

Fiscal Year 2024 Funding Priorities



The **Perkins Basic State Grant** program is the principal source of dedicated federal funding for career and technical education (CTE), and helps build the capacity of secondary and postsecondary institutions to serve millions of students nationwide. Perkins funding expands access to high-quality CTE programs in every congressional district in the country, but is significantly underfunded. Therefore, we urge Congress to support our students and future workforce by providing a **\$400 million increase to the Perkins Basic State Grant program in FY 2024**.

How are Perkins Basic State Grant funds used?

The Perkins Basic State Grant program is a formula grant program issued to states based on poverty level and population. In turn, states distribute funding to local school districts and postsecondary institutions for CTE program improvement. Key activities supported by the funding include:

- Providing CTE “programs of study” that create a seamless educational pathway for students between secondary and postsecondary education and the workplace
- Aligning programs with the needs of the labor market
- Developing a strong accountability system to improve student achievement
- Strengthening the integration of academic, career and technical education
- Ensuring access to CTE for special populations
- Purchasing equipment to ensure that the classrooms have the latest technology
- Providing career guidance and academic counseling services and work-based learning opportunities for students
- Providing professional development and technical assistance for educators
- Supporting career and technical education student organizations (CTSOs)
- Helping students earn industry-recognized credentials of value

Why is a significant funding increase needed?

CTE plays a central role in addressing the nation’s longstanding and worsening skills gap, but is funded hundreds of millions below inflation-adjusted levels from the mid-2000's. In recent years, the Perkins Basic State Grant has been expected to support more students and increase program capacity for activities like work-based learning, but resources have not kept pace with the need. Further, Perkins received no direct supplemental federal funding to support programs during the COVID-19 pandemic—a time when expenses escalated. This has resulted in waiting lists for CTE courses, programs forced to operate without industry-standard equipment, less-supported educators, and unequal access to high-quality CTE coursework and resources like career counselors. CTE systems must also play an increased role in support of recently passed legislation, and need resources to support this work:

- Postsecondary CTE programs in advanced manufacturing, mechatronics, IT and cybersecurity will be critical in preparing learners for the jobs created by the CHIPS and Science Act.
- 17 million new skilled workers will be needed over the next decade to build and maintain U.S. infrastructure, which is being rebuilt in part through the Infrastructure and Jobs Act.
- CTE programs in energy, technology and skilled trades will be pivotal in preparing, reskilling, and upskilling workers and learners to transition a more sustainable and independent energy economy.