

Career and Technical Education Regional Roadshows- December 2018

Prepared for: Illinois State Board of Education and Illinois Community College Board
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Summary

Six listening sessions were held during December 2018 to share information about Perkins V and gather feedback on Illinois' vision for CTE from stakeholders. The facilitated sessions were held in Springfield (2), Mount Vernon (1), Palos Hills (2), and Elgin (1). A total of 209 participants attended the listening sessions representing secondary and postsecondary practitioners, local workforce boards, state agency staff, businesses, parents, and students. Staff from ISBE and ICCB presented the potential opportunities in Perkins V and then attendees were led through an open discussion and completed a worksheet asking them what Illinois' vision should be for CTE. They were also asked to review a list of state leadership activities and select five that should be prioritized by the State. Attendees also were asked to comment on what is working well, current challenges, barriers anticipated with Perkins V, and what they need to overcome those challenges.

What should Illinois' vision be for CTE?

Major Themes – Strategy, Focus, and Approach; Alignment and Collaboration.

Focus on creating a strategy for the various components of CTE (counselor training, teacher pipeline, curriculum, dual credit, etc.) was mentioned most often. Better alignment of services through collaboration and effective partnerships and building understanding of CTE through marketing and communication was also mentioned frequently.

What state leadership activities should Illinois carry out?

The five activities selected most frequently were:

1. High-quality, comprehensive professional development for teachers, faculty, and support personnel, including to stay current with industry standards and earn an industry recognized credential or license. (40)
2. Support for the integration of employability skills into career and technical education programs. (36)
3. Support for establishing and expanding work-based learning opportunities. (26)
4. Improvement of career guidance and academic counseling programs. (24)
5. Support for career academies to implement a postsecondary education and workforce-ready curriculum at the secondary education level that integrates rigorous academic, technical, and employability contents. (24)

What is working well that can be expanded, replicated and scaled across the state?

Major Theme – Partnerships that generate learning opportunities (tours, apprenticeships, etc.)

Partnerships, both with education (secondary and postsecondary) and business, were most frequently identified as something that is working well and could be replicated. These partnerships generate opportunities for students and the ability to be responsive local business needs.

Some of the respondents cited successful student programs (in conjunction with business/industry or within their schools) in their regions:

- CTE-focused student organizations
- Young Manufacturers Association – provides pre-WBL “exposure visits” to workplaces
- Worksite tours for seventh graders. Students bring back coloring books about the trade they saw and share them with younger students, opening conversation about careers at a younger age.
- Focused efforts that successfully engage non-white students in agriculture.

What barriers or challenges are you currently facing?

Major Themes – Funding, Staffing, and Collaboration.

Inequitable funding, restrictions on funding, and inadequate funding were cited as barriers by many respondents. Shortage of teachers and professional development to make them more effective in the classroom was also mentioned frequently as being a barrier. Factors identified as making it difficult to find and engage qualifying instructors: inconsistent requirements/expectations, availability of teacher training, and salary.

Many respondents felt the various stakeholders worked in silos and lacked opportunities for collaboration. Contributing factors include: data/information sharing, effective communication, and finding partnerships.

Enrolling students in CTE classes was also frequently cited as a challenge. Scheduling, dual credit discrepancies, stigma, and graduation requirements were all identified as making it more difficult for students to consider CTE. Identifying and reaching out to more specific populations (such as drop outs and incarcerated students) was also mentioned.

What barriers or challenges do you anticipate with Perkins V?

Major Themes – Implementation, Data Availability, and Collaboration.

Implementation was most often cited as the major concern with resources, timeline, and competing the needs assessment as contributing factors. Some respondents were also concerned about what this would “look like” and felt they needed more understanding about Perkins V and how to implement. Collection, availability, and use of data was also mentioned as a concern. The lack of collaboration and alignment among all partners was cited as problematic, as well.

What professional development or technical assistance needs will help you overcome any challenges?

Major Theme – Professional Development.

The need for professional development was most often mentioned, validating the desire to see state leadership focus on professional training. Most often cited as training needs: teaching skills, adapting to new standards, the role of CTE and readiness, teaching CTE to special education students, and trauma informed practices. Respondents also indicated they would like training on effective marketing, creating partnerships, building understanding, and fighting the stigma associated with CTE.