



Promoting Equity and Excellence in Perkins CTE Reauthorization

In today's economy, high-quality career preparation is more important than ever to ensuring all students are equipped with the right knowledge and skills for success after high school. Unfortunately there are a number of existing and historical factors – including history of diverting students of color and students with disabilities away from college preparatory courses and into low-level “career” courses that aren't actually aligned with the job market; lack of decent outcome data to measure program quality; and the absence of coordination across education and workforce systems – that have made it difficult for states and districts to institute meaningful career preparation programs and measures of success. Moreover, the increased focus on ensuring students are “college and career ready” without sufficient information or support on the “career” side has left many educators confused about what students actually need to be ready.

In reauthorizing the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act (Perkins CTE), Congress has the opportunity to build a stronger foundation for career preparation, putting a greater focus on equity and student outcomes.

The Education Trust recommends including the following provisions in the reauthorization bill.

1. Improve transparency on participation and outcomes
 - a. Establish consistent definitions of key terms across states
 - i. CTE Concentrator
 - ii. CTE Participant
 - iii. Program of Study
 - b. Align terms and definitions with ESSA and WIOA
 - c. Collect and disseminate high quality data
 - i. Continue to disaggregate all participation and outcomes data – at a minimum - by the same subgroups as ESEA state report card requirements, including by gender
 - ii. Measure and report meaningful outcomes for CTE Concentrators, CTE Participants, and non-participants
 1. Graduation rates (with ESSA-aligned four year cohort definition)
 2. Academic achievement on state reading and math assessments required by ESSA
 3. Post-secondary matriculation and persistence
 4. Employment and earnings data
 - d. To minimize data collection burden, link all CTE data with the SLDS and maximize the alignment between CTE data and existing data collections
2. Incentivize attention to long-standing equity gaps

- a. Reserve funds at the state level for outcomes-based rewards for high-performing grantees with no equity gaps
- b. Require grantees that don't meet performance indicators for subgroups of students to develop improvement plans (even if the programs meet the performance indicators overall)
- 3. Increase program quality
 - a. Require grantees to have in place either formal articulation agreements, MOUs, or joint planning processes to assure strong linkages between secondary, postsecondary, and business
 - b. Ensure states and local grantees have a more formalized and central role for the business community in program design and oversight
 - c. Allow states to opt into a fully competitive (or hybrid competitive-formula) funding option in place of the current subgrant funding formula so state leaders can target grants to the most relevant and successful programs, with an emphasis on programs serving the most low-income students
- 4. Spur innovation
 - a. Establish a nationally competitive innovation grant program for the development or expansion of evidence-based programs and gives competitive preference to grantees serving the most low-income students