

**U.S. Department of Education
Office of Vocational and Adult Education
Washington, D.C. 20202-7241**

FISCAL YEAR 2009

Promoting Rigorous Career and Technical Education Programs of Study

**Form Approved
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Dear Colleague:

Thank you for your interest in the “*Promoting Rigorous Career and Technical Education Programs of Study*” program competition for eligible agencies under the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Improvement Act of 2006.

The new Perkins legislation requires that institutions receiving Perkins funding incorporate at least one program of study. Through this program and using a “Programs of Study Design Framework” (Framework), we intend to promote and improve State and local development and implementation of, and to assess the impact of student participation in CTE programs of study (POSs) that link secondary and postsecondary education, combine academic and career and technical education in a structured sequence of courses that progress from broad foundation skills to more occupationally specific courses, offer students the opportunities to earn postsecondary credits for courses taken in high school, and lead to a postsecondary credential, certificate, or degree.

The enclosed materials include the forms you will need to complete your application, instructions for completing the forms, and additional information that you will need to complete the application. Applicants should organize the application contents, including the program narrative in accordance with the instructions provided in this package. Also, it is important to note that project narratives that exceed the page limit will not be reviewed. If you have questions about these or any other program requirement, please call or e-mail Laura Messenger at 202-245-7772 or laura.messenger@ed.gov

We ask that you notify OVAE of your intent to apply. Applicants are encouraged to submit applications electronically. Applicants must complete the one-time registration process to begin submitting grant applications through www.Grants.gov for all Federal grant opportunities. A handy guide “Getting Started” is available through Grants.gov.

Electronic copies must be uploaded in Grants.gov before 4:30 PM Washington, D.C. time on the closing date. A copy of your application must not be emailed directly to the Department. We strongly suggest that you carefully check your submission to ensure that you use the correct forms and instructions.

We look forward to receiving your application and appreciate your efforts to improve the quality of career and technical education.

Sharon Miller
Director for the Division of Academic and
Technical Education
Office of Vocational and Adult Education

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SECTION A: PROGRAM BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The President's American Competitiveness Initiative (ACI) recognizes that a high school diploma or equivalency diploma is no longer adequate for 21st century workforce demands, and that the bedrock of America's competitiveness is a well-educated and skilled workforce. Some form of postsecondary education and training is now critical for workers to succeed in the new global economy.

In response to the increased demands from postsecondary education and employers many State and local agencies have changed their approach to delivering career and technical education by implementing programs of study. Programs of study are offered as an option to students when planning for, and completing future coursework in career and technical content areas. These career and technical education programs of study are designed to outline rigorous academic and technical course standards that assist students to successfully transition from secondary to postsecondary education, and between postsecondary institutions.

This discretionary grant competition is intended to enhance the quality and rigor of career and technical education programs of study through the use of a "Programs of Study Design Framework" (Framework), intended to promote and improve State and local development and implementation of, and to assess the impact of student participation in CTE programs of study (POSS) that link secondary and postsecondary education, combine academic and career and technical education in a structured sequence of courses that progress from broad foundation skills to more occupationally specific courses, offer students the opportunities to earn postsecondary credits for courses taken in high school, and lead to a postsecondary credential, certificate, or degree.

SECTION B: LEGAL AND REGULATORY DOCUMENTS

Program Authority

This project is authorized under The Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Improvement Act of 2006, Section 122(c)(1)9A), Section 122 allows the Secretary of Education to establish and carry out a program of national leadership activities to enhance the quality of career and technical education

The Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR parts 74, 75, 77, 80, 81, 82, 84, 85, 86, 97, 98, and 99. Note: The regulations in 34 CFR part 86 apply to institutions of higher education only.

SECTION D: PROGRAM STATUTE

The relevant section of the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Improvement Act of 2006 is included below.

SEC. 114. NATIONAL ACTIVITIES.

“(a) PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INFORMATION.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall collect performance information about, and report on, the condition of career and technical education and on the effectiveness of State and local programs, services, and activities carried out under this title in order to provide the Secretary and Congress, as well as Federal, State, local, and tribal agencies, with information relevant to improvement in the quality and effectiveness of career and technical education. The Secretary shall report annually to Congress on the Secretary’s aggregate analysis of performance information collected each year pursuant to this title, including an analysis of performance data regarding special populations.

“(2) COMPATIBILITY.—The Secretary shall, to the extent feasible, ensure that the performance information system is compatible with other Federal information systems.

“(3) ASSESSMENTS.—As a regular part of its assessments, the National Center for Education Statistics shall collect and report information on career and technical education for a nationally representative sample of students. Such assessment may include international comparisons in the aggregate.

“(b) MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS.—

“(1) COLLECTION OF INFORMATION AT REASONABLE COST.—

The Secretary shall take such action as may be necessary to secure at reasonable cost the information required by this title. To ensure reasonable cost, the Secretary, in consultation with the National Center for Education Statistics, the Office of Vocational and Adult Education, and an entity assisted under section 118 (if applicable), shall determine the methodology to be used and the frequency with which information is to be collected.

“(2) COOPERATION OF STATES.—All eligible agencies receiving assistance under this Act shall cooperate with the Secretary in implementing the information systems developed pursuant to this Act.

“(c) SINGLE PLAN FOR RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT, DISSEMINATION, EVALUATION, AND ASSESSMENT.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may, directly or through grants, contracts, or cooperative agreements, carry out research,

development, dissemination, evaluation and assessment, capacity building, and technical assistance with regard to the career and technical education programs under this Act. The Secretary shall develop a single plan for such activities.

“(2) PLAN.—Such plan shall—

“(A) identify the career and technical education activities described in paragraph (1) that the Secretary will carry out under this section;

“(B) describe how the Secretary will evaluate such career and technical education activities in accordance with subsection (d)(2); and

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“(C) include such other information as the Secretary determines to be appropriate.

“(d) ADVISORY PANEL; EVALUATION; REPORTS.—

“(1) INDEPENDENT ADVISORY PANEL.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall appoint an independent advisory panel to advise the Secretary on the implementation of the assessment described in paragraph (2), including the issues to be addressed and the methodology of the studies involved to ensure that the assessment adheres to the highest standards of quality.

“(B) MEMBERS.—The advisory panel shall consist of—

“(i) educators, administrators, State directors of career and technical education, and chief executives, including those with expertise in the integration of academic and career and technical education;

“(ii) experts in evaluation, research, and assessment;

“(iii) representatives of labor organizations and businesses, including small businesses, economic development entities, and workforce investment entities;

“(iv) parents;

“(v) career guidance and academic counseling professionals; and

“(vi) other individuals and intermediaries with relevant expertise.

“(C) INDEPENDENT ANALYSIS.—The advisory panel shall transmit to the Secretary, the relevant committees of Congress, and the Library of Congress an independent analysis of the findings and recommendations resulting from the assessment described in paragraph (2).

“(D) FACA.—The Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.) shall not apply to the panel established under this paragraph.

“(2) EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—From amounts made available

under subsection (e), the Secretary shall provide for the conduct of an independent evaluation and assessment of career and technical education programs under this Act, including the implementation of the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act of 2006, to the extent practicable, through studies and analyses conducted independently through grants, contracts, and cooperative agreements that are awarded on a competitive basis.

“(B) CONTENTS.—The assessment required under subparagraph (A) shall include descriptions and evaluations of—

“(i) the extent to which State, local, and tribal entities have developed, implemented, or improved State and local career and technical education programs assisted under this Act;

“(ii) the preparation and qualifications of teachers and faculty of career and technical education (such as meeting State established teacher certification or licensing requirements), as well as shortages of such teachers and faculty;

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“(iii) academic and career and technical education achievement and employment outcomes of career and technical education, including analyses of—

“(I) the extent and success of the integration of rigorous and challenging academic and career and technical education for students participating in career and technical education programs, including a review of the effect of such integration on the academic and technical proficiency achievement of such students (including the number of such students receiving a secondary school diploma); and

“(II) the extent to which career and technical education programs prepare students, including special populations, for subsequent employment in high skill, high wage occupations (including those in which mathematics and science skills are critical), or for participation in postsecondary education;

“(iv) employer involvement in, and satisfaction with, career and technical education programs and career and technical education students’ preparation for employment;

“(v) the participation of students in career and technical education programs;

“(vi) the use of educational technology and distance

learning with respect to career and technical education and tech prep programs; and

“(vii) the effect of State and local adjusted levels of performance and State and local levels of performance on the delivery of career and technical education services, including the percentage of career and technical education and tech prep students meeting the adjusted levels of performance described in section 113.

“(C) REPORTS.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall submit to the relevant committees of Congress—

“(I) an interim report regarding the assessment on or before January 1, 2010; and

“(II) a final report, summarizing all studies and analyses that relate to the assessment and that are completed after the interim report, on or before July 1, 2011.

“(ii) PROHIBITION.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the reports required by this subsection shall not be subject to any review outside the Department of Education before their transmittal to the relevant committees of Congress and the Secretary, but the President, the Secretary, and the independent advisory panel established under paragraph (1) may make such additional recommendations to Congress with respect to the assessment as the President, the Secretary, or the panel determine to be appropriate.

“(3) COLLECTION OF STATE INFORMATION AND REPORT.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may collect and disseminate information from States regarding State efforts

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to meet State adjusted levels of performance described in section 113(b).

“(B) REPORT.—The Secretary shall gather any information collected pursuant to subparagraph (A) and submit a report to the relevant committees in Congress.

“(4) RESEARCH.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—From amounts made available under subsection (e), the Secretary, after consulting with the States, shall award a grant, contract, or cooperative agreement, on a competitive basis, to an institution of higher education, a public or private nonprofit organization or agency, or a consortium of such institutions, organizations, or agencies to establish a national research center—

“(i) to carry out scientifically based research and evaluation for the purpose of developing, improving,

and identifying the most successful methods for addressing the education, employment, and training needs of participants, including special populations, in career and technical education programs, including research and evaluation in such activities as—

“(I) the integration of—

“(aa) career and technical instruction; and

“(bb) academic, secondary and postsecondary instruction;

“(II) education technology and distance learning approaches and strategies that are effective with respect to career and technical education;

“(III) State adjusted levels of performance and State levels of performance that serve to improve career and technical education programs and student achievement;

“(IV) academic knowledge and career and technical skills required for employment or participation in postsecondary education; and

“(V) preparation for occupations in high skill, high wage, or high demand business and industry, including examination of—

“(aa) collaboration between career and technical education programs and business and industry; and

“(bb) academic and technical skills required for a regional or sectoral workforce, including small business;

“(ii) to carry out scientifically based research and evaluation to increase the effectiveness and improve the implementation of career and technical education programs that are integrated with coherent and rigorous content aligned with challenging academic standards, including conducting research and development, and studies, that provide longitudinal information or formative evaluation with respect to career and technical education programs and student achievement;

“(iii) to carry out scientifically based research and evaluation that can be used to improve the preparation and professional development of teachers, faculty, and administrators, and to improve student learning in

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the career and technical education classroom, including—

“(I) effective in-service and preservice teacher and faculty education that assists career and technical

education programs in—

“(aa) integrating those programs with academic content standards and student academic achievement standards, as adopted by States under section 1111(b)(1) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965; and

“(bb) coordinating technical education with industry-recognized certification requirements;

“(II) dissemination and training activities related to the applied research and demonstration activities described in this subsection, which may also include serving as a repository for information on career and technical skills, State academic standards, and related materials; and

“(III) the recruitment and retention of career and technical education teachers, faculty, counselors, and administrators, including individuals in groups underrepresented in the teaching profession; and

“(iv) to carry out such other research and evaluation, consistent with the purposes of this Act, as the Secretary determines appropriate to assist State and local recipients of funds under this Act.

“(B) REPORT.—The center conducting the activities described in subparagraph (A) shall annually prepare a report of the key research findings of such center and shall submit copies of the report to the Secretary, the relevant committees of Congress, the Library of Congress, and each eligible agency.

“(C) DISSEMINATION.—The center shall conduct dissemination and training activities based upon the research described in subparagraph (A).

“(5) DEMONSTRATIONS AND DISSEMINATION.—The Secretary is authorized to carry out demonstration career and technical education programs, to replicate model career and technical education programs, to disseminate best practices information, and to provide technical assistance upon request of a State, for the purposes of developing, improving, and identifying the most successful methods and techniques for providing career and technical education programs assisted under this Act.

“(e) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section such sums as may be necessary for each of fiscal years 2007 through 2012.