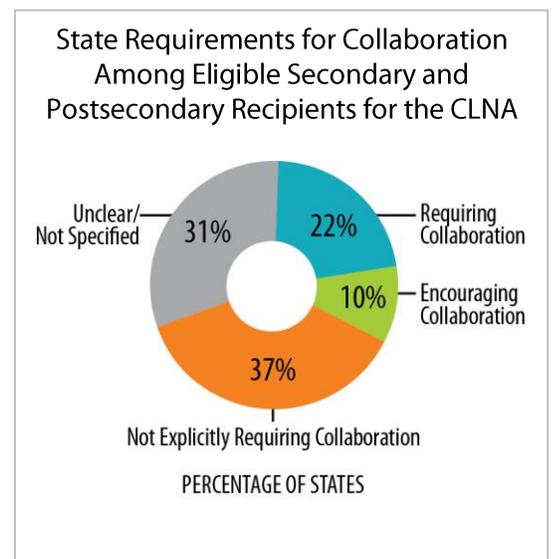
- ◆ Student performance data;
- ◆ Size, scope and quality;
- ◆ Labor market alignment;
- ◆ Progress towards implementing CTE programs and programs of study;
- ◆ Recruitment, retention and training of faculty and staff; and
- ◆ Progress towards improving access and equality.

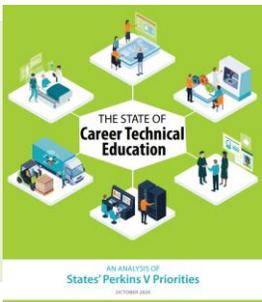
Although the above data must be included in every CLNA, states have flexibility in how they design the CLNA template to reflect their priorities.

## How Did States Design the CLNA?

Any analysis by Advance CTE of each Perkins V four-year state plan found that states are taking advantage of the flexibility to design the CLNA in varying ways. For example, 26 states (51 percent) developed a single, shared CLNA that is used by both secondary and postsecondary recipients. Three states (6 percent) will require local recipients to complete the CLNA annually, with the majority of states requiring a bi-annual update.

Additionally, 11 states (22 percent) are requiring collaboration among secondary and postsecondary recipients for the CLNA, and five states (10 percent) are not requiring collaboration among secondary and postsecondary recipients, but are encouraging it. Such efforts could involve requiring collaboration at the regional level to examine labor market data or explicitly requiring sign-off on the CLNA by both secondary and postsecondary partners.





# Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Act: Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment

## State CLNA Strategies

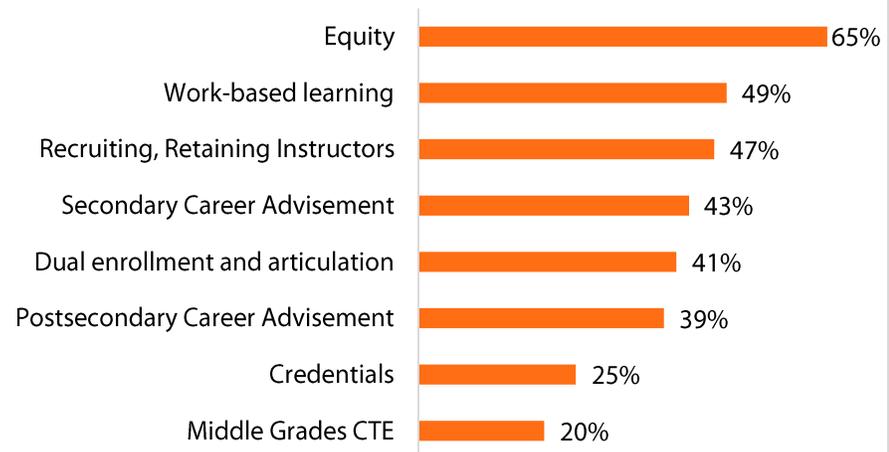
- ◆ The CLNA process in **Colorado** must be completed by eligible recipients on a regional basis across 14 economic development areas. Colorado’s Perkins eligible agency provides labor market information to these regions as part of the CLNA and intends for its regional model to lead to deeper collaboration among eligible recipients, more effective identification of gaps in CTE programming, and better targeting of technical assistance to meet wider workforce development and education priorities throughout the state.
- ◆ The **District of Columbia** has embedded root cause and equity gap analyses within its shared secondary and postsecondary CLNA template. These analyses are then used to develop specific strategies to address program-level equity challenges and help to create feasible solutions that deal with the underlying causes that may be perpetuating these challenges.

In addition to the required components of the CLNA, state CTE leaders can emphasize specific areas of focus to drive innovation or establish priorities for their state. For example, two-thirds of states (65 percent) put an additional emphasis on equity beyond the required elements and half of states (49 percent) had an explicit focus on work-based learning in their CLNA.

States have put a significant amount of time and effort into the development of their first-ever CLNAs, but this step is just the beginning. States will continue to revisit the CLNA, and further refine and strengthen the process to deepen their impact over time.

In a few years, we will have a better sense of whether the intended power and promise of the CLNA — to purposefully interrupt the historical distribution of Perkins funds and instead intentionally focus resources on high impact activities that close equity gaps, ensure learner access to high-quality CTE programs, and further align CTE to the needs of the labor market — have been realized.

### State Priorities within the CLNA



For additional information on how states leveraged the Perkins V state plan, check out *The State of Career Technical Education: An Analysis of States’ Perkins V Priorities* at [https://careertech.org/resource/state-cte-perkins-](https://careertech.org/resource/state-cte-perkins-v)

[v](#)