



## **Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act**



The Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act (Perkins) is essential to ensuring that all students have access to high-quality CTE programs. Since 2006, the last time the Perkins Act was reauthorized, key advancements have been made toward this goal. The attention on CTE is growing, and student performance results have been positive. It is critical that the next Act build on current law by reinforcing its successes and making careful changes to enhance progress. As Congress considers the reauthorization of this Act, ACTE makes the following recommendations:

- **Increase equitable access to high-quality CTE programs.**  
The federal investment should focus on the design and delivery of quality CTE programs of study that ensure a spectrum of career exploration through career preparation opportunities for all students, regardless of their geographic location, race, gender, disability status, socioeconomic background or any other population characteristic.
- **Require greater coordination between planning, spending and accountability.**  
A new local needs assessment structure should be incorporated into the law, modeled off other education legislation; and associated planning and uses of funds language should be directly connected to identified needs. Requirements should be integrated to ensure decisions and investments are guided by data.
- **Prioritize and strengthen connections between secondary and postsecondary education.**  
All programs funded by the Act should meet a more specific “CTE Program of Study” definition, linking secondary and postsecondary education and leading to meaningful credentials; and states should be required to focus on systems alignment.
- **Emphasize increased engagement with employers in the design and implementation of programs that are responsive to economic priorities.**  
More robust stakeholder involvement language is needed related to local planning and program delivery, and programs should be required to take into account current or future local labor market demands. At the same time, final fiscal and programmatic decisions must remain in the hands of educators, who are best positioned to meet diverse student needs.
- **Streamline the law to increase clarity and consistency and end duplication between and within sections.**  
The state and local plan and uses of funds sections should be significantly narrowed to focus on outcomes, while giving states and local communities flexibility in how best to meet their own unique needs.
- **Align the law, to the extent appropriate, with other federal education and workforce development legislation.**  
Thoughtful attention must be paid to both programmatic requirements and accountability indicators in other federal laws, including the Every Student Succeeds Act, Higher Education Act and Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. In making alignment decisions, populations served, institutional structure, reporting burden and the appropriate use of information should all be considered.