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Developing a College- and Career-Ready Workforce **An Analysis of ESSA, Perkins, and WIOA**

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Introduction

Across the United States, state leaders are examining their current and future economic landscapes to ensure that today's workers are appropriately prepared for workforce demands¹ (see Figure 1). The continued advancement of technology and increase in globalization suggest that the nature of work will continue to evolve. Today's workforce will not only need postsecondary training and education but will also need to be lifelong learners, able to gain new knowledge throughout their careers. To establish an education-to-workforce pipeline, state leaders will need to align labor market efforts with the education pipeline to ensure a seamless system of **academic, technical, and employability skills** preparedness. The institutions that make up the education pipeline—including the general K–12 system, career and technical education (CTE) programs, 2-year and 4-year postsecondary institutions, technical training programs, and pre-apprenticeship and registered apprenticeship programs—are crucial partners in addressing labor market demands.

As states grapple with competing priorities and constrained resources, there is an increasing focus on efficiency and alignment among state agencies. The College and Career Readiness and Success (CCRS) Center recently analyzed and compared three federal laws that govern the education-to-workforce pipeline—the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act (Perkins), and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). Although states have years of experience implementing these federal programs, because they are administered across different state agencies or different offices within a state agency and coordinating across initiatives can be a challenge. This brief aims to identify opportunities to connect, align, and leverage state policies, programs, and funding across these three federal laws.

Figure 1. State Governor Priorities—2017

The CCRS Center recently reviewed all 50 governors' state of the state addresses to identify policy priorities for the upcoming legislative term. The CCRS Center found that 37 of the 50 governors included explicit mention of college and career readiness as a priority. Frequent college and career readiness topics included the following:

- 2-year and 4-year college accessibility and affordability (15)
- Career and technical education (11)
- Adult workforce goals (9)
- Accelerated coursework (9)
- Work- and context-based learning (6)
- Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (5)

THE ROLE OF ESSA, PERKINS, AND WIOA IN WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

ESSA, Perkins, and WIOA² play important and complementary roles in educating and training the country's workforce. ESSA is the nation's education law. It provides funding for public education from kindergarten to 12th grade and requires that all students be taught to high academic standards that prepare them to succeed in college and careers. Perkins funds states and other grantees to improve both secondary and postsecondary career and technical education (CTE) programs focused on preparing students for the real world. And WIOA Title I funds the public workforce development system, which matches labor market needs with education, training, and support services for youth and adults looking for meaningful employment, while WIOA Title II funds adult education and literacy activities for out-of-school youth and adults who lack a high school diploma or proficiency in English. Together ESSA, Perkins, and WIOA can facilitate an education-to-workforce pipeline that provides individuals with the academic, technical, and employability skills they need to be successful in the workforce. Table 1 provides additional details for each of the three laws.

¹ English, D., Cushing, E., Therriault, S., & Rasmussen, J. (2017). *College and career readiness begins with a well-rounded education: Opportunities under the Every Student Succeeds Act*. Washington, DC: American Institutes for Research, College and Career Readiness and Success Center. Retrieved from <http://www.ccrscenter.org/products-resources/ask-the-ccrs-center/college-and-career-readiness-begins-well-rounded-education>

² All three laws are reauthorizations of earlier laws. The Every Student Succeeds Act, 2015, is the most recent reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, 1965; the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act, 2006, is the most recent reauthorization of the Smith-Hughes Act of 1917; and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, 2014, is the most recent reauthorization of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998.

Table 1. Overview of ESSA, Perkins, and WIOA

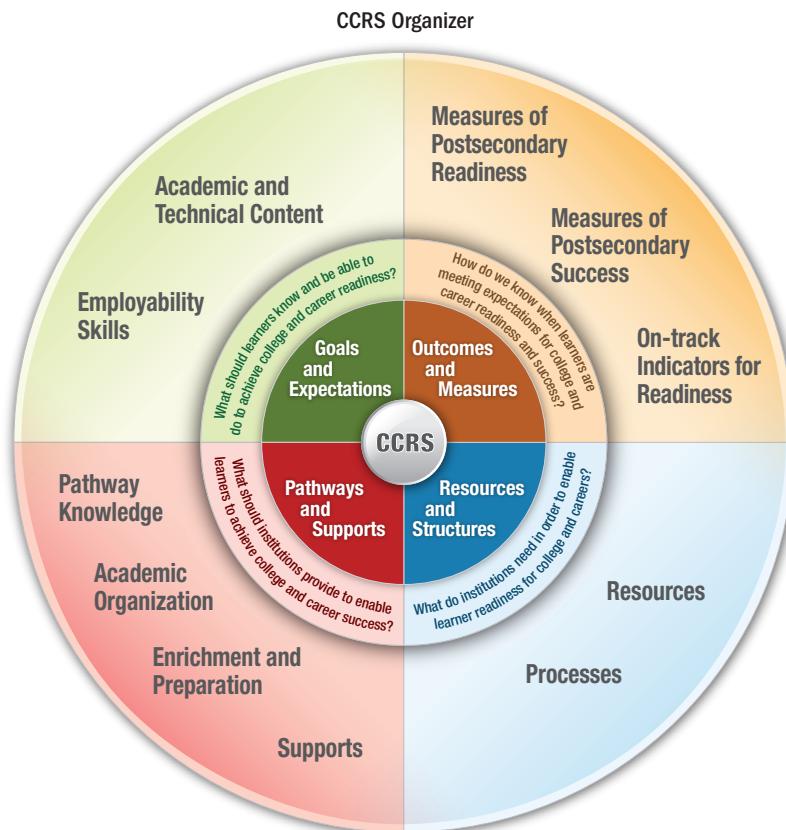
Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)	Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act (Perkins)	Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)
TARGET POPULATION		
Students in public K-12 schools	Secondary CTE students in public schools and students in technical and community colleges	Adults and dislocated workers, job seekers, incumbent workers, and in- and out-of-school youth
DESCRIPTION		
<p>ESSA is the most recent reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, 1965. ESSA provides funding to K-12 schools and districts throughout the nation and emphasizes equal access to education, high standards, and accountability.</p> <p>ESSA emphasizes the well-rounded education provision as a primary policy lever to support states' efforts to fulfill college and career efforts by aligning district and school college and career readiness initiatives with curricula, improved conditions for learning, and other educational experiences that may constitute a well-rounded education. In doing so, states may leverage federal funding for a well-rounded education to drive college and career readiness strategies.</p>	<p>Perkins provides federal support for CTE programs in states. The law focuses on the academic and technical achievement of CTE students, strengthening the connections between secondary and postsecondary education and improving accountability. Perkins includes a requirement for programs of study, which is intended to seamlessly link academic and technical content across secondary and postsecondary education. Perkins is the largest federal investment in America's high schools and a significant source of support for postsecondary institutions.</p> <p>Perkins includes a number of provisions that have direct relevance to college and career readiness, including alignment and integration of academic content standards, programs of study, measuring technical skill attainment to determine work readiness, and strengthened reporting and accountability requirements.</p>	<p>WIOA Title I supports workforce development activities in states by funding career services and job training programs for adults and youth. The law's provisions are aimed at modernizing the nation's workforce development system and streamlining existing employment and workforce-related education and training systems.</p> <p>WIOA authorizes the one-stop career center service delivery system and four core programs. The core programs are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ WIOA Title I (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth formula programs), administered by the Department of Labor ■ Adult Education and Family Literacy Act programs, administered by the Department of Education ■ Wagner-Peyser Act employment services, administered by the Department of Labor ■ Rehabilitation Act Title I vocational rehabilitation program, administered by the Department of Education <p>In addition to the core programs, the following partner programs are required to provide access to their services through the one-stops: postsecondary programs authorized by the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act, employment and training activities carried out under the Community Services Block Grant, Native American programs authorized by Title I of WIOA, Department of Housing and Urban Development employment and training activities, Job Corps, Local Veterans' Employment Representatives and Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program, National Farmworker Jobs Program, Senior Community Service Employment Program, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, Trade Adjustment Assistance Program, unemployment compensation programs, and YouthBuild.</p>
STATE GRANTEE AGENCY		
State education agency (SEA)	State education agency, state postsecondary agency (10 states), Career, Technical, and Adult Education Agency (one state), state Workforce Investment Board (one state)	State Workforce Development Board, state labor or workforce development agency (Title I); state education agency, state postsecondary agency, state labor or workforce development agency (Title II)

PURPOSE OF THE BRIEF

This brief is intended to stimulate conversations amongst state agencies, state agency offices, and local education agencies responsible for planning and implementing each of the three laws. The brief provides a common framework for identifying opportunities to align college and career readiness efforts. The CCRS Center used qualitative research methods to analyze the three laws, including legislation, regulatory guidance, and nonregulatory guidance. The laws were analyzed using the [College and Career Readiness and Success Organizer](#) (Figure 2) as the organizing framework. The Organizer defines the many elements that impact a student's college and career readiness across four overarching domains:

- *Goals and Expectations*—defines the academic, technical, and employability skills students must know and demonstrate to be college and career ready.
- *Outcomes and Measures*—identifies the assessments and indicators that define when students are meeting the academic, technical, and employability skills defined in Goals and Expectations.
- *Resources and Structures*—defines the non-learner structure and resource needs, including fiscal, human capital, programmatic, and community needs.
- *Pathways and Supports*—defines the guidance and services needed to develop individual college and career readiness.

Figure 2. College and Career Readiness Organizer



The brief summarizes the qualitative analysis for each of the laws across each of the four CCRS Organizer domains. [Appendix A. State and Local Planning Workbook](#) offers a facilitated protocol state and local teams can use to identify existing or planned opportunities to strategically align college and career readiness efforts.

Goals and Expectations

The Goals and Expectations quadrant analyzes specific college and career indicators that describe what learners **should know and be able to do** by the time they graduate within the three laws. The indicators define how the laws describe the *academic, technical, and employability skills* competencies that are required for success in college and career. Across the three laws, there are opportunities for states to align their college and career readiness goals and expectations to promote a coherent vision for academic, technical, and employability skills preparedness.



ESSA

ESSA provides SEAs and local education agencies (LEAs) with autonomy in developing college and career readiness expectations that meet their specific context. ESSA requires all states to implement academic standards and it requires LEAs to integrate rigorous academic and employment-focused content for in-demand jobs, emphasizing a focus on science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM), and ensuring remediation-free entry to 4-year colleges. The well-rounded education (WRE) provision is an opportunity for states to align their college and career readiness expectations along the K–12 to postsecondary continuum, including opportunities for students to develop crucial employability skills that align to business and industry needs. Finally, ESSA requires LEAs to support programs that support academic and CTE learning for in-demand jobs.



PERKINS

Because Perkins focuses on both secondary and postsecondary institutions, the law requires the goals and expectations to more closely align with industry demands. Perkins Title I requires integrating academic, technical, and employability skills into CTE coursework. Further, embedded within the law's definition of "CTE coursework" is the requirement that the program contributes to higher-order reasoning and problem-solving skills, work attitudes, and general employability skills. In addition to a focus on CTE content, Perkins consistently identifies the inclusion of rigorous academic coursework in CTE programs and instruction.



WIOA

WIOA focuses on the economic needs of states and regions, including the knowledge, skills, and abilities important for specific industries and occupations. WIOA Title I's focus on preparing adults and youth for in-demand jobs requires the development of academic, technical, and employability skills necessary for employment. One-stop providers must assess participants across educational, training, and employability skills and refer them to aligned services. Title II funds for adult education may be used to develop curricula and provide instruction for the attainment of basic skills in English language arts (ELA), mathematics, and English language proficiency by out-of-school youth and adults.

Table 2 summarizes legislation, regulatory, and nonregulatory guidance that addresses each of the Goals and Expectations indicators.

Goals and Expectations Indicators

Academic and Technical Content

- Academic standards
- Career and technical standards
- Alignment to postsecondary requirements

Employability Skills

- Effective relationships
- Workplace skills
- Applied knowledge

Credential Attainment

- Postsecondary degree
- Industry credentials

Table 2. Summary of Findings on Alignment of Goals and Expectations

ESSA	Perkins	WIOA
<p>TITLE I: DEFINITION OF WELL-ROUNDED EDUCATION (WRE)</p> <p>ESSA defines a WRE as the courses, activities, and programming in subjects such as English, reading or language arts, writing, science, technology, engineering, mathematics, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts, history, geography, computer science, music, CTE, health, physical education, and any other subject, as determined by the state or local educational agency, with the purpose of providing all students access to an enriched curriculum and educational experience.</p> <p>TITLE I, PART A: BASIC PROGRAMS FOR DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS</p> <p>LEAs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Must develop and implement a well-rounded education that promotes mastery of academic content standards and may include coursework and other educational experiences to promote technical and employability skills attainment. ■ Must support programs that integrate academic/CTE learning for attainment of in-demand jobs. <p>TITLE I, PART B: STATE ASSESSMENT GRANTS</p> <p>States may develop rigorous academic achievement standards that are aligned to CTE standards and with achievement levels that ensure remediation-free entry to 4-year colleges.</p> <p>TITLE IV, PART B: 21ST CENTURY SCHOOLS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ LEAs may further support efforts to connect a WRE to in-demand skills by developing and implementing a WRE that includes integrated content for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • STEM • CTE • Employability skills such as collaboration skills, relationship-building skills, and learning skills • Programs that partner with in-demand fields of the local workforce or build career competencies and career readiness and ensure that local workforce and career readiness skills are aligned to Perkins and WIOA 	<p>TITLE I, PART B: STATE PROVISIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Must ensure that students who participate in such CTE programs are taught the same challenging academic proficiencies as are taught to all other students. <p>TITLE I: CTE ASSISTANCE TO STATES</p> <p>LEAs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Must initiate, improve, modernize, and/or implement programs that integrate academic and CTE skills (including employability skills), including through technology improvements. <p>States</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Must integrate academic/technical training and employability skills. ■ Must improve CTE courses that lead to high-wage, high-skill jobs for special populations. ■ Must prepare students for nontraditional fields in current and emerging professions and other activities that expose students, including special populations, to high-skill, high-wage occupations. ■ May align CTE standards with rigorous academic content standards. 	<p>TITLE I: UNIFIED STATE PLANS</p> <p>WIOA state unified plans should include an analysis of the economic condition of the state, including the employment needs of employers, including a description of the knowledge, skills, and abilities, needed in those industries and occupations.</p> <p>TITLE I: ADULT ACTIVITIES³</p> <p>LOCAL AREAS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Must assess basic skills (including literacy, numeracy, and English language proficiency), aptitudes, abilities, and supportive service needs. ■ Must provide integrated education and training programs that include adult education and literacy activities, workforce preparation activities, and workforce training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster. <p>States</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ May develop education and training programs that respond to real-time labor market analysis. ■ May improve coordination of economic development activities with workforce investment activities. ■ May implement strategies to meet needs of employers. <p>TITLE I: YOUTH ACTIVITIES⁴</p> <p>Local Areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Must provide occupational skills training that gives priority to occupations aligned to local, in-demand occupations. <p>States</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ May research linkages between youth needs and workforce opportunities. ■ May support re-entry to and completion of secondary school and/or advanced training. <p>TITLE II: ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY ACTIVITIES</p> <p>States</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide grants directly to eligible education providers to deliver adult education in basic skills concurrent with training and workforce preparation activities.

³ Up to 80% of WIOA Title I funding may be allocated to Adult and Dislocated Worker Employment and Training Activities (i.e., “Adult Activities”). Local activities are provided through one-stop providers.

⁴ At least 20% of WIOA Title I funds must be allocated to Youth Workforce Investment Activities (i.e., “Youth Activities”).

Outcomes and Measures

The Outcomes and Measures quadrant analyzes the essential milestones and benchmarks that **monitor and assess individual academic, technical, and employability skills** competencies. College and career readiness measures should assess the Goals and Expectations and should be continuously validated with intended outcomes. This quadrant also describes data collection and reporting requirements to ensure data are usable and inform decision making. Each of the laws explicitly specifies requirements related to accountability measures and assessment design, as well as data reporting, storage, and access. States interested in aligning efforts can use common measures and coordinate data collection efforts to produce a more robust picture of college and career readiness of individual students.

ESSA

Title I funds require SEAs to develop an accountability system that reports on graduation rate; student growth; and English language, mathematics, and ELA proficiency. States also must include an additional indicator of school quality of their choosing, which may include a college and career readiness measure. Title I, Part A provides funding for states to develop new college and career readiness assessments, including performance-based assessments, CTE assessments, or extended performance tasks. Furthermore, Title I allows state report cards to include college and career readiness indicators.

PERKINS

Nonregulatory guidance defines secondary and postsecondary Perkins accountability requirements for CTE concentrators,⁵ as proficiency in reading, ELA, and mathematics; technical skills attainment participation in and completion of CTE programs; and placement in postsecondary education, advanced training, military service, or employment. Title I funding allows for the development of technical assessments for specified career pathways. Perkins also requires data disaggregated by career cluster, race, gender, special population status, and other state-identified characteristics.

WIOA

Reporting requirements for WIOA outcomes and measures focus heavily on workforce outcomes. Core programs implement common performance accountability metrics, including credential attainment and skills gains, employment, earnings, and employer satisfaction. Further, WIOA assesses and awards credit for prior knowledge, skills, competencies and experiences. Performance accountability measures are disaggregated by subpopulations, race, ethnicity, gender, and age.

Table 3 summarizes legislation, regulatory, and nonregulatory guidance that addresses each of the Outcomes and Measures indicators.

OUTCOMES AND MEASURES INDICATORS

On-Track Indicators for Readiness

- Course completion
- Performance on summative assessment
- Credential attainment

Measures of Postsecondary Readiness

- High school graduation
- Postsecondary enrollment
- Industry certification
- Persistence in postsecondary pathways

Measures of Postsecondary Success

- Job placement in middle skills or career trajectory
- Credential attainment
- College diploma

Assessment

- Assessment design
- Assessment administration

Data Collection

- Statewide longitudinal data systems
- Data sharing

⁵ U.S. Department of Education guidance encourages states to define a CTE concentrator as a secondary student who has earned three or more credits in a single CTE program area, or two credits in a single CTE program area, but only in those program areas for which two credit sequences at the secondary level are recognized by the state and/or its local eligible recipients. States may use other definitions.

Table 3. Summary of Findings on Alignment of Outcomes and Measures

ESSA	Perkins	WIOA
<p>TITLE I, PART A: ACCOUNTABILITY REQUIREMENTS</p> <p>States must include the following measures in their accountability systems: 4-year adjusted cohort graduation rate; student growth or another valid and reliable indicator; progress in achieving English language proficiency; proficiency based on the long-term goal. States may include one or more measures of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Student engagement ■ Educator engagement ■ Student access to and completion of advanced coursework ■ Postsecondary readiness ■ School climate and safety ■ Other <p>TITLE I, PART B: ASSESSMENT</p> <p>Each state plan shall demonstrate [it] has implemented a set of high-quality student academic assessments in mathematics, reading or language arts, and science.</p> <p>TITLE I, PART A: BASIC PROGRAMS</p> <p>Five percent of states' Title I, Part A allocation may be used for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The identification and development of measures of student performance and school quality and systems to collect the measures, including activities to align such systems to Perkins and WIOA systems. ■ The development of statewide assessments, which may be delivered partially in the form of portfolios, projects, or extended performance tasks. <p>States may fund the development of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Assessments in any academic subject. ■ Balanced assessment systems that include summative, interim, and formative assessments. ■ Tests that emphasize mastery of standards and aligned competencies, including technology-based, performance-based, computer-adaptive, and tests that embed projects or extended performance tasks. 	<p>TITLE I, PART A: SECONDARY REPORTING</p> <p>For CTE concentrators only, secondary program accountability systems must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Proficiency in reading ELA, mathematics, and science, as measured by ESEA Title I assessments. ■ Technical skills attainment ■ Attainment of a secondary school diploma or its equivalent ■ 4-year adjusted cohort graduation rate ■ Placement in postsecondary education or advanced training, military service, or employment ■ Participation in and completion of CTE programs that lead to nontraditional fields <p>POSTSECONDARY REPORTING</p> <p>For CTE concentrators only, postsecondary program accountability systems must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Technical skills attainment ■ Industry-recognized credential, certificate, or diploma ■ Student retention or transfer ■ Student placement in military service or apprenticeship programs or placement or retention in employment ■ Participation in and completion of CTE programs <p>PERFORMANCE REPORTING</p> <p>Performance results must be disaggregated by major racial and ethnic group, gender, English language proficiency status, disability status, status as an individual from an economically disadvantaged family, status as a participant in a program that prepares individuals for nontraditional fields, status as a migrant, displaced homemaker status, and status as a single parent or single pregnant woman.</p> <p>CTE program enrollment data for CTE concentrators disaggregated by career cluster area, race, gender, and special population status.</p>	<p>TITLE I, CHAPTER 4: PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY</p> <p>Performance accountability measures for youth and adults shall include indicators of having obtained or being in the process of obtaining:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Postsecondary credential, secondary school diploma, or equivalent during participation or within 1 year after program exit. ■ Enrollment in education that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential or employment and achievement of measurable skill gains toward those goals. ■ Unsubsidized employment (and/or, in the case of youth, participation in education and training) during the second and fourth quarters after exit from the program. ■ Median earnings during the second quarter after exit from the program. ■ Effectiveness in serving employers. <p>TITLE I: ADULT AND YOUTH ACTIVITIES</p> <p>Local Areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Must provide an initial assessment of academic and technical skills, as well as employability, interests, aptitudes and development needs, and, if appropriate, comprehensive and specialized assessments of skills. ■ Must provide performance information on eligible training providers, providers of youth workforce development activities, adult education, postsecondary CTE and CTE programs for dropouts under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act, and vocational rehabilitation services. ■ Must provide data to participants regarding the local area performance on accountability measures that is usable. <p>States</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Must provide assistance to state entities and agencies, local areas, and one-stop partners in coordination and alignment of data systems. ■ Must fund various evaluation, monitoring, and oversight activities of local adult and youth programs that integrate the required performance indicators.

ESSA	Perkins	WIOA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ State report cards that can be cross-tabulated by major racial and ethnic group, gender, English language proficiency status, and disability status and that may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number and percentage of students enrolled in Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate coursework. • College-going rate of students within 1 year of graduation, where available. • Any other information, including CTE proficiency attainment. <p>TITLE I, PART B: GRANTS FOR STATE ASSESSMENTS AND RELATED ACTIVITIES AND INNOVATIVE ASSESSMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY DEMONSTRATION AUTHORITY</p> <p>States may fund efforts to replace statewide mathematics, ELA/reading, or science assessments with next-generation assessments, which may be competency based or performance based.</p>	<p>TITLE I: CTE ASSISTANCE TO STATES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ May develop and enhance data systems to collect and analyze data on secondary and postsecondary academic and employment outcomes. ■ May develop valid and reliable assessment of technical skills. 	<p>TITLE II: ADULT EDUCATION AND FAMILY LITERACY</p> <p>Measures for adult education participants are the same as those established for the WIOA Title I youth, adult, and dislocated worker programs</p> <p>TITLE I, CHAPTER 4: PERFORMANCE REPORTS</p> <p>The performance report for a state shall include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Information specifying the levels of performance achieved with respect to the primary indicators of performance for each of the programs with respect to individuals with barriers to employment⁶, disaggregated by each subpopulation of such individuals and by race, ethnicity, gender, and age. ■ The number of individuals with barriers to employment served by each of the programs, disaggregated by each subpopulation of such individual.

⁶ Individuals with barriers to employment include: displaced homemakers; low-income individuals; Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians; individuals with disabilities; older individuals; ex-offenders; homeless individuals; youth who are in or who have aged out of the foster care system; English language learners, individuals who have low levels of literacy, and individuals “facing substantial cultural barriers;” single parents, including single pregnant women; individuals within 2 years of exhausting lifetime eligibility for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF); migrant and seasonal farmworkers; long-term unemployed individuals; and any other groups identified by the Governor.

Resources and Structures

Resources and Structures analyzes the **institutional assets necessary to prepare college- and career-ready students**, including the necessary funding, processes, people, and resources. Each of the three laws identify organizational, curriculum, and instructional alignment opportunities to support the development of academic, technical, and employability skills for all students.



ESSA

ESSA provides funding dedicated to the professional development of teachers and other educators and staff through Title II, Part A. Funding under Titles I and IV may be used to support collaborative professional development for CTE, higher education, and general education stakeholders focused on dual/concurrent enrollment, Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate, and early college coursework and STEM instruction. ESSA also allows funds to be used to support educator training on state and regional workforce needs, particularly for college and career counselors. Finally, ESSA allows professional development that supports (a) the integration of academic, technical, and employability skills and (b) the capacity to provide work-based learning experiences and pathways that culminate in in-demand work placement.

RESOURCES AND STRUCTURES INDICATORS

Resources

- Human capital
- Fiscal
- Learning resources

Processes

- Professional development
- Community engagement
- Alignment of policies and programs
- Alignment across institutions



PERKINS

Perkins funding must support professional development that offers instructional strategies for integrating academic and technical content and for supporting educators in understanding current industry needs. Additionally, Perkins requires that educator professional development opportunities are offered to CTE teachers, faculty, administrators, and career guidance and academic counselors. Perkins also requires that educator professional development content focuses on helping parents and students understand career and education pathways opportunities.



WIOA

WIOA Title I does not identify explicit opportunities for integrating academic, technical, and employability skills into professional development. However, the law offers more flexibility on who can receive professional development including staff and educators of local boards, offices of chief elected officials, one-stop operators, one-stop partners, and eligible service providers in local areas. Under WIOA Title I, capacity-building responsibilities fall largely to the state Workforce Development Board. Further, state WIOA Title II funds may be used to integrate literacy and English language instruction with occupational skills training.

Table 4 summarizes legislation, regulatory, and nonregulatory guidance that addresses each of the Resources and Structures indicators.

Table 4. Summary of Findings on the Alignment of Resources and Structures

ESSA	Perkins	WIOA
<p>TITLE I: SCHOOLWIDE PROGRAMS</p> <p>The LEA may use funds to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide joint in-service training for teachers, in collaboration with CTE educators and educators from institutions of higher education, for integrating rigorous content into a dual/concurrent curriculum. ■ Develop integrated, rigorous content to support dual/concurrent coursework and CTE educators. ■ Deliver instruction to support academic, technical, and employability skills. ■ Integrate academic and technical course content. ■ Address the needs of all students, particularly those at risk, through activities that may include specialized instructional support services. <p>TITLE II: STATE PLANS</p> <p>The SEA may use funds to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Improve instructional strategies of teachers, principals, and other school leaders to integrate CTE content into academic instructional practices, which may include training on best practices to understand state and regional workforce needs and transitions to postsecondary education and the workforce. ■ Support opportunities for collaborative discussion of the transition to elementary school, including school-readiness issues. ■ Provide instruction in STEM subjects and computer science. ■ Integrate CTE into academic content. ■ Improve students' peer interaction skills. ■ Help students develop skills necessary for learning readiness and academic success. ■ Build capacity to deliver instruction for dual/concurrent coursework, Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate coursework, or early college coursework that leads to college credit. ■ Integrate work-based learning experiences into academic and CTE coursework. <p>TITLE IV: 21ST CENTURY SCHOOLS</p> <p>The SEA and LEA may use funds to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide effective STEM instruction, including integrating STEM with other academic subjects. ■ Help students develop relationship-building skills, such as effective communication. ■ Support college and career guidance and counseling programs, including training counselors to effectively use labor market data. 	<p>TITLE I: STATE PLAN</p> <p>The state must provide support comprehensive professional development for CTE teachers, faculty, administrators, and career guidance and academic counselors.</p> <p>Professional development will promote the integration of rigorous academic content standards and CTE curricula, including through the joint development and implementation of curricula and pedagogical strategies by appropriate stakeholders.</p> <p>States</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Must support professional development for CTE teachers, postsecondary faculty, administrators, and career guidance and academic counselors, including integration of academic standards and CTE and effective teaching skills based on research-based promising practices. ■ Must provide educators with the knowledge, skills, and occupational information necessary to assist parents and students, especially special populations, with career exploration, educational opportunities, education financing, and exposure to high-skill, high-wage, or high-demand occupations and nontraditional fields, including occupations and fields requiring baccalaureate degrees. ■ Must support academic and CTE teachers in staying current with industry needs and trends; developing higher levels of academic and industry knowledge in CTE; and effectively using applied learning, which may support work-based learning and effective practices, to improve parental and community involvement. <p>LEAs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Must support partnerships to provide industry experience to teachers and faculty. ■ Must build capacity of teachers, faculty, administrators, and counselors to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrate CTE and academic content. • Improve instruction in general. • Stay current on industry developments. 	<p>TITLE I: YOUTH ACTIVITIES</p> <p>The state has broad flexibility to fund efforts to train staff and educators of local boards, offices of chief elected officials, one-stop operators, one-stop partners, and eligible service providers in local areas based on their needs.</p> <p>TITLE I: ADULT ACTIVITIES</p> <p>The state is required to fund the development and training of staff of these entities, which may include training of staff to provide opportunities for individuals with barriers to employment to enter in-demand industry sectors or occupations and nontraditional occupations.</p> <p>TITLE II: ADULT EDUCATION AND FAMILY LITERACY</p> <p>States are required to establish or operate high-quality professional development programs to improve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Instruction in essential components of reading instruction, such as components related to adults. ■ Other instruction related to specific needs of adults. ■ Instruction provided by volunteers or state personnel. ■ Dissemination of information about models and promising practices related to such programs.

Pathways and Supports

The Pathways and Supports quadrant analyzes **the coordinated system of supports and services that support individual student development**.

In this sense, Pathways and Supports set the context wherein students determine career goals, master content, determine postsecondary options to accomplish the goals, and overcome barriers to postsecondary success. The three laws reference supportive services related to receiving academic content, career awareness, work-based learning, and knowledge of postsecondary pathways. In addition to the education focus, the laws identify nonacademic support services necessary for student success, including health services, counseling, transportation, and housing.



ESSA

Title I, Part A allows LEAs to integrate work-based learning experiences into the WRE provision to support academic and CTE skills attainment. ESSA does not require career awareness activities. However, funds may be used for advanced coursework and other educational experiences that support transitions from high school to postsecondary education, training, or work. ESSA funding for career counseling can help students identify viable career pathways and establish partnerships among LEAs, businesses, and other stakeholders. Finally, Title I, Part A and Title IV, Part A provide funding for improving conditions for learning for disadvantaged students, including academic and nonacademic pipeline services that address readiness to learn.

PATHWAYS AND SUPPORTS INDICATORS

Academic Organization

- Curriculum, instruction, and assessment
- Pathways to postsecondary opportunities
- Work- and context-based learning
- Well-rounded education

Pathways Knowledge

- Awareness of pathway options
- Knowledge of personal interests and skills
- Personal goals and aspirations
- Postsecondary transitions
- Career pathways participation
- Guidance/career counseling

Supports

- Individualized pathways/learning plans
- Pipeline services
- Credit recovery
- Accommodations



PERKINS

Under Perkins, CTE must contribute to students' knowledge of all aspects of an industry and local areas must provide at least one program of study that links integrated academic, technical, and career training across secondary and higher education, training, and/or work opportunities. Furthermore, embedded in the Perkins definition of CTE is the requirement that sequenced coursework and training leads to credentials. Finally, local funding may be used to support work-based learning experiences for CTE students or a narrowly defined set of support services for disadvantaged and/or special populations.



WIOA

WIOA Title I requires one-stop providers to assess the supportive service needs of adults and youth, defined as such services as transportation, child care, housing, and counseling. One-stop providers must offer career services that connect the career aptitudes and interests of adults to in-demand career opportunities and must help adults and youth navigate these pathways. Work-based learning experiences are required components of these services. WIOA Title I also requires that local workforce development boards lead the development of career pathways by aligning employment, training, education, and supportive services for adults and youth, particularly individuals with barriers to employment. State and local workforce development boards may use funds to drive sector partnerships with businesses that help inform and participate in these pathways. In competitively awarding WIOA Title II funds to adult education providers, states must consider whether the provider will offer flexible schedules and coordinate with federal, state, and local sources of support services, such as child care and transportation.

Table 5 summarizes legislation, regulatory, and nonregulatory guidance that addresses each of the Pathways and Supports indicators.

Table 5. Summary of Pathways and Supports Alignment Findings

ESSA	Perkins	WIOA
<p>TITLE I, PART A: IMPROVING CONDITIONS FOR LEARNING</p> <p>LEAs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Must implement strategies to improve conditions for learning that may include a broad spectrum of support services. ■ Must, if appropriate, support academic and CTE content through experiential learning opportunities that promote skills attainment important to in-demand occupations. ■ Must, if appropriate, support programs that integrate work-based learning opportunities that provide in-depth interaction with industry professionals and, if appropriate, academic credit. ■ Must support transitions from high school to postsecondary education, including, where applicable: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordination with institutions of higher education and employers. • Increased access to career counseling to identify student interests and skills. <p>Schoolwide programs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ May support counseling, mental health programs, specialized instructional support, mentoring, or other strategies to improve students' skill outside the academic subject areas. ■ Must address the needs of all students but particularly those at risk, which may include <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness of opportunities for postsecondary education and the workforce • CTE programs • Broadening students' access to advanced coursework <p>Targeted assistance programs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ May strengthen academic programs through expanded learning programs. <p>TITLE I, PART A: WELL-ROUNDED EDUCATION (WRE)</p> <p>LEAs and Title I schools may include, in a WRE, Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate, dual/concurrent, or early college coursework; career exploration activities; work-based learning; or other programming that supports transitions to postsecondary education, training, or work. Additional areas within ESSA where WRE is referenced include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Title II, Part A: Supporting Effective Instruction ■ Title IV, Part A: Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grants (SSAEG) ■ Title IV, Part B: 21st Century Schools 	<p>TITLE I: DEFINITION OF SUPPORT SERVICES</p> <p>The term "support services" means services related to curriculum modification, equipment modification, classroom modification, supportive personnel, and instructional aids and devices.</p> <p>LEAs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Must provide activities to prepare special populations who are enrolled in CTE programs for high-skill, high-wage, or high-demand occupations that will lead to self-sufficiency. ■ Must provide strong experience in and understanding of all aspects of an industry, which may include work-based learning. ■ Must support at least one sequenced program of study integrating core academic and technical training across secondary and postsecondary education that leads to an industry-recognized credential or certificate at the postsecondary level or an associate or baccalaureate degree. ■ May support local partnerships to support work-related experiences, such as internships, co-ops, school-based enterprises, entrepreneurship, and job shadowing. ■ May provide direct assistance to special populations, including dependent care, transportation, tuition, books, and supplies. ■ May provide mentoring for all students. ■ May support dual/concurrent coursework ■ May provide career guidance and academic counseling tailored to student goals and expectations, for secondary and postsecondary students enrolled in CTE programs, including adults who are changing careers or updating skills. ■ May develop and articulate pathways from subbaccalaureate education to baccalaureate education. <p>States</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Must support partnerships among LEAs, institutions of higher education, adult education providers, and other entities—such as employers, labor organizations, intermediaries, parents, and local partnerships—to enable students to complete a sequenced plan of CTE study. ■ May award incentive grants to encourage progress of special populations toward meeting performance indicators. 	<p>TITLE I: ADULT ACTIVITIES</p> <p>Local areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Must assess needs for supportive services. ■ Must provide information regarding the availability of supportive services and referral to these services. ■ Must provide career services, which may include career planning, internships, and work experiences that are linked to careers. ■ Must provide, if appropriate to obtain employment, services to develop an individual employment plan, including employment goals, achievement objectives, providers of training services, and career pathway. ■ May provide customer support to help individuals overcome barriers to employment. ■ May coordinate local services with programs for individuals with disabilities. <p>States</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Must assist local areas in developing, convening, and implementing industry or sector partnerships. ■ May use funds to articulate and implement pathways. <p>TITLE I: YOUTH ACTIVITIES</p> <p>Local areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Must assess the need for and provide supportive services. ■ Must provide adult mentoring for at least 12 months. ■ Must provide guidance and counseling. ■ Must identify service strategies for each individual that identify career pathways that include education and employment goals. ■ Must provide activities leading to attainment of a secondary diploma or its equivalent, or a recognized postsecondary credential. ■ Must provide unpaid and paid work experiences that integrate occupational and academic education. ■ Must provide services, such as career awareness and career exploration services, that provide labor market and employment information about in-demand industry sectors or occupations in the local area. <p>States</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ May support the delivery of career services in the one-stop delivery system. ■ May develop evidence-based programs for youth to re-enter secondary school and for individuals to graduate, enroll in postsecondary and training, and enter pathways to employment.

ESSA	Perkins	WIOA
<p>TITLE IV, PART B: LOCAL FUNDING FOR SSAEG AND 21ST CENTURY SCHOOLS</p> <p>Promoting a WRE that may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Work-based learning and field-based experiences ■ Service learning ■ College and career guidance and counseling <p>TITLE IV: PROMISE NEIGHBORHOODS AND FULL-SERVICE COMMUNITY LEARNING SCHOOLS</p> <p>Grantees must provide pipeline services to schools with high concentrations of low-income students.</p> <p>TITLE I: DIRECT STUDENT SERVICES FUNDS</p> <p>States may fund Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate, dual/concurrent, or early college coursework and CTE that leads to credentials.</p> <p>TITLE IV, PART A: STUDENT SUPPORT AND ACADEMIC ENRICHMENT GRANTS</p> <p>LEAs may provide mentoring and counseling services for all students, including those who are at risk of academic failure.</p> <p>TITLE IV, PART F: PIPELINE SERVICES</p> <p>The term “pipeline services” means a continuum of coordinated supports, services, and opportunities for children from birth through entry into and success in both postsecondary education and career attainment. Such services shall include, at a minimum, strategies to address through services or programs (including integrated student supports) the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ High-quality early childhood education programs. ■ High-quality school and out-of-school-time programs. ■ Activities that support postsecondary and workforce readiness, which may include job training, internship opportunities, and career counseling. ■ Social, health, nutrition, and mental health services and supports. ■ Juvenile crime prevention and rehabilitation programs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ May support and improve career guidance and academic counseling, which may include information regarding training options, occupational supply and demand, and connections between career goals to CTE preparation. ■ May support transition of CTE students into postsecondary programs through articulation between associate and baccalaureate programs. ■ May support dual/concurrent coursework. 	<p>TITLE II: ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY ACTIVITIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Uses the same definition of “individuals with barriers to employment” as WIOA Title I youth, adult, and dislocated worker programs <p>States</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Must align activities for individuals with pathways that provide employment and training services. ■ May develop content and models for integrated education and training and career pathways. ■ May develop and implement a system to assist in the transition from adult education to postsecondary education. ■ May develop and implement programs and services to meet the needs of adult learners with learning disabilities or English language learners.

Conclusion

ESSA, Perkins, and WIOA play important and complementary roles in educating and training the country's workforce with the academic, technical, and employability skills they need to be successful. Creating this coherent education-to-workforce pipeline requires aligning implementation efforts across the laws and key stakeholders. This brief analyzes how each of the laws reflect key indicators of college and career readiness. Using the College and Career Readiness and Success Center Organizer as the framework for analysis, this brief and accompanying supplemental resources can be used by SEA and LEA teams to review their implementation efforts—including the general K–12 system, CTE programs, 2-year and 4-year postsecondary institutions, technical training programs, adult education, and apprenticeship programs—to strategically coordinate college and career readiness efforts and ensure a seamless system of **academic, technical, and employability skills** preparedness.

Appendix A. State and Local Planning Workbook

Purpose: This workbook is intended to facilitate conversations with state teams to identify and plan for opportunities to align college and career readiness efforts across ESSA, Perkins, and WIOA. State teams should include representatives who are familiar with the state's plans for each of the three laws, can speak to the implementation details, and have authority to act on collaborative opportunities identified.

Directions: Stakeholders familiar with each of the three laws respond to each of the guiding questions. As stakeholders respond to the questions, identify opportunities in the plans or existing implementation practices that may be applicable to the other laws. In addition to identifying opportunities for alignment, define key terms for the laws. This could include terms that are crucial for developing understanding or terms that have different definitions or connotations between the laws. Finally, consider any key stakeholder groups that need to be engaged to facilitate alignment across the laws.

Preparation: Prior to convening as a large group, all stakeholders should review the guiding questions and be prepared to respond. Furthermore, stakeholders should consider areas that are strongest within their laws, as well as areas that are an existing challenge or areas where they want support from the other laws. Guiding questions to be prepared in advance include:

- **Question 1:** How does the plan define the academic, technical, and employability skills that learners must know and be able to do to be college and career ready?
 - Map your state's current education-to-workforce pipeline and indicate how each of the three laws interact throughout a student's trajectory.
 - Identify the college and career readiness vision articulated by each plan, including how the plans define success for students.
 - Categorize the academic, technical, and employability skills—as articulated in each of the plans—that are necessary for college and career readiness.
- **Question 2:** How does the plan define when learners are meeting the academic, technical, and employability skills expectations for college and career readiness?
 - Identify the accountability measures that reflect the academic, technical, and employability skills that are necessary for college and career readiness.
 - Identify the assessments used to assess the academic, technical, and employability skills that are necessary for college and career readiness.
 - Review data reporting requirements for the law and identify opportunities to share data in a coherent state longitudinal data system.
- **Question 3:** What are the non-learner structures and resources needed (fiscal, human capital, programmatic, and community)?
 - Which funding streams are used to support the development of student academic, technical, and employability skills?
 - Describe how the plan identifies and responds to the academic, technical, and employability skills technical assistance content and pedagogical needs of educators.
 - Identify the coordinating community organizations, throughout the PK–20 continuum, that support the development of academic, technical, and employability skills for all learners.

- **Question 4:** What guidance and services should be provided to develop college and career readiness among individual learners?
 - List the academic and non-academic supports that personalize college and career readiness development in learners. Supports should reflect individual learner's interests, skills, needs, and goals.
 - Identify existing strategies or opportunities to integrate academic, technical, and employability skills into K–12 standards, curricula, and instructional practices.
 - Review work-based learning policies, practices, and processes and identify successful practices that can be scaled or replicated. If none exist, skip.

Question 1: How does the plan define the academic, technical, and employability skills that learners must know and be able to do to be college and career ready?

	ESSA Plan and Implementation Efforts	Perkins Plan and Implementation Efforts	WIOA and Implementation Efforts
Map your state's current education-to-workforce pipeline and indicate how each of the three laws interact throughout a student's trajectory.			
Identify the college and career readiness vision articulated by each plan, including how the plans define success for students.			
Categorize the academic, technical, and employability skills—as articulated in each of the plans—that are necessary for college and career readiness.			

Opportunities to reference, leverage, or build on state ESSA, Perkins, and WIOA plans and practices:

Key Terms to Define:

Key Stakeholders to Engage:

Question 2: How does the plan define when learners are meeting the academic, technical, and employability skills expectations for college and career readiness?

	ESSA Plan and Implementation Efforts	Perkins Plan and Implementation Efforts	WIOA and Implementation Efforts
Identify the accountability measures that reflect the academic, technical, and employability skills that are necessary for college and career readiness.			
Identify the assessments used to assess the academic, technical, and employability skills that are necessary for college and career readiness.			
Review data reporting requirements for the law and identify opportunities to share data in a coherent state longitudinal data system.			

Opportunities to reference, leverage, or build on state ESSA, Perkins, and WIOA plans and practices:

Key Terms to Define:

Key Stakeholders to Engage:

Question 3: What are the non-learner structures and resources needed (fiscal, human capital, programmatic, and community)?

	ESSA Plan and Implementation Efforts	Perkins Plan and Implementation Efforts	WIOA and Implementation Efforts
Which funding streams are used to support the development of student academic, technical and employability skills?			
Describe how the plan identifies and responds to the academic, technical, and employability skills technical assistance content and pedagogical needs of educators.			
Identify the coordinating community organizations, throughout the PK–20 continuum, that support the development of academic, technical, and employability skills for all learners.			

Opportunities to reference, leverage, or build on state ESSA, Perkins, and WIOA plans and practices:

Key Terms to Define:

Key Stakeholders to Engage:

Question 4: What guidance and services should be provided to develop college and career readiness among individual learners?

	ESSA Plan and Implementation Efforts	Perkins Plan and Implementation Efforts	WIOA and Implementation Efforts
List the academic and non-academic supports that personalize college and career readiness development in learners. Supports should reflect individual learner's interests, skills, needs, and goals.			
Identify existing strategies or opportunities to integrate academic, technical, and employability skills into K-12 standards, curricula, and instructional practices.			
Review work-based learning policies, practices, and processes and identify successful practices that can be scaled or replicated. If none exist, skip.			

Opportunities to reference, leverage, or build on state ESSA, Perkins, and WIOA plans and practices:

Key Terms to Define:

Key Stakeholders to Engage:

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