

MDE/MinnState Position on Technical Skill Assessment Implementation

Updated, 7/1/17

The Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 sets an expectation that career and technical education concentrators are assessed for their attainment of technical skills using valid and reliable assessment instruments aligned with industry standards where available and appropriate. Each state and each local recipient must negotiate targets for performance levels on Technical Skill Attainment in order to receive funding. It is expected that each state and local recipient will use data on the performance indicators to improve career and technical education.

Minnesota has undertaken a state process for identifying core skills and assessment tools for technical skill attainment for programs of study in career pathways. Go to the Technical Skill Attainment website at: <http://www.minnstate.edu/system/cte/programs/mntsa.html> for state-approved technical skill assessments, core competencies, and assessment blueprints in the identified career pathways to date.

The Minnesota State Plan for Perkins IV states that technical skill assessments will be identified in all state-approved programs of study by 2014 and beyond. The goal of the Minnesota Technical Skill Assessment project is to assure quality programs and use assessments as a tool to use within each program of study based on the Rigorous Program of Study framework and its supporting elements.

Implementation Within State-Approved Programs of Study:

- It is the state expectation that consortia with state-approved programs of study in the areas listed above will assess CTE students within a state-approved program of study.
- Each consortium offering a state-approved program of study for which state-approved assessments have been identified MUST assess CTE students at the secondary and postsecondary levels in at least one secondary and one postsecondary CTE program within that program of study.
- If a consortium does not have an approved program of study but wishes to assess students in a secondary or postsecondary CTE program, it is encouraged (but not required) to do so.
- It is the role of local consortia leaders and consortia coordinators to communicate new information/ revisions/ and change on the Minnesota Technical Skill Assessment project to all stakeholders (local administrators, local assessment coordinators, teachers, faculty, and business/industry/community partners).

Selection of Assessments:

- It is the intent of the Perkins Act that all CTE students are assessed, though the requirement of the Act is to report, for the purpose of accountability, assessment results on CTE concentrators.
- Each consortium is to select at least one assessment from the list of state-approved assessments for assessing CTE students within each state-approved program of study offered by the consortium.
<http://www.minnstate.edu/system/cte/programs/index.html>

- The choice of assessments might be the same or different at the secondary and postsecondary levels, but most likely different assessment instruments or scoring expectations will be used due to the level of understanding and ability of the students. Refer to the list of state-approved assessments for each program of study at the secondary level and at the postsecondary level.
- The selected pathway assessment(s) for each high school and college in a consortia should be identified and reported each year in May in the annual Perkins plan.

Administration of Assessments:

- The consortium is responsible for identifying the courses/programs at the secondary and postsecondary levels in which the assessments will be placed and must assess all CTE students participating in the course or program where the assessment is placed. From those students assessed, the state will extract assessment data on CTE concentrators for the purposes of accountability.
- Consortia are encouraged to determine the appropriate time within the student's participation in the program of study to administer the assessment. It might vary from one local program to another depending on the selected assessment, course offerings, and class schedules.
- CTE-approved programs that offer instruction totally online are required to administer a technical skill assessment. At this time, students will need to go to an identified testing site (i.e. college testing center or CTE classroom) to take the identified assessment. Teachers and faculty should work with their local consortia leadership to determine the best time and location for administering the assessment for maximum participation.

Funding Technical Skill Assessments:

- Cost of Assessment/ Postsecondary: If the assessment is required as part of the course and not a service sought by a student for a specific licensure requirement or for employment, the cost should be included in the tuition or paid by state or Perkins grant funds.
- Cost of Assessment/ Secondary: If the assessment is required as part of the course the cost should be paid by local or state funds or Perkins grant funds. If a student elects to take an assessment for a specific licensure requirement or for employment, there is no obligation on the school to pay for the assessment.
- It is not required that Perkins grant funds be used for the costs of implementing technical skill assessments in each consortia. This may vary by consortia throughout the state. Consortia leadership will work closely with local administration to determine the best way to support the funding and implementation of technical skill assessments in all high school and college programs in each career pathway.
- Failure to comply with the requirement of administering a state-approved technical skill assessment in a program could result in pulling Perkins grant funds to support future program improvement.
- Perkins funds are used to support programmatic expenses, not support individual students. However, when an assessment is connected to a specific career and technical student organization (e.g. SkillsUSA)

and it is a requirement that all students within the program are given the assessment, Perkins grant dollars may be used to pay for the student organization membership as well as the assessment costs.

- When a third party proctor is required to administer the assessment, local or state funds or Perkins grant dollars may be used to support reasonable costs of the proctor.

Related Professional Development:

- Minnesota is committed to sustainable professional development for consortia leaders, Perkins coordinators, local administrators, teachers, faculty, and local assessments coordinators. Technical skill assessment workshops and webinars will be offered on a regular basis to inform all stakeholders.
- Perkins grant dollars may be used for curriculum development/revision to embed pathway core competencies addressed within the state-approved technical skill assessment.

Annual Reporting of Assessment Results to the State:

Secondary:

- In submitting student information to MDE, consortia must, for each student reported in a school year, note whether the student was assessed and whether the student received a passing score on that assessment. Consortia are expected to work with school districts to ensure that all data are complete and ready for statewide submission by the end of the school year.
- The state will determine the number of CTE concentrators who were assessed and the number of CTE concentrators who passed the assessments and report those results as part of accountability reporting.
- The state will extract assessment data for CTE concentrators from assessment data on all CTE students submitted by consortia.

Postsecondary:

- System Office Research staff from the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities will coordinate the central collection of data, as possible (i.e., if/when data sharing agreements are able to be made), from licensing boards and third-party vendors for inclusion in the TSA accountability measure.
- The state will determine the number of CTE concentrators who were assessed and the number of CTE concentrators who passed the assessments and report those results as part of its accountability reporting responsibilities.

Definitions of CTE Concentrator:

- A secondary CTE concentrator is a student who has successfully completed at least 240 hours of work in state-approved career and technical education courses within one career field.
- A postsecondary CTE concentrator is a student who is enrolled in a state-approved career and technical education program, has completed 12 or more credits and has declared as his/her degree intent (major)

a CTE award (Certificate, Diploma, AS or AAS) or is a student who has enrolled in a short-term CTE program (less than 12 credits) and completed and received a CTE award in that program.