



Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment (CLNA) Guide

Fiscal Year 2026

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Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment

Background

The Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act, otherwise known as Perkins V, was signed into law by President Donald Trump in July 2018. This legislation effectively reauthorized the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006, which governs the federal support for career and technical education (CTE). One of the most significant changes introduced in Perkins V is the new comprehensive local needs assessment (CLNA).

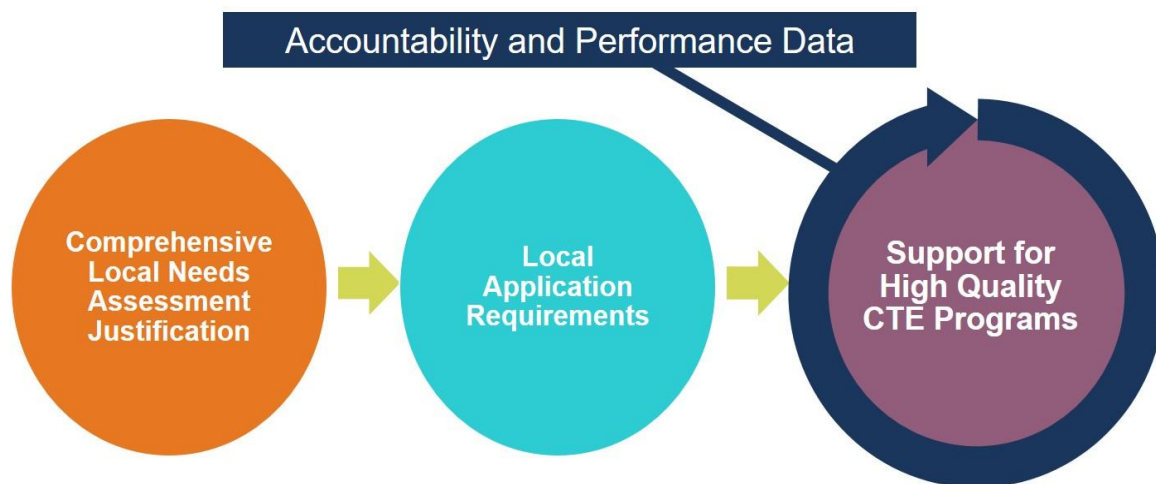
Specifically, the legislation states, *“To be eligible to receive financial assistance under this part, an eligible recipient shall — (A) conduct a comprehensive local needs assessment related to career and technical education and include the results of the needs assessment in the local application submitted under subsection (a); and (B) not less than once every 2 years, update such comprehensive local needs assessment.”*¹

Purpose

The purpose of the CLNA is to align planning, spending, and accountability activities under Perkins V to support innovative CTE programs. The results of the CLNA will inform the Local Application for Perkins Basic Funding two-year goals (fiscal years 27 and 28) to target performance, accountability, and access gaps of CTE student groups.

How to Use This Guide

Using the data indicated, LEA’s must answer all “Compliance-based Questions”. “Questions for Innovation and Growth” are optional and should be used at the LEAs discretion. Responses will be recorded in ePlan.



¹ Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act, Section 134(c)

CLNA Priorities

The framework for the CLNA will focus on these five priorities:

1. Evaluate CTE student **performance** on state-determined accountability measures and local targets.
2. **Justify alignment** of CTE program(s) of study to high wage, high skill, and/or in-demand vertically aligned career pathways.
3. Identify CTE program(s) of study **growth opportunities** to support the current and **emerging trends** in regional and local employment needs.
4. Assess the **recruitment, retention, and training** of highly skilled CTE educators at the local level.
5. Evaluate the **access** to and **participation** in CTE program(s) of study for all student groups and special populations.

Required Stakeholder Engagement

Advisory Council Members²

- Teachers, career guidance and academic counselors, principals and other local education agency (LEA) or school leaders, administrators, specialized instructional support personnel and paraprofessionals,
- Postsecondary representatives from 1-, 2-, and 4-year educational institutions, including faculty and administration,
- Local or state workforce development boards and range of local or regional businesses or industries,
- 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.

Other Members to Consider

- County and/or municipal mayor,
- Local legislator(s),
- Professional and social organization(s) representatives,
- Faith-based and/or other community organization(s) representatives,
- Private and/or charter school leaders, where applicable,
- Military recruiters,
- Labor union representatives.

² Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act, Section 134(d)

Section 1 | Performance

Evaluation

Perkins V requires LEAs to evaluate their learners' performance on state accountability measures in the aggregate and disaggregated by race, gender, migrant status, and special population groups.

Data

State Provided Data³

Core Indicators of Performance (CIP) Report

- CIP 1S1 | Graduation Rate
- CIP 2S1-2S3 | Academic Attainment: Reading Language Arts (RLA), Math, and Science
- CIP 3S1 | Postsecondary Placement Follow-up⁴
- CIP 4S1 | CTE Concentrators in a nontraditional programs of study
- CIP 5S3 | Work-based learning participation
- CIP 5S4 | Ready Graduate (disaggregated by each component)⁵

LEA Provided Data

None

Compliance-based Questions

1. How are CTE concentrators from different genders, races, and ethnicities performing in your Core Indicators of Performance, particularly in programs leading to high skill, high wage, or in-demand industry sectors or occupations?
2. How are CTE concentrators in each special population student group performing in your CTE programs of study in comparison to students who are not identified in a special population, particularly in programs of study leading to high skill, high wage, or in-demand industry sectors or occupations?
3. What is driving the difference(s) in these performance targets? What is the root cause of these performance gaps?

Questions for Innovation and Growth

- What does your Ready Graduate percentage say about the need for additional or more streamlined offerings? What are the barriers to Ready Graduate?
- Which groups of learners are experiencing the highest degree of difficulty across multiple programs of study? Which groups are having the most success?
- Where do the biggest performance gaps exist between groups of learners for each accountability indicator? How is this affecting your Ready Graduate attainment?
- What are the plans to provide additional science, math, engineering design process, and problem-based learning in CTE courses? Have the instructors attended professional development in these areas of focus?
- Are there certain CTE programs of study in which specific special population groups are performing above average? Below average?
- How are learners in your CTE programs of study performing on accountability indicators in comparison to non-CTE learners? What are potential explanations for these differences?

³ Anticipated release is December.

⁴ Follow-up data is lagged one year.

⁵ Ready Graduate data is lagged one year.

- How are honors classes being developed and implemented to increase enrollment of university-bound students?

Section 2 | Justify Alignment

Evaluation

Perkins V requires LEAs to evaluate their programs of study, as a whole and individually, to address industry demand, student need, and meet the definition of “size, scope, and quality.”

Data

State Provided Data⁶

- [Transparent Tennessee Dashboard](#)
- [TN Academic Supply for Occupational Demand Report](#)
- [TN Economic and Community Development County Profile Tool](#)
- Regional labor market data through career cluster justification reports
- Monitoring results (from FPO)

LEA Provided Data

- Local labor market data from chamber of commerce (should be more specific than regional data)
- Program(s) of study offered by LEA, including Tennessee College of Applied Technology (TCAT) dual enrollment programs
 - Student career assessment data (PC108 assessment data)
 - Student information provided through the [High School and Beyond Plan](#)
 - Student participation data
 - Number of concentrators by program of study
 - Enrollment by program of study, including TCAT dual enrollment
- Middle School CTE programs offered by LEA
 - Middle-grade courses
 - Middle-grade enrollment
- CTSO Opportunities and Experiences
 - CTSO membership by organization
 - CTSO competition participation data
 - Middle school CTSO membership
- WBL participation, including school-based enterprises
- Follow-up data

Available Resources

- [Tennessee School Board Association Dashboard](#)
- [Department of Labor and Workforce Development](#)
- [Department of Economic and Community Development](#)
- [US Bureau of Labor and Statistics](#)
- [Jobs4TN](#)

⁶ Anticipated release is November.

- Occupational data included in the [state report card](#)

Compliance-based Questions

LEAs should be prepared to complete the following grid for each POS currently being offered.

POS Name	Student Enrollment	Labor Market Need	SSQI	EPSOs attained	WBL Enrollment
	3- year average of student enrollment in POS	High-skill, high-wage, and/or in demand	Meets all 5 size, scope, and quality indicators (yes/no)	Identify all EPSOs attained by a student in this POS.	3- year average of student enrollment in WBL courses

1. What is the involvement of the advisory council in the development, implementation, and/or closure of CTE programs of study?
2. For the program(s) of study not currently meeting the definition of size, scope, and quality, where are the gaps or needs which need to be addressed?
3. To what degree are learners in these programs of study earning [postsecondary credits](#)?
 - a. How does attainment vary across programs of study and student groups?
4. How is the High School and Beyond Plan used to plot a course of postsecondary credits and industry credentials based on student goals?
5. To what degree are learners in these programs of study earning [Tennessee Promoted Student Industry Credentials](#)?
 - a. Which credentials? Are the credentials varied in tiers? Are there trends in IC attainment?
 - b. How does attainment vary across programs of study and student groups?
6. How does the degree to which learners in your programs of study are completing meaningful work-based learning experiences vary across student groups?
7. To what degree are career and technical student organizations (CTSOs) integrated within classroom experiences and programs of study with opportunities for students to participate, and how does this vary across programs of study and student groups?

Questions for Innovation and Growth

- To what degree do your programs of study have multiple entry and exit points with postsecondary and the workforce? How does this vary across programs of study? Do programs of study have stackable credentials? Are students using their postsecondary credentials for matriculation to postsecondary programs? Are there aligned postsecondary programs in your region?
- To what degree are students who want to enroll in your programs of study unable to do so because of capacity limitations, as determined by program waitlists, student surveys, or other evidence?
- To what degree are the offered dual enrollment programs and courses aligned with local industry needs?
- To what degree do learners have access to career advisement and development opportunities through the High School and Beyond Plan, both before entering CTE programs of study and during participation in programs of study? Does this vary across programs of study? Across student groups?
- To what degree are your facilities and equipment adequate given your program of study offerings, student enrollment, and labor market needs?
- To what degree are honors courses developed and implemented for CTE programs?
- To what degree do your CTE programs attend to the full range of CTE expectations (e.g., transferable career-ready or employability skills, broader Career Cluster-level skills, industry-specific skills, and academic skills)? Where are the gaps?
- To what degree are your learners being retained in the same program of study when they transition between secondary and postsecondary? Does this vary across programs of study? Across student groups?

- To what degree are there opportunities for learners to explore careers or participate in CTE programs in middle school? Are there issues with scheduling additional career courses? Does this vary across Career Clusters? Across student groups?
- To what degree are students participating in work-based learning? How has the program evolved? To what extent are school-based enterprises being utilized to combat transportation issues?
- To what degree are program of study data and High School and Beyond Plans used for program improvement and decision making? How does the use of data vary across programs of study?
- To what degree are the CTE director and/or CTE faculty involved in the course scheduling and student course selection process?

Section 3 | Identify Program of Study Growth Opportunities

Evaluation

Perkins V requires LEAs to evaluate the alignment between programs of study offered and current and emerging trends in labor market needs of the local area and region.

Data

State Provided Data⁷

- [TN Academic Supply for Occupational Demand Report](#)
- [Transparent Tennessee Dashboard](#)
- Regional labor market data through career cluster justification reports
- Monitoring results (from FPO)

LEA Provided Data

- Local Labor market data
 - Expected new businesses in the area
 - Emerging trends in current and expected businesses and industries
- Program(s) of study offered by LEA, including TCAT dual enrollment programs
 - Student career assessment data (middle school and junior year)
 - Student requests for courses during the High School and Beyond Plan discussions
 - Student participation data
 - Number of concentrators by program of study
 - Enrollment by program of study
- Middle School CTE programs offered by LEA
 - Middle-grade courses
 - Middle-grade enrollment
 - Middle-grade school-based enterprise opportunities
- CTSO Opportunities and Experiences
 - CTSO membership by organization
 - CTSO competition participation data
 - CTSO membership in middle school
- WBL participation, including school-based enterprises
- Follow-up data

⁷ Anticipated release is December.

Available Resources

- [Tennessee School Board Association Dashboard](#)
- [Department of Labor and Workforce Development](#)
- [Department of Economic and Community Development](#)
- [US Bureau of Labor and Statistics](#)
- [Jobs4TN](#)
- Occupational data included in the [state report card](#)

Compliance-based Questions

1. What industry sectors or occupations identified as high skill, high wage, and/or in-demand are projected to grow the most in your region or local area in the short, medium, and long term?
2. To what degree do your CTE programs of study enrollments match projected demand in the region or local area?
3. To what degree is the LEA offering a mix of dual enrollment and regular CTE courses? To what degree are TCAT courses being monitored to ensure students are prepared to continue the program at the postsecondary campus? Where are the biggest gaps in your program of study offerings particularly in high skill, high wage, and/or in-demand jobs?
4. To what degree do your CTE programs of study expose learners to the current and emerging high-skill, high wage, and/or in-demand industry sectors or occupations in your region, identified by each program of study offered. To what degree does this exploration begin in middle school?
5. To what degree are you ensuring that CTSO experiences are connected to local industry?
6. What employability skills that industry partners need are being incorporated into programs of study? What skills are lacking in programs of study? Identify each program of study offered.

Questions for Innovation and Growth

- How is the High School and Beyond Plan being used to predict program growth or decline?
- Where are graduates of your programs of study finding success in the labor market and/or postsecondary institutions? Are there industries in which placement rates are low? If so, why? Are students matriculating to TCATs to complete their programs of study? Community college? Universities?
- How are you validating the skills being taught in your programs of study with postsecondary and industry partners?
- How are you preparing students for the potential workplace of the future, using new trends and innovations?
- Which local businesses are hiring your students through internships or permanent employment? Which are not? Why?
- How are you being intentional about educating and providing supports for learners with disabilities, English learners, part-time students, and other special populations in programs of study leading to high skill, high wage, or in-demand industry sectors or occupations?
- If you are not currently providing programs of study to meet the needs of high skill, high wage, or in-demand industry sectors or occupations, how are other programs and service providers in your region addressing those labor market needs?
- To what extent will the cross-cutting courses be used in the coming school year to personalize student course schedules based on their goals?
- To what degree are students being provided with information about military careers as they apply to the programs of study offered? How are students being supported in the process of enlistment, ROTC applications, and academy appointments?

Section 4 | Recruitment, Retention, and Training of Educators

Evaluation

Perkins V requires LEAs to assess the quality of their staff through recruitment, retention, training, and professional development.

Data

State Provided Data

- [TN Educator Licensure Resources](#)
- [Occupational Educator Licensure guidance](#)
- [Report Card](#)
- [InformTN](#) (culture/climate and educator data)

LEA Provided Data

- Teacher history data
- Current, relevant teacher credentials and industry certifications
- General professional development hours offered for teachers
- Content-specific professional development hours offered for teachers
- Educator Preparation Program / Grow Your Own data
- Student demographics
- Teacher demographics
- Teacher evaluation data

Compliance-based Questions

1. To what degree do you have sufficient faculty and staff (including instructors, support staff, guidance, advisement professionals, administrators, and other key staff) to offer high-quality programs of study and career development?
 - a. To what degree do you have the faculty and staff needed to meet the demand for regional high-skill, high-wage, and/or in-demand opportunities in the short, medium, and long term?
2. To what degree are you utilizing TCAT faculty to instruct classes on the LEA campus?
3. What processes are in place to recruit faculty and staff, and are these processes efficient and effective, especially for instructors coming from the industry?
4. What structures are in place to retain faculty and staff, and to what degree do you offer regular, substantive training and professional development opportunities? Do faculty and staff have a mentor to assist with daily and weekly processes? How effective are these experiences at improving student outcomes?
5. Are the occupational-licensed instructors able to complete the required Occupational Licensed New Teacher Training (OLNTT) in the first year of teaching?

Questions for Innovation and Growth

- In what subject areas do you need to develop or recruit faculty and staff due to expected retirements, growing student interest, and/or emerging priority employment areas?
- To what degree are the Year 1 Endorsements being utilized to supplement instruction in programs of study with enrollment that is at capacity?
- To what degree are occupational educators aware of the [Occupational Educator Scholarship Program](#)?
- To what degree do faculty, staff, and administrators have opportunities to work with and learn directly from representatives of business and industry?
- To what degree do faculty, staff, and administrators have opportunities to work with and learn directly from their peers in formal or informal professional learning communities?

- What do faculty, staff, and administrators report as needs and preferences for professional development, benefits, and supports?
- What professional development offerings are most highly rated by participating faculty, staff, and administrators? Why?
- What professional development offerings are being provided specific to program of study, industry credentials, and/or equipment utilization?

Section 5 | Access through Analysis

Evaluation

Perkins V laws require LEAs to evaluate their progress in providing access to CTE programs, particularly CTE programs that lead to strong positive outcomes for learners, and in providing CTE in ways that maximize success for special populations, especially in programs leading to high skill, high wage, or in-demand industry sectors or occupations.

Data

State Provided Data

- Core Indicators of Performance (CIP) Report
- CIP 1S1 | Graduation Rate
- CIP 2S1-2S3 | Academic Attainment: Reading Language Arts (RLA), Math, and Science
- CIP 3S1 | Postsecondary Placement Follow-up⁸
- CIP 4S1 | CTE Concentrators in a nontraditional program of study
- CIP 5S3 | Work-based learning participation
- CIP 5S4 | Ready Graduate (disaggregated by each component)⁹
- Course enrollment for all WBL courses

LEA Provided Data

- Easy IEP – report for accommodations by courses (career and technical education)

Compliance-based Questions

1. To what degree are student groups taking part in CTE at disproportionate levels, in comparison to the overall student population, at the program of study level?
 - a. Which groups are over-and under-represented, particularly in programs of study leading to high skill, high wage, and/or in-demand industry sectors or occupations?
2. What specific strategies have been used to recruit and retain learners into your programs of study, particularly in programs leading to high skill, high wage, and/or in-demand industry sectors and occupations?
3. What barriers (such as prerequisites, transportation, scheduling, etc.) prevent certain student groups from accessing your programs of study, and which student groups are most affected by these barriers?
4. What barriers prevent certain student groups from taking part in embedded activities such as work-based learning, early postsecondary opportunities, and CTSOs, and which student groups are most affected by these barriers?

⁸ Follow-up data is lagged one year.

⁹ Ready Graduate data is lagged one year.

Questions for Innovation and Growth

- What specific strategies are used to recruit and retain learners into your programs of study; strategies have been most and least effective? Which are underused?
- How and when do you recruit students into your programs of study? Are you reaching all students, including students from groups identified as special populations?
- To what degree do students have access to career guidance that is comprehensive through the High School and Beyond Plan?
- To what degree are parents involved in the plans for the students?
- To what degree do faculty and staff have access to professional development on providing instruction, career development, and other services to students comprehensively and equitably?
- What differentiated accommodations, modifications, and supportive services do you currently provide to ensure the success of special population groups? Which ones have been most and least effective? Which ones are underused? To what degree do these supports align with student Individualized Education Plans (IEPs)?
- What additional accommodations, modifications, and supportive services would help ensure access for all students within your programs?
- What additional resources, such as WIOA Title I funds, might be available to support certain learners?
- How are you aligning with other federal or state programs, such as Families First, the state's Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) programs, or SNAP Employment & Training, to ensure that CTE students can access additional supports that may be available?