

National Alliance for Partnerships in Equity

NAPE 2013 Perkins Act Reauthorization Position Paper

The Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act is set to be reauthorized in 2013. The Act, last reauthorized in 2006, is designed to increase the quality of career and technical education (CTE). The National Alliance for Partnerships in Equity (NAPE) promotes the ideals of the Carl D. Perkins Act and advocates for closing equity gaps and providing all students the opportunity to obtain skills and training necessary for the jobs of today and the future. NAPE believes that the high-skill, high-wage, and high-demand jobs of the 21st century will be in nontraditional fields, primarily in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) where there is presently a large gap in who has access to skill-building education and training. NAPE believes that access and opportunity for all underrepresented groups is critical to a strong and healthy U.S. economy.

NAPE believes that the federal government and states should work together to ensure that local education agencies provide high-quality CTE programs based on strong standards that will provide youth and adults with the skill-set to be competitive in the 21st century. In addition, programs successful in engaging special populations should serve as models for creating high-quality CTE programs. Outlined below are NAPE's specific recommendations for a transformative and results-oriented reauthorized Perkins Act in 2013.

A Focus on Equity

NAPE believes that the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act can only truly be viable if there is a strong focus on equity and programs that lead to high-wage careers for *all* students, including women, racial and ethnic groups, the disabled, the economically disadvantaged, single parents, displaced homemakers, individuals pursuing nontraditional careers, and English language learners.

Legislative Recommendations:

- NAPE supports having a percentage of federal funds available to create innovative programs or program components focused on equity.
- NAPE supports a focus on nontraditional fields for current and emerging high-skill occupations, where one gender represents more than 25% of those individuals employed in the occupation.
- NAPE supports targeting funds for underrepresented in CTE, such as special populations defined under the Carl D. Perkins Act of 2006.
- NAPE recommends that *all* students have access to *all* programs, including career development and targeted guidance counseling for traditionally underrepresented groups.
- NAPE recommends research to guide in the creation of high-quality programs, provide lessons-learned, and provide data to inform program improvements that result in closing equity gaps.

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- NAPE supports states being required to have trained state-level persons responsible for providing professional development, technical assistance, and program administration that ensure equity in CTE.
- NAPE recommends that state and local education agencies conduct annual equity gap analyses to identify where program improvement efforts need to be focused and ensure that progress is being made.

Acknowledging National and Global Realities

NAPE believes that CTE will be the most successful if we realize the global nature of today's careers, the global competition in today's economy, the knowledge-based nature of today's required skill-set, and the impact of changing demographics and current levels of preparedness for the workforce of today and tomorrow.

Legislative Recommendations:

- NAPE supports the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Vocational and Adult Education's (OVAE's) Investing in America's Future: A Blueprint for Transforming Career and Technical Education (Blueprint) goal of providing a" world-class education system that provides high-quality job-training opportunities" and the critical role played by CTE.
- Therefore, NAPE supports the Blueprint's call for Alignment, Collaboration, Accountability, and Innovation.
- NAPE recommends ensuring broad and varying pathways to success that align with the demands of the 21st century economy.

Accountability

NAPE supports the current accountability provisions in Perkins IV, particularly the measures to increase the participation and completion of underrepresented gender students in nontraditional fields and technical education programs. This includes the review of states' and locals' reported accountability data, negotiated performance measures, and implementation of the improvement planning and sanctions provisions in Perkins IV.

Further, NAPE believes that all states should be required to continue to collect and report Perkins IV mandated disaggregated data requirements for gender, race/ethnicity, and special populations. This effort should be supported by implementing federal policy for data sharing across agencies (i.e., Unemployment Insurance (UI) wage data for placement measures and clarification of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)) for educational accountability at the national and state level.

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¹ See: http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ovae/pi/cte/transforming-career-technical-education.pdf.

Legislative Recommendations:

- NAPE recommends collecting, accessing, and utilizing data as part of an annual equity performance gap analysis, including disaggregated data on special populations for all accountability measures.
- NAPE recommends performing an equity gap analysis at all critical levels of intervention to better understand where investments are needed and how to better align with regional labor market needs.
- NAPE recommends conducting research to better understand lessons learned, what is
 working, and how to ramp-up and replicate excellent programs that have closed equity
 gaps.
- NAPE supports adequately measuring the progress of all students and implementing programmatic changes to promote students whose progress is lagging.
- NAPE supports the Blueprint's recommendation to use uniform definitions for participation and performance indicators to create high-quality data systems that enable meaningful comparisons and identification of equity gaps.

High-Quality Programs

NAPE believes that high-quality programs build usable skills for 21st-century high-wage jobs, including a strong focus on science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. High-quality programs ensure access and success across gender, race and ethnicity, and Perkins' defined special populations.

Legislative Recommendations:

- NAPE supports rigorous and integrated academic and technical curriculum content in CTE.
- NAPE recommends increased academic knowledge and understanding and meeting industry standards to create students with highly technical skills matched to current and future employment opportunities.
- NAPE recommends research to guide in the creation of high-quality programs, provide lessons learned, and provide data to ensure equity.
- NAPE supports the recommendation to empower states to build CTE programs that match their states' industry needs from the Blueprint.
- NAPE supports providing states better guidance on establishing high-quality programs.
- NAPE recommends gap analyses to highlight state realities and ensure that progress is being made.
- NAPE recommends support for high-quality professional development as a critical component of all state and local programs.
- NAPE recommends partnerships with employers to train students for family-sustaining wage, high-growth jobs in their state.

Career Development for Students

NAPE believes that career development and counseling is critical to students' successful education and skill building that will lead students to choose careers that will provide them with family-sustaining wages. Students need strong guidance to better understand career options and navigate through the complexities of 21st-century employment opportunities. Well-informed career counselors and accurate, non-biased career information systems are critical for the success of students and the ability of states to match the training and skill-set of students with the needs of employers.

Legislative Recommendations:

- NAPE recommends support for school counselors so that they can better prepare students for competitive technical careers with family sustaining wages.
- NAPE supports high quality professional development for all school counselors as a critical component of all state programs.
- NAPE recommends supporting a strong counseling staff that focuses on *all* students and helps students understand their opportunities and options.
- NAPE supports the development of accurate, timely and non-biased career information systems to help students expand their career options.

Educator Professional Development and Effectiveness

NAPE believes that highly effective teachers and administrators are the backbone of successful CTE programs. Teachers and faculty need support and skills to train promising CTE students from all backgrounds. Administrators need the skills to create a school climate where every student is engaged and supported to be successful.

Legislative Recommendations:

- NAPE supports strong, comprehensive, ongoing, standards-based teacher professional development programs for CTE educators to build pedagogical skills and access to resources to ensure the success of underrepresented students.
- NAPE supports giving educators the skills to provide students with the skill-set necessary for entry into a career that provides a family-sustaining wage and encourages life-long learning.
- NAPE supports the investment of state and local resources in developing administrator skills to be visionary leaders where equity is central to their school improvement mission.

Building on Success

NAPE believes that programs should build on lessons-learned from the success of highperforming states and local CTE programs. State and local investments in CTE should create

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high-quality, sustainable programs that are built from successful models that have proven to be successful in preparing *every* student to be career and college ready. This requires that CTE includes a strong focus on research, evaluation, and dissemination.

Legislative Recommendation:

- NAPE supports the Blueprint's recommendation to "incentivize and reward local recipients that exceed performance targets" and suggests that there be a vehicle to provide technical assistance to scale up effective models.
- NAPE supports an innovation fund as a means to create and test models that have shown promise in closing equity gaps in CTE.
- NAPE recommends that research on lessons learned, what works, and how to expand successful programs be a key component of the innovation fund.

Creating Partnerships

NAPE believes that successful CTE programs will be served by partnerships between various groups including, secondary and postsecondary educators, employers, and community-based organizations.

Legislative Recommendation:

- NAPE encourages partnerships that will support high-quality CTE programs including
 partnerships among secondary schools, postsecondary institutions, baccalaureate degree—
 granting institutions, area CTE schools, local workforce investment boards, business and
 industry, and intermediaries, as outlined in Perkins 2006 and the Blueprint.
- NAPE supports strong in-school partnerships that allow for the buy-in from the entire school and partnerships between administrators, teachers, counselors, students, and parents that will help programs flourish.

NAPE looks forward to working with Congress to reauthorize a Career and Technical Education Act that ensures access and success for EVERY student in high-quality, family-sustaining wage career preparation programs where there are no equity gaps.