PERKINS LEADERS FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)

The following questions were submitted by Perkins secondary and postsecondary consortia leaders. We have taken the liberty to modify these questions for the sake of clarity or length. Most of the questions can be answered by referring to the *Perkins IV Operational Handbook;* because of this fact, the *Handbook* is referenced frequently. Other questions may be answered somewhat differently depending on one's perspective or experience. For these questions, you may be able to provide a better explanation or a more accurate response; please share that with us.

Obviously, this isn't an all-inclusive list of possible questions; however, it's a starting point from which we can build. The intent of these FAQs is to provide a useful resource for new (or not so new) Perkins consortia leaders.

If you have any questions, contact Karl Ohrn, Interim Associate System Director for CTE at karl.ohrn@minnstate.edu.

Q: Where can I find a list of acronyms related to CTE and to the Perkins Grant?

A: A list of acronyms can be found on page 134 of the *Perkins IV Operational Handbook*, 2018.

Q: What are the differences in roles between secondary and postsecondary coordinators?

A: Secondary coordinators represent school districts included within their Perkins consortia and are typically employed by one of the districts or an education cooperative. Postsecondary coordinators represent the college (or colleges) in their consortia. They are typically employees of the college they represent. Although their roles differ slightly, what is more important is what they have in common; that is, secondary and postsecondary coordinators should collaborate as partners to administer the Perkins Grant with their consortium. Refer to *Roles and Responsibilities of Perkins Consortium Coordinator* on page 21 of the *Perkins IV Operational Handbook, 2018.*

Q: What are the top 10 things to consider when writing the grant?

A:

1. How can we improve the academic achievement of CTE students?
2. How can we strengthen connections between secondary and postsecondary education?
3. How can we improve state and local accountability?
4. How can we improve Programs of Study (POS) within our consortium?
5. How can we increase involvement of local employers, businesses, chambers of commerce, workforce centers, or other education or community partners to strengthen educational pathways?

6. How can we best serve students with disabilities, economically disadvantaged students, individuals preparing for nontraditional careers, single parents including single pregnant women, displaced homemakers, or individuals with limited English proficiency?

7. How can we provide better transitions for students from secondary to postsecondary CTE instruction?

8. What can we do to improve collaboration of all stakeholders with the end result of improving the effectiveness of our Perkins consortium?

9. What innovations can we implement to enhance student success in CTE programs and pathways in our consortia?

10. Where can I go to get more information on how to write the Perkins Grant for my consortium?

Q: Where do I start when writing the grant?

A: The grant is written online using the Minnesota State grant management system. Contact the CTE staff at Minnesota State System Office for more information on this; http://minnstate.edu/system/cte/directories/ourstaff.html .
Refer to *The Local Application Plan*, page 22 of the *Perkins IV Operational Handbook, 2018*.

Q: Who can I contact for assistance?

A: Contact information for CTE staff at Minnesota State Colleges and Universities or Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) and other Perkins consortia leaders can be found at http://minnstate.edu/system/cte/directories/index.html

Q: What are the reporting requirements for the Perkins Grant?

A: Each consortium must submit a local consortium Perkins application plan annually in May and an Annual Performance Report in October. See *Local Application Plan Process* and *Submission of the Local Plan* of the *Perkins IV Operational Handbook, 2018*; see *Annual Performance Report* section.

Q: How do I connect with and serve the variety of consortium member high schools and colleges?

A: The best response to this question is probably to contact experienced consortia coordinators and ask them for advice on how to do this effectively. A list of all Perkins consortia secondary and postsecondary coordinators can be found at
http://minnstate.edu/system/cte/directories/perkinscoordinators.html

Q: When is <u>(you fill-in the blank)</u> due? What should I be focused on at a given time?

A: The Perkins Grant process operates on an annual rotating schedule; refer to the Perkins Workflow Diagram in the *Perkins IV Operational Handbook, 2018*. Also refer to the *Consortia Reporting Timeline* in the handbook Appendices section.

Q: What is "program approval" and who is responsible for it?

A: Program approval is the process through which CTE programming quality is assessed regularly. Refer to *CTE Program Approval and Review* of the *Perkins IV Operational Handbook, 2017.*

Q: What are the responsibilities of Perkins consortia leaders?

A: Review *Roles and Responsibilities of Perkins Consortium Coordinator,* which can be found at: http://minnstate.edu/system/cte/directories/documents/Role-and-Responsibilities-of-Perkins-Consortium-Coordinator-7-7-2015.pdf and included in the *Perkins IV Operational Handbook, 2018.*

Q: What's the difference between "Basic" and "Reserve" Perkins funds?

A: Ninety percent of funds allocated to consortia under the Perkins Grant are "basic" and ten percent are "reserve." The difference between "basic" and "reserve" is in how the amounts are determined. This is explained under *Formula Distribution* of the *Perkins IV Operational Handbook, 2018*. Also, refer to the definition of Basic Grant under *Formula Distribution.* Both basic and reserve funds can be used for all required or permissive uses of funds.

Q: How do I develop a Perkins budget to support the 5 goal areas?

A: A planning estimate will be provided by the Minnesota State System Office and MDE prior to your plan submission each year. Use this planning estimate amount to develop your budget. In the Minnesota State grant management system, enter budget amounts under each goal as you have determined by your budget. Totals for your consortium's basic and reserve allocations, along with the consortium total, must match the planning estimate provided.

Q: What is UFARS and where can I get training on it?

A: UFARS is an acronym that stands for Uniform Financial Accounting and Reporting System. This is a system used by the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) to account for Perkins funds. Contact MDE officials for training. Contact information can be found at:
http://minnstate.edu/system/cte/directories/MDE-Staff.html

Q: How do we invite charter schools to join our Perkins consortium?

A: Charter schools with a state-approved CTE program who request membership shall be invited to participate in a consortium. Refer to *Consortium Membership Requirements* section in the *Perkins IV Operational Handbook, 2018*. The consortium coordinators can contact charter school officials directly.

Q: What is the process to retire obsolete equipment originally purchased with Perkins Grant dollars?

A: At the postsecondary level, equipment is usually offered to other Minnesota State Colleges or Universities first, then to local secondary districts. As a last resort, equipment may be sold to the public and the revenue invested in other CTE programs. Individual colleges may have their own established procedures regarding disposal of such equipment. Refer to *Disposal of Equipment/Curriculum Purchased Through the Secondary Perkins Grant* section for guidance of disposal of secondary equipment in the *Perkins IV Operational Handbook, 2018.*

Q: How can Perkins leaders help teachers and administrators understand pathways, concentrators, etc.?

A: A good place to start is with the Minnesota Career Fields, Clusters & Pathways chart:
http://minnstate.edu/system/cte/consortium_resources/documents/POS_Framework-2017-Final-8x11.pdf
Other resources to help you explain these topics can be found on the consortia resources webpage:
http://minnstate.edu/system/cte/consortium_resources/index.html
Of course, the *Perkins IV Operational Handbook, 2018* is also a good resource.

Q: How should advisory committees be developed? (program-level vs. consortium-level committees)

A: With certain exceptions, consortia can design their advisory committees in a way that works best for them. Refer to the *Career Program Advisory Committee Handbook, 2016* for guidance on this issue. It can be found on the consortia resources webpage:
http://minnstate.edu/system/cte/consortium_resources/index.html

Q: What types of things can we purchase with Perkins Grant dollars?

A: Start by reviewing A*llowable and Unallowable Uses of Funds* in the *Perkins IV Operational Handbook*, *2018*. If you need further clarification, contact other consortia leaders or Minnesota State System Office CTE personnel for guidance.
http://minnstate.edu/system/cte/directories/index.html

Q: Can I change my original budget in SERVS? How do I make the change?

A: Contact MDE officials for guidance on this.
http://minnstate.edu/system/cte/directories/MDE-Staff.html
See *Secondary Budget Changes* in the *Perkins IV Operational Handbook, 2018.* Also, see *SERVS Financial System at MDE* in the handbook.

Q: How do I process the reallocation dollars? What can they be used for?

A: Reallocated funds are Perkins Grant funds that were not used by consortia and therefore reclaimed by the state. The state reallocates the unused funds by formula and redistributes these funds to consortia. Consortia coordinators must determine how they will use these reallocated funds in accordance with their current Perkins Plans. The Minnesota State System CTE Office and MDE must approve reallocation plans before funds can be used. Reallocated funds must be spent prior to 30 June or they are forfeited. Refer to the *Perkins IV Operational Handbook, 2018* for more information.

Q: When do I need to obtain permission from the state for spending?

A: Anytime you are unsure of whether or not an expenditure is authorized with Perkins Grant funds, contact MDE (secondary coordinators) or the Minnesota State CTE staff (postsecondary coordinators) for guidance. You may instead want to contact some other consortia coordinators and ask them first; they may be able to answer your question. Contact information can be found at
http://minnstate.edu/system/cte/directories/index.html
Any spending changes following approval of your consortium's Perkins plan must be coordinated with MDE or the Minnesota State System CTE Office for approval prior to being made. Further guidance can be found on page 88 of the *Perkins IV Operational Handbook, 2018.*

Q: Who administers TSAs?

A: Consortia must have TSAs in use at both the secondary and postsecondary levels for all state-approved Programs of Study (POS) in the consortium. TSAs can be administered by any authorized person within a school or college.

Q: What TSAs can we use to meet the Perkins requirement?

A: A list of state-approved technical skill assessments for Minnesota career cluster occupations can be found at http://www.minnstate.edu/system/cte/programs/mntsa.html

Q: Can I get additional time to complete my Perkins Plan?

A: No, unless there are exceptional circumstances involved and state CTE leaders agree to allow more time based on those circumstances. Contact state leadership if you are experiencing circumstances which are preventing you from completing your Perkins application. Contact information can be found at http://minnstate.edu/system/cte/directories/ourstaff.html

Q: What is supplanting?

A: Supplanting refers to the use of Perkins funds for expenditures that were previously paid for with state (general) funds. This is not permitted under Federal law. Refer to *Supplement Not Supplant Requirements* of the *Perkins IV Operational Handbook, 2018.*

Q: Can Perkins funds be used to serve 7-8th grade or middle school students in CTE?

A: Yes, Perkins funds may be used for 7th and 8th grade programs such as those involving career exploration and career awareness activities. Refer to *Allowable and Unallowable Uses of Funds* in the *Perkins IV Operational Handbook, 2017*.

Q: Many Technical Skills Assessments (TSAs) have both pre- and post-tests. Do students have to complete both?

A: No; students do not have to complete both pre- and post-tests to meet the requirement for TSAs in state-approved Programs of Study (POS). Students only have to complete TSA post-tests. The purpose of pre-tests is to gauge what students already know about a subject area before being instructed in that subject matter. This helps faculty determine what needs to be taught during the course or program and prevents faculty from wasting time and resources teaching students what they already know. Post-tests are then given to determine what students learned as a result of formal instruction.

Q: What is the time limit for funding positions with Perkins dollars?

A: Perkins funds are not intended to fund positions long-term. The general rule of thumb is that if an employee is funded for more than 3 years, they should be considered permanent employees and therefore funded under the general fund vs. the Perkins Grant. Refer to *Using Perkins IV Resources to Fund Personnel* in the P*erkins IV Operational Handbook, 2018*.

Q: Where can I find the *Perkins IV Operational Handbook*?

A: It can be found online at:
http://minnstate.edu/system/cte/consortium_resources/index.html