

Perkins Reauthorization Priorities

Where We are on Perkins Reauthorization

- CTE remains a bipartisan issue, but there is a growing divergence about its fundamental purpose
- Executive actions over the past year have accelerated this divide and introduced new areas of potential disagreement
- WIOA reauthorization (ASWA) nearly passed, but has stalled— instructive for Perkins VI reauthorization
- Other policy developments tangential to Perkins/CTE are likely to shape future reauthorization discussions

The Congressional CTE Conversation

- CTE and WFD hearings & proposals to date have surfaced a few key through lines:
 - **Scaling CTE**: Perkins and CTE more generally is working as intended...but how do we scale these opportunities?
 - **Starting Early**: Increasing interest in earlier CTE exposure and middle grades programming, but capacity and resource constraints limit implementation
 - **Credential Quality**: Strong bipartisan interest in CTE pathways and programs, but questions persist about credential quality and value
 - **Data Quality & Infrastructure**: Data infrastructure gaps limit ability to track outcomes, demonstrate effectiveness, and access reliable source data for accountability

The Congressional CTE Conversation

- **Systems Alignment**: How can federal policy ensure alignment between education and workforce development remains an open question
- **Employer Engagement**: Meaningful employer involvement recognized as critical, but questions remain about engaging employers at scale beyond already-committed partners
- **Work-based Learning**: Disruption in labor markets will require education and workforce systems to provide work-based learning experiences that no longer occur organically in the economy
- **Cultivating Durable Skills**: Growing recognition that non-cognitive skills are essential for adaptability in rapidly changing labor markets, but limited consensus on how to teach and assess them

Beyond Perkins: Wider ED-WFD Policy Discussion

- Funding for Perkins V has largely remained flat-funded
 - Fiscal constraints will continue to be a key headwind
- OB3 will define a lot of current environment:
 - Workforce Pell grants
 - Postsecondary accountability framework
 - School vouchers
 - Loan caps / repayment changes
- Apprenticeship activity / interest continues to accelerate:
 - 1M apprenticeship goal
 - OA regulatory changes
 - Pay-for-performance
- Policymaking through waivers:
 - Creates implementation variability
 - Complicates consensus on legislation
 - Can have unintended consequences (e.g. NCLB)

Looking Ahead

- Realistic timeline for Perkins VI remains longer-term
- Current efforts are “foundation laying”
- Addressing policy constraints and philosophical divides remain key priorities at this stage
- Expect more hearings and smaller legislative proposals before anything more comprehensive
- Key considerations for the CTE community:
 - Continue to identify areas of implementation friction
 - Elevate successes and tell your story
 - Engage early and often with policymakers

Reauthorization Priorities Process

- Feedback solicited through:
 - Listening sessions at major events
 - Focus groups
 - Survey data
 - Board engagement
 - Targeted outreach
- Joint Board approval in late January/February

*Preserve what works while making
targeted and strategic refinements*

Preserve State and Local Flexibility

- Continue state choice about which agency is Perkins eligible, how funding is split, and whether to submit a combined plan
- Continue state and local flexibility to set performance targets
- Continue flexible use of funds at the state and local levels, in concert with the CLNA

Expand State and Local Capacity

- Increase appropriations to Perkins
- Make it easier for providers to form consortia and regional partnerships
- Continue federal technical assistance, research, and support for innovation through National Programs

Establish Dedicated Support for Broader Career Readiness Infrastructure

- Create a new, separate Title II to expand high-quality career readiness opportunities for all learners
- Support statewide pathways systems with a priority on scaling work-based learning experiences
- Facilitate stronger connections between CTE programs funded under Title I and other complementary systems

Continue to Promote CTE Program Quality

- Require greater percentages of Perkins funding to be directed toward programs of study
- Maintain state and local ability to support early career exploration and development
- Clarify terminology to ensure common expectations for quality
- Streamline accountability to focus on the education and labor market outcomes that matter most
- Leverage the law to ensure non-degree credentials have value for students and employers

Deepen Reciprocal Alignment Across Systems

- Require not only Perkins to articulate with other systems but also those other systems and federal investments to align with and support CTE
- Further strengthen connections between CTE and apprenticeship through expanded uses of funds, intentional planning requirements, and stronger integration into accountability

Strengthen Data Infrastructure and Quality

- Make explicit that Perkins grantees are permitted to access wage records and data from other institutions and partners
- Encourage reporting tools and dashboards that serve multiple audiences
- Facilitate data innovation, increased data linkages and transparency across SLDS
- Support a wider research agenda for CTE

Reduce the Administrative Burden on States and Local Grantees

- Streamline the CLNA's required components and provide more flexibility to states to determine timelines
- Streamline state planning and the list of state authorized uses of funds
- Enable states to set multiple years of performance targets after the initial target-setting period without a full plan update

Next Steps

- Fleshing out tenets to more specific recommendations
- Drafting legislative language proposals
- Continuing to engage with members
- Closing tracking Hill activity