Colorado Career & Technical Education

CTE®
Learning that works
for Colorado

Regional Needs Assessment
Handbook (revised 2021)

Updated July 2021

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Introduction

This handbook has been prepared to guide the Colorado CTE needs assessment process. The purpose for this process is grounded in the new vision for Colorado CTE.

***"Colorado Career & Technical Education (CTE) leverages workforce and education systems so that each learner has quality CTE experiences leading to lifelong career success**."*

The belief stated in this vision is the foundation of the needs assessment process. All Colorado learners deserve a quality CTE experience that leads to lifelong career success. Throughout this process, the emphasis must remain on how to create and sustain a CTE system that focuses on the success of each learner.

The needs assessment process is also required by Perkins V (The Strengthening Career and Technical Education (CTE) for the 21st Century Act). The law obligates applicants to conduct a local needs assessment and update it at least every two years.

Supplemental information for the needs assessment process are found in the *Colorado Needs Assessment Resource Guide.* The *Guide* also includes a glossary of the terms and a description of what the law says and what the law means to understand the requirements of Perkins V.

> Specifically, the law states: *"To be eligible to receive financial assistance under this part, an eligible recipient shall— (A) conduct a comprehensive local needs assessment related to career and technical education and include the results of the needs assessment in the local application submitted under subsection (a); and (B) not less than once every 2 years, update such comprehensive local needs assessment."* (Section 134(c))

The regional needs assessment process has the potential to be a major driver of quality and equity in CTE. It is an opportunity to take an in-depth look at the entire CTE system in Colorado and identify areas where targeted improvements can lead to increased opportunities for student success. It also provides an opportunity to engage diverse stakeholders committed to the growth and improvement of Colorado CTE.

The needs assessment presents an unprecedented opportunity to:

- Implement the goals of the new Colorado CTE Strategic Plan;

- Create CTE programs and opportunities to ensure access and success for each learner that lead to high wage, high skill, and in-demand occupations;

- Ensure CTE programs of study are aligned to and validated by local workforce needs and economic priorities;

- Set strategic short- and long-term goals and priorities to ensure coordinated program review and improvement processes; and

- Regularly engage in conversation with stakeholders around the quality and impact of CTE programs and systems.

Regional Approach to the Needs Assessment
Colorado will conduct this needs assessment on a regional level based on economic development regions.
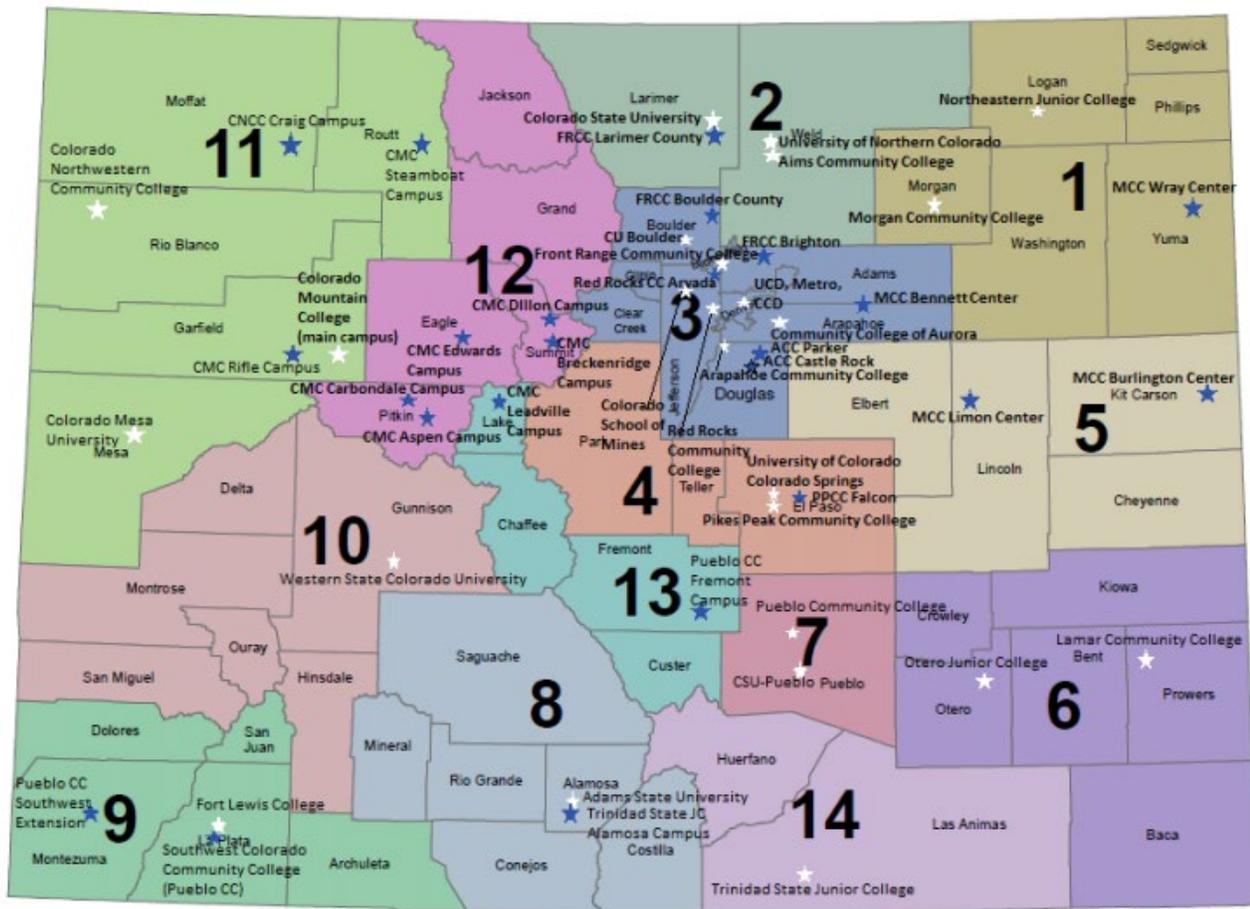
The above map identifies the Colorado Economic Development Regions for the needs assessment. Where it makes sense, regions could certainly combine to create a larger region (i.e. Regions 1 & 5 might collaborate).

Each district and/or college in Colorado desiring to operate an approved CTE program is **required** to actively participate in the needs assessment process. At the local level, colleges, districts, and consortia will have local data and information to gather and bring to the larger regional process.

The Benefits of a Regional Approach to the Needs Assessment

- The advantage of working with shared stakeholder groups including secondary and postsecondary faculty and administration, representatives of special populations, state or local workforce boards, parents and students, business and industry, Tribal organizations and government agencies representing a common region.

- Increases the focus on collaboration, including secondary/postsecondary alignment, program quality and alignment to labor market needs.

- Identifies similar needs and data to meet the needs within the economic region.

- A more efficient use of resources in preparing for and completing the comprehensive needs assessment.

- Focusing local, regional, and state-wide efforts on the implementation of the Colorado CTE Strategic Plan.

Resources from CCCS for Needs Assessments

- CCCS will provide a standard template to be used across Colorado.

- The opportunity for facilitation teams upon request.

- Current and accurate economic and workforce data (i.e. anticipated growth in high wage, high skill, in-demand occupations) by region.

- The ability to request customized assistance to complete the assessment.

The Colorado comprehensive needs assessment is aligned to the goals and foundational elements of the Colorado CTE Strategic Plan. The Executive Summary of the Colorado CTE Strategic Plan is found in the *Colorado Needs Assessment Resource Guide.*

The needs assessment has seven required elements. Many of these elements are interwoven and insights gained in one part may be helpful in tackling another part.

Final Regional Needs Assessment Results
The final product of Colorado's regional approach will be the completion of all parts of the Needs Assessment Results Document. This document will identify the significant priorities to improve the quality of Colorado CTE and for the use of Perkins funds in the local application

This handbook has been created with significant assistance from our national partners at Advance CTE and the Association for Career and Technical Education (ACTE). The content has been borrowed liberally from their guidance documents as well as the Nebraska CTE Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment and Louisiana Perkins V: Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment Guidebook.

The Regional Needs Assessment Process:

Identify Convener	Local Partners Complete Needs Assessment Worksheets	Engage Stakeholders and Conduct Regional Meeting of Local Partners	Develop the Needs Assessment Results Document	Local Education Partners use Results

1. Identify Convener
- Convener is selected to facilitate the needs assessment process at the regional level.
- Convener identifies representatives of local education partners (Perkins recipients school districts, consortia, and colleges)
- Convener provides guidance to local education partners on completing the local needs assessment worksheets. Convener works with local education partners to identify and engage regional stakeholders.

1A. (New for 2021) For Interim Needs Assessment, Determine Extent of Needs Assessment Update Needed
- Region determines whether a full needs assessment is necessary or if the current strategies can be reviewed and revised on a limited basis.
- If a limited update is selected, local education partners complete supplement worksheets using local data and information with engagement from local stakeholders in preparation for regional meeting of local partners (step 3). For full needs assessment update, proceed to step 2.

2. Local Education Partners Complete Local Needs Assessment Worksheets
- Local education partners complete needs assessment worksheets using local data and information.
- Convener monitors and assists local education partners in completing the local needs assessment worksheets.

3. Engage Stakeholders and Conduct Regional Meeting of Local Partners
- Convener hosts meeting of local education partners and regional stakeholders to complete regional needs assessment worksheets.
- Required stakeholders provide data and information for regional level needs assessment.

- Convener works with local education partners and stakeholders to summarize findings or cooperates with education partner(s) to summarize data and information.

4. Develop the Needs Assessment Results Document
- Findings summary is developed into the final regional Needs Assessment Results Document.
- All local education partners must sign off on the Needs Assessment Results Document.
- All parts of the Needs Assessment Results Document is submitted to CCCS along with regional worksheets.

5. Local Education Partners use Results
- Local education partners use results to guide improvement of CTE programs and programs of study.
- Local education partners use results to guide the development of their local Perkins application.

Step 1 - Identify Convener

The regional approach will require considerable cooperation from each local district, consortia, and college. Each economic development region will need a convener (i.e. college, Board of Cooperative Education Services, district) who is willing to coordinate all education partner districts, consortia, and colleges in the region in the needs assessment process.

The convener may or may not be the preparer of the needs assessment results document on behalf of the region. If the convener is not going to prepare the results, the convener must identify an entity to complete the needs assessment results. CCCS is able to work with regions to identify a convener and/or entity to complete the needs assessment results as necessary.

Perkins funds may be used (subject to local policies and priorities) as long as it is in the Perkins plan. For example, to cover a substitute for key district/college personnel or travel to any regional meetings. Local grant funds could also be used to help provide a stipend for a regional needs assessment coordinator for this specific instance (i.e. since the duties are new and outside of anyone's current role.) For questions about funding possibilities, please contact the CCCS Perkins Plan Manager.

Convener Responsibilities:

The convener will act as the facilitator of the needs assessment process. Specific responsibilities include:

- Identify an individual from each education partner to represent their respective district, consortia, or college.
- Distribute relevant communications and updates as needed.
- Coordinate all meetings at the regional level.
- Create a timeline to ensure that all deadlines are met.
- Work with representatives from the education partners to gather the needed data and information related to their institution and complete the local needs assessment worksheets.
- Work with education partners to identify required stakeholders to engage in the regional needs assessment process.
- Invite required stakeholders to participate in the regional needs assessment process.
- Complete the regional needs assessment worksheets.
- Summarize the data and information from the local and regional needs assessment worksheets.
- Prepare the final needs assessment results document or supervise the individual or entity who will complete the final document.

Step 2 – Local Education Partners Complete Local Needs Assessment Worksheets

The convener must communicate with local education partners on completing the local needs assessment worksheets. The education partners must complete the local needs assessment worksheets and analyze the needed data and information prior to the regional meeting.

The worksheets found in the *Needs Assessment Local and Regional Worksheets* must be used to record the discussion and analysis based on the questions for each element. A worksheet is provided for each element of the needs assessment.

There are two parts to each worksheet:

1. **Questions to Consider –** This section contains questions to guide the discussion. Space is provided to collect information and notes for later use.
    - **Current State –** Use this section to describe the present state based on the review of data and other information. Document significant strengths and challenges as the CTE program is currently operating.
    - **Desired State –** Use this section to identify what the ideal state would be if all the challenges were addressed and the current strengths continue or increase. Be as specific as possible to address the question presented. It may be appropriate to write the desired state as goal statements. Provide enough detail to substantiate the goal.
    - **Evidence –** Source of the data or information to substantiate the statements in the current or desired state.

2. **Rating –** This section is to be completed at the end of the examination of the data and information and the discussion of the questions. This will help gauge the extent to which the particular element of the needs assessment is in place.
    - There is a section to record the strategies to address the challenges and strengths. Please list these strategies in priority order.

Needs Assessment Elements

There are seven required elements of the needs assessment process. The elements are aligned to the Colorado CTE Strategic Plan goals and foundational elements. The goals and/or foundational elements are highlighted in each of the following element descriptors.

Element 1 **Career Advisement & Development** **Goal 1: Career Advisement & Development**	**Element 2** **Local Workforce Alignment** **Goal 3: Parnerships** **Goal 4: Quality Programs**	**Element 3** **Size, Scope, & Quality & Implementing CTE POS** **Goal 4: Quality Programs**
Element 4 **Student Performance Data** **Goal 4: Quality Programs** **Foundational Element: Equity, Access & Inclusion**	**Element 5** **Improving Access & Equity** **Foundational Element: Equity, Access & Inclusion**	**Element 6** **Recruitment, Retention, and Training of Faculty and Staff** **Goal 2: Instructor Recruitment & Retntion**
	Element 7 **Work-Based Learning** **Goal 5: Work-based Learning**	

On the following pages, each element is described as it should be evaluated with the needs assessment worksheets on the local level. In addition, the following resources are provided:

- Suggested areas to review and materials needed
- Suggested stakeholders to engage
- Suggested strategies for consultation
- Worksheet questions to answer for this element

Element 1 Career Advisement & Development

Each Colorado learner deserves the opportunity to explore career options and receive guidance in planning for their future careers. Career advisement and development should be a systemic process that starts with a broad understanding of what work is and what is required to be successful in a career. It should narrow as learners move through middle school, secondary, and postsecondary education.

This element provides the opportunity for evaluation of the total career advisement and development system in place. A systemic approach allows for programs, partners, and initiatives to develop and maintain an informed system for all learners.

> This element aligns to the Colorado CTE Strategic Plan:
>
> **Goal 1: Career Advisement & Development –** *Ensure each Colorado learner has access to ongoing career advisement and development.*

Suggested Areas to Review and Materials Needed

- Access to current and projected future labor market needs and education requirements for these careers.
- Follow up data on both CTE and non-CTE students with emphasis on career success including special populations.
- Data on usage of career advisement materials and activities by all populations.
- School counseling/career advisement activities for each special population.
- Data on impact of work-based learning experiences on career development.
- Data on learner development of Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness (PWR) skills.
- Findings from surveys/focus groups with students, parents, and/or community representatives of special populations.
- Focus groups with postsecondary institutions, military, unions, apprenticeship programs and others involved in career development.
- Survey of secondary and postsecondary counselors and career advisement professionals to determine strategies that work, activities and materials needed, and ways to strengthen career advisement and development.

Suggested Stakeholders to Consult	Suggested Strategies for Consultation
- Secondary and postsecondary teachers/faculty - Administrators, teachers, and faculty - School counselors and advisement professionals - Representatives of special populations - Local data staff Also - Employers, business and industry representatives willing to assist in career advisement - Career coaches - Parents - Students	Workgroup to examine data including educators, school counselors/advisement professionals, and representatives of special populations Focus groups, interviews, study circles and surveys with: - Students and former students - Parents - CTSO advisors - Representatives of special populations - Business, industry, and community partners - School counselors - Secondary and postsecondary career advisement professionals

Worksheet Questions to Answer for this Element
1. To what extent are CTE instructors and other faculty trained to be career coaches or have meaningful conversations with learners about their skill sets and career choices? For example, are they confident and competent? 2. To what extent are all opportunities presented to learners to consider 2- and 4-year postsecondary education, technical colleges, apprenticeships, military, and direct employment? 3. To what extent are CTE instructors collaborating with counseling/career advisement professionals?

A sample of the worksheet for this element is found on the next page. It can be accessed on-line at http://coloradostateplan.com/administrator/perkins/perkins-forms-and-files/.

Local Needs Assessment Element 1 Worksheet: Career Advisement & Development

Discuss each of the following questions in light of the data collected and notes from interviews, focus groups, or other methodologies. Capture notes in the space provided.

1. To what extent are CTE instructors and other faculty trained to be career coaches or have meaningful conversations with learners about their skill sets and career choices? For example, are they confident and competent?

Current State	Desired State	Evidence

2. To what extent are all opportunities presented to learners to consider 2- and 4-year postsecondary education, technical colleges, apprenticeships, military, and direct employment?

Current State	Desired State	Evidence

3. To what extent are CTE instructors collaborating with counseling/career advisement professionals?

Current State	Desired State	Evidence

Strategies for Element 1 in Priority Order

Element 1: Career Advisement & Development
Ratings:
1 Significant gaps and/or multiple gaps exist
2 Some gaps exist and/or we do not have a concrete plan to address them
3 Very few gaps exist, and we have processes in place to close the remaining gaps
4 No gaps exist
Rating (circle one)
1   2   3   4

Element 2   Evaluation of Workforce Alignment

Quality CTE programs are aligned to the needs of the future workforce. This element of the needs assessment examines CTE program alignment with local, state, regional, or Tribal in-demand industry sectors identified by the state or local workforce development board or local workforce needs and economic priorities.

Current labor market information about occupations, training requirements, and wages is crucial in order to make important decisions about career goals. Labor market information can help provide reasonable expectations of job openings and wages when entering work.

It is important to examine multiple sources of data. Great sources of information are:

- LMI data sheets provided in the *Local and Regional Needs Assessment Worksheets* or *Colorado LMI Gateway*
- Discussion with local business and industry on workforce needs
- Economic development plans for businesses the region is trying to attract or expand
- Local Workforce Boards
- Information from local Chambers of Commerce
- Information from active sector partnerships

> This element aligns to the Colorado CTE Strategic Plan:
>
> **Goal 3: Partnerships -** *Prepare Colorado's future workforce through transformational partnerships*
>
> **Goal 4: Quality Programs -** *Elevate the quality of CTE programs to support each learner's skill development and meet industry needs.*

Suggested Areas to Review and Materials Needed
- State and local labor market information (LMI) including current and projected employment.   - Follow-up data on program completers to determine entry and success in their career areas.

Suggested Stakeholders to Consult	Suggested Strategies for Consultation
- Administrators, teachers, and faculty - School counselors and advisement professionals - Former students	- Workgroup to examine data including educators, school counselors/advisement personnel, and workforce development staff - Engagement of advisory council for input into workforce alignment - Focus groups, interviews, study circle, surveys with:

• Representatives of special populations • Local data staff	○ Students and former students ○ Local agencies involved in workforce initiatives

Worksheet Questions to Answer for this Element

1. To what extent are we offering programs of study that are preparing learners for current and future workforce and economic needs?

2. Evaluate the processes in place for reviewing workforce and economic data to determine effectiveness and impact of program offerings on a regular basis.

Element 3   **Evaluation of Program Quality including Size, Scope & Quality and Progress toward Implementing CTE Programs of Study**

Providing a quality CTE experience should be the goal of every Colorado CTE program. This element of this needs assessment examines CTE program quality by describing how local CTE programs are sufficient in size, scope, and quality to meet the needs of all students and progress toward implementing quality programs of study.

Additional resources for program quality evaluation are found in *Colorado Needs Assessment Resource Guide.*

> This element aligns to the Colorado CTE Strategic Plan:
>
> **Goal 4: Quality Programs -** *Elevate the quality of CTE programs to support each learner's skill development and meet industry needs.*

Definition of a Programs of Study

A Program of Study is a coordinated, non-duplicative sequence of academic and technical content at the secondary and postsecondary level that:
- Incorporates challenging State academic standards;
- Addresses both academic and technical knowledge and skills, including employability (career readiness) skills;
- Progresses in specificity (beginning with all aspects of an industry or career cluster and leading to more occupation-specific instruction);
- Has multiple entry and exit points that incorporates credentialing; and
- Culminates in the attainment of a recognized postsecondary credential

Proposed Definition of Size, Scope and Quality

Colorado's definitions of size, scope and quality are important to ensure funds are used to drive quality, equitable, and impactful programs. Colorado's proposed definitions are:

Sufficient Program Length – Each program Completer definitions determine the minimum and maximum length of each program.

> **For secondary programs**, the minimum completion requirement will be equivalent to two year-long courses (i.e. two Carnegie Units of instruction), an optimum program length will be three years of Carnegie Units, and a program may be longer. A program completer should be ready for entry-level employment or ready for the next level of advanced training as verified by the Technical Advisory Committee. A program concentrator will be equivalent to two courses, with a course being defined as equivalent to one full school year of credit in the specific program pathway (for one Carnegie Unit). Due to the variety of school schedules used across the state, the contact hours for this minimum will be at least120 hours.
>
> A course may count toward completion of multiple pathways and be appropriate on multiple program approvals.
>
> **For postsecondary programs**, a postsecondary certificate program (with occupational field of study specified) is an organized program of study intended to prepare students to enter skilled and/or paraprofessional occupations or to upgrade or stabilize their employment. This program is not intended for transfer to baccalaureate degree programs but may transfer to Associate Degree Programs.
>
> An initial certificate in a program area needs to include the skills, knowledge and competencies required for entry-level employment. Other certificates in the same program need to advance that skill level.
>
> In addition, to be of sufficient size and scope, a certificate program must at a minimum, consist of:
> > **Option #1** - Two CTE courses*; or
> > **Option #2** - One, five credit hour CTE course* *as determined by CCCNS Course approval process
>
> Any certificate of substantial length i.e. 45 or more credits must have an appropriate general education component. (Source: Higher Learning Commission) Area Technical Colleges are exempt from this requirement. A concentrator is a student who has completed a minimum of 12 credits in the CTE program or who has completed the entire CTE program if it is 12 or fewer credits.

Sequence of courses
Each CTE program approved at the secondary or postsecondary level will be comprised of courses that include integrated academic, technical and employability (PWR) skills

and progress in a sequence toward at least entry level employment or advanced training.

Provide Work-Based Learning Experiences

Another critical component of a CTE program is that it provides appropriate work-based learning. Work-based learning provides hands-on or realistic experiences for secondary learners that relate to the students' CTE Program of Study.

Work-based learning options are required for secondary programs. Career exploration experiences are required for middle school programs and work-based learning is strongly encouraged in postsecondary programs.

Work-based learning at the secondary level are defined by the continuum from Colorado Workforce Development Council Talent Found (Appendix as Work-based learning is a continuum of activities that occur, in part or in whole in the workplace providing the learner with hands-on real-world experiences.

Leadership development

CTE programs also include embedded leadership development opportunities for learners, including through participation at the secondary level in CTE Student Organizations (CTSO). At both the secondary and postsecondary levels, this also includes embedded employability skills that help ensure postsecondary and workforce readiness skills.

Industry Partnership

CTE programs should be designed to meet industry need. To help ensure this is the case, an approved program must have active partnerships and engagement with business and industry. One method of demonstrating compliance with this requirement is a functioning and active advisory committee for each program comprised of at least 51% business and industry members. Advisory committees should meet a minimum of two times per year to provide feedback and input in the CTE program. Some benefits of active advisory committees is that they provide a mechanism to help ensure CTE programs are teaching current and emerging technical skills using proper equipment and technology, and that CTE staff are aware of trends in industry that should be incorporated into the program.

Equal Access and Appropriate Facilities

While equity, access, and inclusion are expected to be embedded in each component of a CTE program of sufficient size, scope, and quality, it is expected that CTE programs will ensure at a local level that learners are aware of the options and benefits of participating in CTE and that each learner has access to do so. This can only happen if CTE programs

occur in spaces that are appropriate to the needs of the program and the number of learners served. This includes ensuring sufficient equipment, instruction, and safety protocols are in place.

Periodic Evaluation

Periodic self-evaluation is strongly encouraged for all CTE programs. Additionally, all Colorado CTE programs will be reviewed for renewal purposes every four years at a minimum. This evaluation will occur through the program approval process and will use data-driven practices as well as a technical assistance and coaching model to ensure quality CTE programs for our learners and industry partners.

Completing the evaluation of program quality including size, scope & quality and progress toward implementing CTE programs of study

Analyzing program quality including size, scope & quality and progress toward Implementing CTE programs of study will be addressed by reviewing the data from each education partner at the local level using the local needs assessment worksheets. The following information will help the education partner complete the worksheets.

Suggested Areas to Review and Materials Needed		
Size (capacity focus)	**Scope (curricular focus)**	**Quality (outcome focus)**
• Total number of programs/programs of study and number of courses within each • CTE participant and concentrator enrollment for the past three years, aggregate and disaggregated • Capacity of each program for the past three years • Number of students applying for the program in the last three years, if applicable • Number of students on waiting lists if applicable	• Documentation of CTE Programs of Study course sequences from secondary to postsecondary including aligned curriculum • Credit transfer agreements for CTE programs. • Data on student retention and transition from secondary to postsecondary within the CTE program of study • Description of dual/concurrent enrollment courses and data on student participation and success • Data on student credential attainment in each program disaggregated by student demographic and value of credential • Curriculum standards showing depth and breadth of program and alignment to workforce and economic needs • Opportunities for expanded learning within and across CTE programs of study	• Curriculum standards and frameworks showing alignment to industry needs. • Assessments leading to credentials of value • Safety requirements • Work-based learning procedures • Career and Technical Student Organizations (CTSO) activities and alignment to curriculum • Data collection mechanisms • Program improvement/ assessment processes • Placement in employment education, or military following program participation (if applicable)

Suggested Stakeholders to Consult	Suggested Strategies for Consultation

• Administrators, teachers, and faculty
• Representatives of special populations
• Parents and students
• School counselors and advisory professionals
• Local data staff
	• Workgroup to examine data including representatives of educators, school counselors/career advisory professionals, special populations, and employers
	• Focus groups, interview, or survey of:
	    ○ Parents and students
	    ○ Employers
	    ○ School counseling staff and career advisory professionals

Worksheet Questions to Answer for this Element

1. How do programs maintain conversations with secondary, postsecondary, and business/industry representatives so that a robust and up-to-date skill set is developed in each program?

2. Which programs have current industry standard equipment, appropriate classroom and laboratory space, and quality instructional materials?

3. Which programs of study incorporate relevant academic, technical, and workforce, postsecondary readiness (PWR) skills at every learner level? (Including concurrent enrollment opportunities)

Element 4   Evaluation of Student Performance Data

Quality CTE is quality education that contributes to both the technical and academic preparation of all learners. Perkins V requires the needs assessment to include an evaluation of student performance including special populations and each subgroup identified in the law. The needs assessment must contain an evaluation of CTE concentrators' performance on the core performance indicators.

This element aligns to the following goals and foundational elements of the Colorado CTE Strategic Plan:

Goal 4: Quality Programs - *Elevate the quality of CTE programs to support each learner's skill development and meet industry needs.*

Foundational Element: Equity & Access - *Create opportunities for each learner to access quality CTE programs and distribution of CTE programs throughout the state.*

Foundational Element: Inclusivity - *Provide each learner with the opportunity to participate in a CTE program and decrease the gaps of CTE participation for target populations, non-traditional occupations, and geographic areas.*

This element will be addressed by reviewing the data from each education partner at the local level using the local needs assessment worksheets. The following information will help the education partner complete the worksheets.

Suggested Areas to Review and Materials Needed

- Review Perkins performance data for the past three years disaggregated by CTE program area and subgroups including:
    - Gender
    - Race and ethnicity
    - Migrant status
    - Individuals with disabilities
    - Individuals from economically disadvantaged families including low-income youth and adults
    - Individuals preparing for nontraditional fields
    - Single parents including single pregnant women
    - Out of work individuals
    - English learners
    - Homeless individuals
    - Youth who are in or who have aged out of the foster care system
    - Youth with a parent who is on active duty military

- Strategies utilized to address performance gaps for specific subgroups along with outcomes for the strategies attempted.

Suggested Stakeholders to Consult	Available Resources
- Administrators - Secondary teachers - Postsecondary faculty - Academic and career advising professionals - Tribal organizations and representatives - Corrections education staff - Representatives of special populations - Local data staff	- https://cte.cccs.edu/perkins/ (logging in to Perkins site provides unsuppressed data) - https://ctep.cccs.edu/energizer/reports/report_list.jsp (logging into program approval provides unsuppressed data). - General K12 data https://www.cde.state.co.us/schoolview - General postsecondary data https://highered.colorado.gov/Data/Search.aspx

Suggested Strategies for Consultation

- Establish a work group that includes educators, counseling professionals, data stewards, and representatives of special populations to examine data and identify gaps or areas of concern.

- Assemble educator groups by CTE career field or cluster to examine data in their specific area, review board policies, processes for developing student schedules, and graduation guidelines for systemic barriers to CTE enrollment by special populations.

Worksheet Questions to Answer for this Element

1. Where do the biggest gaps in Perkins performance indicators exist between subgroups of students and program areas?

Element 5   Progress Toward Improving Equity and Access

Equity, access, and inclusivity are foundational to meeting the needs of all students in quality CTE. This element requires education partners to assess progress toward providing equitable access to all CTE programs. There should also be an examination of any barriers (real or perceived) that may prevent members of any special populations from entering and thriving in CTE programs. Additional materials on equity and access are found in the *Regional Needs Assessment Resource Guide.*

The term "special populations" means-
- Individuals with disabilities;
- Individuals from economically disadvantaged families, including low income youth and adults;
- Individuals preparing for non-traditional fields;
- Single parents, including single pregnant women;
- Out-of-work-individuals;
- English learners;
- Homeless individuals described in section 725 of the McKinney-Vento Act;
- Youth who are in, or have aged out of, the foster care system;
- Youth with a parent who is:
  - A member of the armed services
  - Is on active duty status

> This element aligns to the Colorado CTE Strategic Plan:
>
> **Foundational Element: Equity & Access -** *Create opportunities for each learner to access quality CTE programs and distribution of CTE programs throughout the state.*
>
> **Foundational Element: Inclusivity -** *Provide each learner with the opportunity to participate in a CTE program and decrease the gaps of CTE*

Suggested Areas to Review and Materials Needed
- School counseling and recruitment activities   - Program promotional materials   - Processes for communicating and providing accommodations, modifications, and supportive services for all students, including special populations   - Procedures for workplace experiences for special population students   - Information on accelerated credit and credentials available for special populations   - Data on CTE and CTSO participation and performance by each career area and each special population   - Findings from the root causes and strategies analysis from the student performance element (Element 1)   - Findings from surveys/focus groups with students, parents, and/or community representatives of special populations

Suggested Stakeholders to Consult	Suggested Strategies for Consultation

• Secondary and postsecondary teachers/faculty and administrators
• School counselors and advisement professionals
• Representatives of special populations
• Local data staff
	• Workgroup to examine data including educators, school counselors/advisement professionals, and representatives of special populations
	• Focus groups, interviews, study circles and surveys with:
	   o Students and former students
	   o Parents
	   o CTSO advisors
	   o Representatives of special populations
	   o Business, industry, and community partners

Worksheet Questions to Answer for this Element

1. Which students identified as special population groups are under-represented or over-represented in CTE programs overall? In which program area?

2. What barriers currently exist that prevent each special population group from participating in your programs?

3. How can cultural elements such as racial, ethnic, socio-economic, or geographic elements be considered and addressed when seeking out and working with learners and their families?

4. Are there new programs that need to be developed to ensure access in our region?

Element 6   Recruitment, Retention, and Training of CTE Educators

This element of the needs assessment assesses the educator workforce in your programs. This is not just about teachers, instructors, and faculty, but also includes specialized instructional support personnel, paraprofessionals, and school counselors and advisement professionals.

An important part of this assessment asks education partners to look at the diversity of these professionals and how closely they match the diversity of the education system in your local or regional community. It also looks at efforts to "grow your own" by conducting activities to encourage students to pursue careers as CTE educators.

> This element aligns to the Colorado CTE Strategic Plan:
>
> **Goal 2: Instructor Recruitment & Retention -** *Develop and ensure a viable pipeline of CTE instructors to fill the educator position at the middle school, secondary, and postsecondary levels.*

Suggested Areas to Review and Materials Needed
- Data on faculty, staff, administrator, and school counselor preparation credentials, salaries, benefits, and demographics   - Student demographic data   - Description of recruitment process   - Description of retention efforts   - Description of professional development, mentoring and externships opportunities   - Data on educator participation in professional development, mentoring, and externships   - Survey or focus group results conducted with educators regarding needs and preferences   - Trend data on CTE educator hiring and retention in terms of CTE areas and demographics (at least past 5-10 years)   - Trend data on educator and staff retention in terms of CTE areas and demographics (at least 5-10 years)

Suggested Stakeholders to Consult	Suggested Strategies for Consultation
All stakeholders required by law, particularly: - Secondary and postsecondary teachers/faculty - Human Resource department members - Administrators, teachers, and faculty - School counselors and advisement professionals - Representatives of special populations - Local data staff	- Workgroup to examine data including educators, school counselors/advisement professionals, and human resources staff - Focus groups, interviews, study circles and surveys with: - Veteran teachers and Human Resources staff Developing teachers - Individuals charged with selecting, designing, and implementing professional development

Worksheet Questions to Answer for this Element

1. What processes are in place to recruit new CTE educators? For example, what is the process to develop or recruit CTE instructors from existing staff/students?

2. What strategies from the Colorado CTE Strategic Plan are you using to retain CTE educators?

3. What strategies are in place to utilize instructors/educators across the region? For example, to what extent do districts share instructors to create a full-time position, where applicable?

Element 7   Work-Based Learning

This element focused on the status of providing meaningful work-based learning experiences for all students. Work-based learning is an educational strategy that provides students a setting where they can enhance their learning, explore career options, and demonstrate their academic, technical, and career readiness skills in authentic work settings.

Work-based learning experiences are not extra-curricular but rather expanded learning opportunities central to the student's personal and professional development. These experiences must be integrated into the curricular offerings and assessed accordingly.

This element aligns to the Colorado CTE Strategic Plan:

Goal 5: Work-based Learning – *Ensure access to meaningful work-based learning opportunities for each CTE*

The Work-Based Learning Continuum is found *Regional Needs Assessment Resource Guide.*

Suggested Areas to Review and Materials Needed

- Data on work-based learning programs and student participation
- Data on satisfaction of work-based learning students and employers of work-based learning students
- Work-based learning promotional materials
- Partnerships with Vocational Rehabilitation and Special Education to provide work-based learning
- Instruction PWR skills for all students to be prepared for work-based learning experiences
- Materials for engaging employers and appropriately supervise work-based learning students
- Processes for recruiting, communicating and providing accommodations, modifications, and supportive services for special populations
- Data on work-based learning participation and performance by each career area and each special population
- Findings from surveys/focus groups with students, parents, and employers providing work-based learning experiences

Suggested Stakeholders to Consult	Suggested Strategies for Consultation

• Secondary and postsecondary teachers/faculty
• Administrators, teachers, and faculty
• School counselors and advisement professionals
• Representatives of special populations
 	
Also:
• Local data staff
• Employers
• Chambers of Commerce
• Industry Councils
• Students and Parents
	• Workgroup to examine work-based learning data including educators, school counselors/advisement professionals, and representatives of special populations
	
	• Focus groups, interviews, study circles with:
	   o Students and former students
	   o Parents Employers participating in work-based learning
	   o Representatives of special populations
	   o Vocational Rehabilitation and Special Education providers
	   o Chambers of Commerce
	   o Business, industry, and community partners

Worksheet Questions to Answer for this Element

1. How successful are current work-based learning experiences in enhancing technical and professional, workforce readiness (PWR) skills for all learners?

2. What strategies are used to recruit and retain employers to participate in work-based learning programs? What should be added?

3. How are you evaluating employer satisfaction with the learners they supervise and the quality of the work-based learning experiences?

4. How are school/campus-based enterprises used as a vehicle to provide work-based learning experiences?

5. To what extent are work-based learning experiences intentionally connected to classroom instruction and activities and the student's career plan?

Step 3 – Conduct Regional Meeting of Local Partners and Stakeholders

The Convener is responsible for organizing the regional meeting to complete the needs assessment process. Each local education partner must bring the completed local needs assessment worksheets with the prioritized strategies for each element.

During the regional meeting, the strategies will be discussed and aggregated on the regional level. A final report will be produced based on the discussions at the regional meeting.

Meeting Facilitation

CCCS will provide facilitation for the regional meeting.

Who should attend?

Each local education partner must be represented. The representatives must bring the completed local education worksheets (one for each participant from the local partner). The meeting will also engage regionally shared stakeholders such as workforce partners as required by Perkins V.

Perkins V Required Stakeholders

The strength of the needs assessment process is enhanced with input from a diverse representation of stakeholders. The regional approach allows stakeholders to become engaged at the regional level rather than at each education partner level.

Perkins V requires stakeholders to be engaged in the needs assessment process. Remember that individuals may represent more than one stakeholder group. For example, parents may also be representatives of business or special populations.

Engaging stakeholders may be accomplished in a variety of ways. The *Regional Needs Assessment Resource Guide* contains a helpful resource with this process. In addition to large group input sessions, this *Guide* describes different tools to use.

> **Required Stakeholders (Sec 134(d) of Perkins V)**
>
> - Representatives of CTE programs in a local or educational service agency, including:
>   - teachers
>   - career guidance and academic counselors
>   - principals and other school leaders
>   - administrators
>   - specialized instructional support personnel and paraprofessionals
> - Representatives of CTE programs at the postsecondary educational institutions, including faculty and administrators
> - Representatives of state board or local workforce development boards, regional economic development organizations, and local or regional business and industry
> - Parents and students
> - Representatives of special populations
> - Representatives of regional or local agencies serving out-of-school youth, homeless children and youth, and at-risk youth
> - Representatives of Indian Tribes and Tribal Organizations in the State, where applicable
> - Any other stakeholder required by the state, region, or local agencies

Proposed Agenda
- Welcome and Introductions
- Review of the Colorado CTE Strategic Plan
- Discussion of local strategies for each element
- Create summary of regional strategies to address identified needs of the element
- Table groups share strategies from local worksheets and prioritize for regional level
- Finalization of strategies for each needs assessment element
- Agreement reached on strategies for Regional Needs Assessment Results Document
- Discussion of next steps to ensure the project is completed in the required timeframe

Summarize Findings at Reginal Level

Each local education partner will bring their completed local needs assessment worksheets. The worksheets will have the prioritized strategies for each element of the needs assessment. During the regional meeting, local education partners and required stakeholders will work together to summarize the strategies for each element and establish the priority strategies for the region.

The process of aggregating the strategies from the local level must involve meaningful discussions. A suggested approach is as follows:

- Have participants sit at round tables.
- Begin with the entire group working on Element 1.
- Have each local partner share the information on their worksheet for Element 1.
- On a flip chart, capture the prioritized strategies from each of the local education partner worksheets for Element 1.
- Have the table group vote to put the strategies in priority order.
- Conduct a gallery walk to have all participants review the flip charts. Have participants vote on the strategies they believe are most impactful.
- Capture the strategies with the highest votes.
- Repeat the process with the other elements. It may be advantageous to have different tables work on different elements at the same time.
- At the end of work on all elements, post the results and have a gallery walk, then proceed to a discussion about adopting the final strategies for the region.

Suggested resources needed for regional meeting:

Name Tents   Markers   Flip Charts   Sticky Notes   Pens/Paper
Projector   Screen   Dots for voting Round tables for discussion
Band width for multiple computer use

Other Materials

- Demographic capture card to identify stakeholders present at the regional meeting and how they were engaged.
- Individual note cards for capturing thoughts during the table conversations.

Facilitation Suggestions

Using multiple facilitation techniques will assist in getting to the strongest possible finished product. Here are some techniques that may be helpful.

- Decide whether individuals from the same local education partner should sit at the same table or not.

- Have capture cards at the table for writing down ideas or thoughts. This is particularly useful for individuals who are not comfortable or confident enough to speak publicly.
- Use the Pair-Share technique. Have participants talk to the person next to them and have each share their thoughts and ideas. Then move to a group discussion at the table followed by a share out from each table.
- Try the Gallery Walk. After capturing ideas on flip charts posted on the wall, have the group walk around the room and review each chart. Either manage the walk by allowing a certain amount of time at each chart or let the group move at their pleasure.
- Use dots for voting. After having numerous ideas posted on flip charts around the room, have everyone vote for their top three or five. Clarify the rules to make clear if individual can cast more than one vote (one dot) for a single idea.
- Move people around during the day. Don't let the same individuals sit at the same table all day. This can be done by rearranging the name tents during a break or simply having everyone find a new table.
- Use the thumb to vote. When asking for a vote, have participants use their thumbs to cast a thumbs up, thumbs sideways or thumbs down to vote.
- Use a quiet signal. When you need to get the attention of the group, use a unique sound into the microphone. Other techniques are putting one hand up in the air, clapping, or tap your neighbor.
- Manage time by using a projector countdown, announcing time frames, or posting how much time is left by 5-minute increments at the front of the room.
- Managing difficult participants:
  - Late Comer
    - Start on time to respect the individuals who did arrive on time.
    - Reward arriving on time with a door prize that only those who were on time are eligible to win.
    - Avoid making negative comments. When individuals arrive late, simply keep on moving with the program. Don't call attention to them.
    - Shut the door when the break is over. Keeping the door open is an invitation to wander in at their convenience.
  - The Preoccupied
    - Ask participants to put their phones on vibrate to avoid distracting the group.
    - Make break time precise for cell phone use.
    - Use team competitions to engage participants.
    - Use pairs or small group discussions to engage participants.
  - The Introvert
    - Use small group projects and discussions.

- Use written responses where possible.
- Provide incentives. Give chances to win a door prize based on ideas presented.
- Allow participants to be comfortable, don't intimidate participants into speaking. Give them the opportunity, but don't force.
  - o The Domineering
    - Use small group work when possible.
    - Rotate group leadership to take the person out of the lead role.
    - Use physical proximity.
    - Rotate group members.
    - Directly question other participants.
    - Make and break eye contact.
    - Deny acknowledgement.
    - Private discussion with the participant.

Step 4 - Develop the Needs Assessment Results Document

The final product of this needs assessment process will be the Needs Assessment Results Document. This may be completed by the Convener after the regional meeting to summarize the prioritized strategies and the discussions. All three parts of the Needs Assessment Results Document must be completed.

The Needs Assessment Results will provide meaningful input and direction for the improvement of Colorado's CTE system. It also provides the priorities to be addressed in the local application for Perkins funds.

The worksheets from the education partners must be submitted to the convener to assist with the development of the final results document. The regional worksheets and the Needs Assessment Results Document along with the Needs Assessment Required Stakeholder Verification worksheet and Education Partner Signature Page must be submitted to CCCS. The convener must ensure all education partners have signed off on the final document prior to submission.

Step 5 – Local Education Partners use Regional Needs Assessment Results Document to Improve the Quality of CTE and to Prepare Perkins Application

The Needs Assessment Results Document must be signed off on by all local education partners. Specifically, this signature should be from each entity's primary Perkins contact. This document should be used to establish an action plan by each local education partner to work toward the improvement of CTE. It will be the guiding document for the preparation of the local application for Perkins funds.