



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

OFFICE OF VOCATIONAL AND ADULT EDUCATION

THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY

FEB 16 2007

Honorable Edward M. Kennedy
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Kennedy:

Thank you for your January 17, 2007, letter to the Department of Education expressing concern about the treatment of the nontraditional participation and nontraditional completion indicators in the current version of the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (Perkins IV or Act): Guide for the Submission of State Plans (State Plan Guide). You specifically express opposition to the Department's intent to combine these two indicators for accountability and reporting purposes. You accurately point out that the Department's long-term policy has been to keep these indicators separate for reporting and accountability purposes. Our intent in combining the two nontraditional indicators into a single indicator for purposes of accountability was to address concerns from State directors of career and technical education regarding how the Department historically has broken down the indicators for purposes of accountability and to be consistent in our interpretation and application of the Act.

I appreciate your clarification of congressional intent that these two indicators remain separate as the best way to ensure that States are maximizing both the participation and completion of nontraditional students in Perkins-supported programs. We will revise the State Plan Guide to retain the current practice of keeping the nontraditional participation and completion indicators as separate indicators for both accountability and reporting purposes. We expect to issue the final State Plan Guide along with non-regulatory guidance related to the performance indicators in the next couple of weeks.

Thank you for your interest in the provision of career and technical education to students. If you have additional questions or concerns, please contact the Office of Legislation and Congressional Affairs at 202-401-0020. I am sending an identical response to the cosigners of your letter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Troy R. Justesen".

Troy R. Justesen