

Developing a College- and Career-Ready Workforce

An Analysis of ESSA, Perkins V, IDEA, and WIOA

By Ellen Cushing, David English, Susan Theriault, EdD, and Rebecca Lavinson



March 2019 | Updated March 2026



Advancing Evidence.
Improving Lives.

Developing a College- and Career-Ready Workforce

An Analysis of ESSA, Perkins V, IDEA, and WIOA

March 2019 | Updated March 2026

The authors wish to thank the following individuals, who played a key role in shaping this brief: Tessie Bailey, PhD, Marjorie Cohen, Janet Gao, Jessica Giffin, Catherine Jacques, Katelyn Lee, Marcela Movit, and Jenna Tomasello.

Introduction

Across the United States, state leaders are examining their current and future economic landscapes to ensure that today's workers are appropriately prepared for workforce demands.¹ The continued advancement of technology and increase in globalization suggest that the nature of work will continue to evolve. Today's workforce will not only need postsecondary training and education but will also need to be lifelong learners who can gain new knowledge throughout their careers. To establish an education-to-workforce pipeline, state leaders will need to align the education system with labor market needs to ensure a seamless system of **academic, technical, and employability skills** preparedness. The institutions that make up the education pipeline—including the general K–12 system, career and technical education (CTE) programs, 2-year and 4-year postsecondary institutions, technical training programs, and pre-apprenticeship and registered apprenticeship programs—are crucial partners in addressing labor market demands.

As states grapple with competing priorities and constrained resources, there is an increasing focus on efficiency and alignment of programs and resources across state agencies. The College and Career Readiness and Success (CCRS) Center at the American Institutes for Research® (AIR®) recently analyzed and compared four federal laws that govern the education-to-workforce pipeline—the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Perkins V), the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). Although states have years of experience implementing these federal requirements and programs, they are administered across different state agencies or different offices within a state agency, and coordination across initiatives can be a challenge. This brief identifies opportunities to connect, align, and leverage state policies, programs, and funding across these four federal laws to establish an education-to-workforce pipeline.

The Role ESSA, Perkins V, IDEA, and WIOA in Workforce Development

ESSA, Perkins V, IDEA, and WIOA² play important and complementary roles in educating and training individuals and shaping the current and future workforce. ESSA, which provides funding for public education from kindergarten to 12th grade, requires that all students be taught to challenging academic content standards that prepare them to succeed in college and careers. Perkins V funds states and other grantees to improve both secondary and postsecondary career and technical education (CTE) programs and programs of study that prepare students for the real world. IDEA ensures that all students with disabilities from birth up to 21 years of age³ have access to a free appropriate public education that emphasizes special education and related services designed to meet their unique needs and prepare them for further education, employment, and independent living. WIOA Title I funds the public workforce development system, which matches labor market needs with education, training, and support services for youth and adults looking for meaningful employment, while WIOA Title II funds adult education and literacy activities for out-of-school youth and adults who lack a high school diploma or proficiency in English.

¹ English, D., Cushing, E., Therriault, S., & Rasmussen, J. (2017). *College and career readiness begins with a well-rounded education: Opportunities under the Every Student Succeeds Act*. American Institutes for Research, College and Career Readiness and Success Center. <http://www.ccrscenter.org/products-resources/ask-the-ccrs-center/college-and-career-readiness-begins-well-rounded-education>

² All four laws are reauthorizations of earlier laws. The Every Student Succeeds Act, 2015, is the most recent reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, 1965; the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act, 2018, reauthorizes the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (Perkins); IDEA was reauthorized in 2004 and most recently amended through ESSA in 2015; and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, 2014, is the most recent reauthorization of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998.

³ IDEA requires that eligible students receive services through school completion or up to 21. After age 18, states have discretion over the age at which they no longer provide services. Some states stop before age 21, while other states continue to age 26.



Together, ESSA, Perkins V, IDEA, and WIOA can facilitate an education-to-workforce pipeline that provides all individuals with the academic, technical, and employability skills they need to be successful in the workforce. Table 1 provides additional details for each of the four laws.

Table 1. Overview of ESSA, Perkins V, and WIOA

Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)	Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Perkins V)	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)	Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)
TARGET POPULATION			
Students in public K–12 schools	CTE participants in public schools and students in technical and community colleges	Individuals with disabilities who are in school until the age of 21	Adults and dislocated workers, job seekers, incumbent workers, and in- and out-of-school youth
DESCRIPTION			
ESSA provides funds to K–12 schools and districts. It emphasizes equal access to education, high standards, and accountability. ESSA's "well-rounded education" provision supports states' college and career readiness efforts by aligning district- and school-level readiness initiatives with curricula, improved conditions for learning, and other educational experiences. States can leverage ESSA funding for a well-rounded education to drive college and career readiness strategies.	Perkins V provides significant federal funding for CTE programs in states. It focuses on academic and technical achievement of CTE participants, strengthening the connections between secondary and postsecondary education, and improving accountability. Perkins V requires states to have programs of study that seamlessly link academic and technical content (including employability skills) across secondary and postsecondary education. The Perkins V provisions that have direct relevance to college and career readiness include alignment and integration of academic content standards, CTE programs of study, and employability skills education; assessment of competencies and technical skills to determine work readiness; and strengthening reporting and accountability requirements.	IDEA authorizes formula and discretionary grants to support special education and related services, early intervention services, and personnel preparation and development. IDEA ensures a free appropriate public education to students with disabilities by providing special education and related services, including individualized education programs (IEPs), transition plans, and early and personalized interventions. IDEA is meant to ensure equality of opportunity, full participation, independent living, and economic self-sufficiency.	WIOA Title I supports workforce development in states by funding career services and job training programs. It aims to modernize the workforce development system and streamline existing employment-related education systems. WIOA authorizes four core programs: ■ WIOA Title I (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth formula programs), administered by the Department of Labor ■ Adult Education and Family Literacy Act programs, administered by the Department of Education ■ Wagner-Peyser Act employment services, administered by the Department of Labor ■ Rehabilitation Act Title I vocational rehabilitation program, administered by the Department of Education WIOA also authorizes a "one-stop" career center service delivery system. It requires partner programs to provide services through several one-stops that focus on a wide range of agencies and activities (e.g., postsecondary programs, Community Services Block Grant employment and training activities, WIOA Native American programs, Department of Housing and Urban Development employment/training activities, the Senior Community Service Employment Program, and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families).
STATE GRANTEE AGENCY			
State education agency (SEA)	State education agency; state postsecondary agency; career, technical and adult education agency; other designated agency	State education agency	State Workforce Development Board, state labor or workforce development agency (Title I); state education agency, state postsecondary agency, state labor or workforce development agency (Title II)

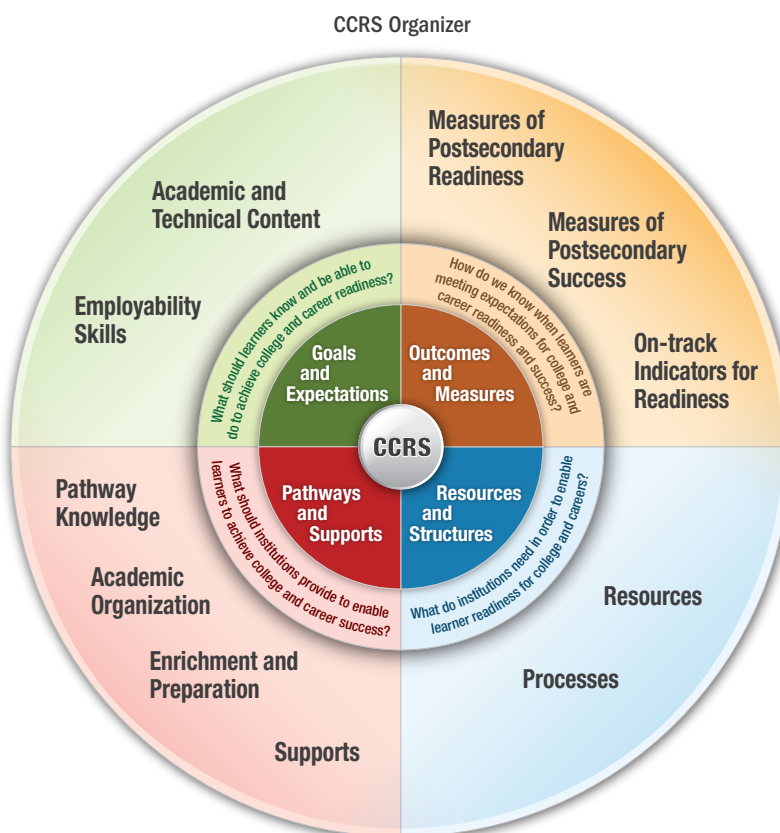


Purpose of the Brief

This brief is designed to launch and stimulate conversations focused on developing a coherent education-to-career pipeline among key policymakers (including state agencies, state agency offices, and local education agencies responsible for planning and implementing each of the four laws). The brief provides a common framework for identifying opportunities to align college and career readiness efforts. The CCRS Center at AIR team used qualitative research methods to analyze the four laws, including legislation, regulatory guidance, and nonregulatory guidance. The laws were analyzed using the College and Career Readiness and Success Organizer (see Appendix) as the organizing framework. The Organizer defines the many elements that impact a student's college and career readiness across four overarching domains:

- *Goals and Expectations*—defines the academic, technical, and employability skills students must know and demonstrate to be college and career ready.
- *Outcomes and Measures*—identifies the assessments and indicators that define when students meet the academic, technical, and employability skills defined in Goals and Expectations.
- *Resources and Structures*—defines the non-learner structure and resource needs, including fiscal, human capital, programmatic, and community needs.
- *Pathways and Supports*—defines the guidance and services needed to develop individual college and career readiness.

Figure 2. College and Career Readiness Organizer



The brief summarizes the qualitative analysis for each of the laws across each of the four CCRS Organizer domains. The [State and Local Planning Workbook](#) offers a facilitated protocol state and local teams can use to identify existing or planned opportunities to strategically align college and career readiness efforts.



Goals and Expectations

The Goals and Expectations quadrant analyzes specific college and career indicators across the four laws, that describe what learners **should know and be able to do** by the time they graduate. The indicators define the **academic, technical, and employability skills** competencies that are required for success in college and career. Across the four laws, there are opportunities for states to align their college and career readiness goals and expectations to promote a coherent vision for academic, technical, and employability skills preparedness.



ESSA | ESSA provides state education agencies (SEAs) and local education agencies (LEAs) autonomy in developing college and career readiness expectations that fit their specific context. ESSA requires all states to implement academic standards, and requires LEAs to integrate rigorous academic and employment-focused content for in-demand jobs, emphasizing a focus on science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM), and ensuring remediation-free entry to 4-year colleges. The well-rounded education (WRE) provision is an opportunity for states to align their college and career readiness expectations along the K-12-to-postsecondary continuum, including opportunities for students to develop crucial employability skills that align to business and industry needs. Finally, ESSA requires LEAs to support programs that support academic and CTE learning for in-demand jobs.



PERKINS V | Because Perkins V focuses on both secondary and postsecondary institutions, the law requires the goals and expectations to prepare all students, including special populations, for careers in in-demand and emerging sectors. Perkins V, Title I requires integrating academic, technical, and employability skills within and across CTE programs and coursework. Embedded within the law's definition of "career and technical education" is the requirement that CTE contribute to higher-order reasoning and problem-solving skills, work attitudes, and employability skills. In addition to a focus on technical content, Perkins V promotes the inclusion of rigorous academic coursework in CTE programs and instruction.



IDEA | To ensure that students with disabilities have opportunities for productive and independent adult lives, they need (1) access to an education system with high academic achievement standards, (2) preparation in employability skills, and (3) clear student performance goals. IDEA assists SEAs and LEAs in providing specialized services for eligible students with disabilities, so they improve educational results and are prepared for independent living and economic self-sufficiency. IDEA protects eligible students and their families, and assists SEAs and LEAs in preparing students for further education and employment. The SEA is responsible for establishing long-term goals for student performance on key indicators (e.g., graduation, postsecondary outcomes) and identifying measures of interim progress that are consistent with goals and standards for general education students. Further, IDEA requires that each student have an IEP that outlines individual annual goals and expectations based on his or her needs. Beginning at age 16 (or 14 in some states), the IEP must also include a transition plan that outlines measurable postsecondary goals related to training, education, employment, and independent living skills.



WIOA | WIOA focuses on the economic needs of states and regions, including the knowledge, skills, and abilities important for specific industries and occupations. WIOA Title I's focus on preparing adults and youth for in-demand jobs requires the development of academic, technical, and employability skills necessary for employment. One-stop providers must assess participants across educational, training, and employability skills and refer them to aligned services. Title II funds for adult education may be used to develop curricula and provide instruction for the attainment of basic skills in English language arts (ELA), mathematics, and English language proficiency by out-of-school youth and adults.

Table 2 summarizes legislation and regulatory and nonregulatory guidance that addresses each of the Goals and Expectations indicators.

GOALS AND EXPECTATIONS INDICATORS

Academic and Technical Content

- Academic standards
- Career and technical standards
- Alignment to postsecondary requirements

Employability Skills

- Effective relationships
- Workplace skills
- Applied knowledge

Credential Attainment

- Postsecondary degree
- Industry-recognized credentials



Table 2. Summary of Findings on Alignment of Goals and Expectations

ESSA	Perkins V	IDEA	WIOA
TITLE I: DEFINITION OF WELL-ROUNDED EDUCATION (WRE) ESSA defines a WRE as the courses, activities, and programming in subjects such as science, technology, engineering, mathematics, computer science, CTE, and any other subject, as determined by the state or local educational agency, with the purpose of providing all students access to an enriched curriculum and educational experience. TITLE I, PART A: BASIC PROGRAMS FOR DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS LEAs ■ Must develop and implement a well-rounded education that promotes mastery of academic content standards, and may include coursework and other educational experiences to promote technical and employability skills attainment. ■ Must support programs that integrate academic/CTE learning for attainment of in-demand jobs. TITLE I, PART B: STATE ASSESSMENT GRANTS States may support the development of rigorous academic achievement standards that are aligned to CTE standards and require a level of achievement that ensures remediation-free entry to 4-year colleges. TITLE IV, PART B: 21ST CENTURY SCHOOLS ■ LEAs may further support efforts to connect a WRE to in-demand skills by developing and implementing a WRE that includes integrated content for • STEM • CTE • Employability skills such as collaboration skills, relationship-building skills, and learning skills. • Programs that partner with in-demand fields of the local workforce; or build career competencies and career readiness and ensure that career readiness skills are aligned to Perkins V and WIOA.	TITLE I, PART B: STATE PROVISIONS ■ Must ensure that students who participate in CTE programs are taught the same challenging academic proficiencies as taught to all other students. TITLE I: CTE ASSISTANCE TO STATES LEAs ■ Must support CTE students' mastery of the same challenging academic standards that are required of all other students. ■ Must initiate and strengthen programs that integrate learning in academic skills, CTE skills aligned with academic standards, and employability skills, in subjects that constitute a well-rounded education. ■ Must contribute to attainment of higher-order reasoning and problem-solving skills, work attitudes, and employability skills. ■ Must provide activities to prepare CTE participants (including special populations) for high-skill, high-wage, or in-demand sectors. States may support the integration of academic, technical training, and employability skills. ■ May develop CTE standards that are aligned with challenging academic standards.	PART A: DEFINITION OF FREE APPROPRIATE PUBLIC EDUCATION IDEA ensures a free appropriate public education, or special education and related services, is provided to all students with disabilities to meet their unique needs and prepare them for further education, employment, and independent living. That education must: ■ Be provided at public expense and without charge. ■ Meet the standards of the SEA. ■ Include preschool, elementary school, or secondary school education. ■ Conform with the student's individualized education program (IEP). PART B: ASSISTANCE FOR EDUCATION OF ALL STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES ■ The state must provide full educational opportunity to students with disabilities to ensure equality of opportunity, full participation, independent living, and economic self-sufficiency. ■ An IEP must be created for each child with a disability. The IEP is a written statement that is developed, reviewed, and revised to include measurable postsecondary goals related to training, education, employment, and independent living skills. ■ Students with disabilities must be educated in the least restrictive environment, meaning with students who are not disabled; removal of students with disabilities from the regular educational environment must occur only when the use of supplementary aids and services in the regular classes is not sufficient. ■ The state has established goals for the performance of students with disabilities that: • Are consistent with goals and standards for students established by the state. • Are the same as the state's long-term goals and measurements of interim progress for students with disabilities under ESSA.	TITLE I: UNIFIED STATE PLANS WIOA Unified State Plans should include an analysis of the economic condition of the state—including the employment needs of employers, with descriptions of the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed in the relevant industries and occupations.⁴ TITLE I: ADULT ACTIVITIES⁵ Local Areas ■ Must provide integrated education and training programs that include adult education and literacy activities, workforce preparation activities, and workforce training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster. States ■ May develop education and training programs that respond to real-time labor market analysis. ■ May improve coordination of economic development activities with workforce investment activities. ■ May implement strategies to meet needs of employers. TITLE I: YOUTH ACTIVITIES⁶ Local Areas ■ Must provide occupational skills training that gives priority to occupations aligned to local, in-demand occupations. States ■ May research linkages between youth needs and workforce opportunities. ■ May support re-entry to and completion of secondary school and/or advanced training. TITLE II: ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY ACTIVITIES States ■ Provide grants directly to eligible education providers to deliver adult education in basic skills concurrent with training and workforce preparation activities.

⁴ States may choose to develop a WIOA Combined State Plan that includes one or more partner programs as listed in Section 103 of WIOA. The U.S. Departments of Education and Labor issued joint guidance in January 2026 encouraging states to develop WIOA Combined State Plans that incorporate Career and Technical Education funded under Perkins V.

⁵ Up to 80% of WIOA Title I funding may be allocated to Adult and Dislocated Worker Employment and Training Activities (i.e., "Adult Activities"). Local activities are provided through one-stop providers.

⁶ At least 20% of WIOA Title I funds must be allocated to Youth Workforce Investment Activities (i.e., "Youth Activities").



Outcomes and Measures

The Outcomes and Measures quadrant analyzes the essential milestones and benchmarks that **monitor and assess individual academic, technical, and employability skills** competencies. College and career readiness measures should assess the Goals and Expectations and should be continuously validated against intended outcomes. This quadrant also describes data collection and reporting requirements to ensure data are usable and inform decision making.

Each of the four laws explicitly specifies requirements related to accountability measures and assessment design, as well as data reporting, storage, and access. States interested in aligning efforts can use common measures and coordinate data collection efforts to produce a more robust picture of the college and career readiness of individual students.



ESSA | Title I funds require SEAs to develop an accountability system that identifies low-performing schools based on graduation rate, English language arts/reading and mathematics proficiency, and another academic indicator such as student growth and progress in English learner proficiency. States also must include an additional indicator of student success or school quality of their choosing, which may include a college and career readiness measure. Results for all measures must be disaggregated by race and special population status (English learner, student with disability, economically disadvantaged). Title I, Part A provides funding for states to develop new college and career readiness assessments, including performance-based assessments, CTE assessments, and extended performance tasks.



PERKINS V | Perkins V defines accountability measures for participation and performance of CTE concentrators⁷ attending secondary and postsecondary schools. Postsecondary institutions must measure participation in CTE programs in nontraditional fields; persistence in postsecondary education or advanced training, military service, service programs, or volunteer service; and attainment of recognized postsecondary credentials. Secondary schools must measure proficiency in ELA/reading, mathematics, and science; graduation rate; participation in CTE programs; and postsecondary placement. Additionally, secondary schools must measure any one of the following: participation in work-based learning, attainment of dual/concurrent coursework credits, or attainment of postsecondary credentials (i.e., industry-recognized certificate or certification, apprenticeship completion, license, or associate or bachelor's degree). Perkins V, Title I funding allows for the development of technical assessments for specified career pathways. Perkins V also requires data that are disaggregated by program or program of study (or career cluster if not available), race, gender, special population status, and other state-identified characteristics.



IDEA | Although students with disabilities participate in the state ESSA accountability system, they also participate in the IDEA accountability system, known as Results-Driven Accountability (RDA). IDEA requires each state to develop a state performance plan and annual performance report that evaluates the state's efforts to implement the requirements of IDEA. The plan and report include goals, baseline, and results of 17 indicators of child and family outcomes and compliance. Five indicators directly align with SEA monitoring and assessing of academic, technical, and employability skills of students with disabilities: Indicator 1 – Graduation, Indicator 2 – Dropout, Indicator 3 – Academic Achievement, Indicator 13 – Transition Planning, and Indicator 14 – Post-School

⁷ Perkins defines a CTE concentrator as a secondary student who has completed two or more courses in a single CTE program or program of study, or a postsecondary student who has earned at least 12 credits in a single CTE program or otherwise completed the program (pp. 6–7).

OUTCOMES AND MEASURES INDICATORS

On-Track Indicators for Readiness

- Course completion
- Performance on summative assessment
- Credential attainment

Measures of Postsecondary Readiness

- High school graduation
- Postsecondary enrollment
- Industry certification
- Persistence in postsecondary pathways

Measures of Postsecondary Success

- Job placement in middle skills or career trajectory
- Credential attainment
- College diploma

Assessment

- Assessment design
- Assessment administration

Data Collection

- Statewide longitudinal data systems
- Data sharing

Outcomes. The SEA must publicly report these data annually. Under IDEA, students with disabilities must have an IEP that outlines individualized, annual goals; a description of how individual progress toward those goals will be measured; and when periodic reports of progress will be shared with parents. Grants are available for improving the alignment, compatibility, and development of valid and reliable assessments and alternate assessments of student academic achievement.



WIOA | Reporting requirements for WIOA outcomes and measures focus heavily on workforce outcomes. Core programs implement common performance accountability metrics, including credential attainment and skills gains, employment, earnings, and employer satisfaction. Further, WIOA assesses and awards credit for prior knowledge, skills, competencies, and experiences. Performance accountability measures are disaggregated by subpopulation based on race, ethnicity, gender, and age.

Table 3 summarizes legislation and regulatory and nonregulatory guidance that addresses each of the Outcomes and Measures indicators.



Table 3. Summary of Findings on Alignment of Outcomes and Measures

ESSA	Perkins V	IDEA	WIOA
TITLE I, PART A: ACCOUNTABILITY REQUIREMENTS States must include the following measures in their accountability systems: 4-year adjusted cohort graduation rate; student growth or another valid and reliable academic indicator; progress in achieving English language proficiency; proficiency in ELA/reading and math based on the long-term goals; and an indicator of school quality or student success, which may include one or more measures of: ■ Student engagement ■ Educator engagement ■ Student access to and completion of advanced coursework ■ Postsecondary readiness ■ School climate and safety ■ Other TITLE I, PART B: ASSESSMENT Each state plan shall demonstrate that it has implemented a set of high-quality student academic assessments in mathematics, reading or language arts, and science. TITLE I, PART A: BASIC PROGRAMS Five percent of states' Title I, Part A allocation may be used for: ■ The identification and development of measures of student performance and school quality, and systems to collect those measures, including activities to align such systems to Perkins V and WIOA systems. ■ The development of statewide assessments, which may be delivered partially in the form of portfolios, projects, or extended performance tasks.	TITLE I, PART A: SECONDARY REPORTING States must develop secondary and postsecondary measures of CTE concentrator performance aligned with measures used under other federal laws (e.g., ESSA and WIOA) to the greatest extent possible. Secondary program accountability systems must measure: ■ Proficiency in reading/ELA, mathematics, and science, as measured by ESEA Title I assessments. ■ 4-year adjusted cohort graduation rate and, optionally, extended-year rate. ■ Participation rate in CTE programs that lead to nontraditional fields. ■ Placement rate of graduates in postsecondary education or advanced training, military service, service program, volunteer service, or employment. ■ For graduates, one of the following: • Attainment rate of recognized postsecondary credentials. • Attainment rate of dual/concurrent coursework credits. • Participation rate in work-based learning. POSTSECONDARY REPORTING Postsecondary program accountability systems must measure: ■ Persistence in postsecondary education or advanced training, military service, service program, or volunteer service employment (as of 2nd quarter after program completion). ■ Attainment of industry-recognized postsecondary credential. ■ Participation in CTE programs that lead to non-traditional fields.	PART B: ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES As part of the state performance plan and annual performance report, the state must establish goals for, monitor, and report progress on 17 indicators. Five indicators directly align with SEA monitoring and assessment of academic, technical, and employability skills of students with disabilities: ■ Graduation (Indicator 1) – Percent of youth with IEPs graduating from high school with a regular high school diploma. ■ Dropout (Indicator 2) – Percent of youth with IEPs dropping out of high school. ■ Participation and Performance on Statewide Assessment (Indicator 3A–3C) – Participation and performance of children with IEPs on statewide assessments. ■ Secondary Transition (Indicator 13) – Percent of youth with IEPs aged 16 and above with an IEP that includes the requirements of 20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(B). ■ Post-School Outcomes (Indicator 14A–14C) PART B: TRANSITION IEP (20 U.S.C. 1416(A)(3) (B)) In addition to IEP component requirements, a student's transition plan must include: ■ Appropriate, measurable postsecondary goals in the areas of training, education, employment, and, where appropriate, independent living skills that are annually updated. ■ Age-appropriate transition assessment(s). ■ Annual goals that enable the child to make progress in the general education curriculum and toward postsecondary goals. ■ Transition services, including courses of study, that will reasonably enable the student to meet those postsecondary goals. ■ Annual IEP goals related to the student's transition service needs.	TITLE I, CHAPTER 4: PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY Performance accountability measures for youth and adults shall include indicators of having obtained or being in the process of obtaining: ■ Postsecondary credential, secondary school diploma, or equivalent during participation or within 1 year after program exit. ■ Enrollment in education that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential or employment and achievement of measurable skill gains toward those goals. ■ Unsubsidized employment (and/or, in the case of youth, participation in education and training) during the second and fourth quarters after exit from the program. ■ Median earnings during the second quarter after exit from the program. ■ Effectiveness in serving employers. TITLE I: ADULT AND YOUTH ACTIVITIES Local Areas ■ Must provide an initial assessment of academic and technical skills, as well as employability, interests, aptitudes and development needs, and, if appropriate, comprehensive and specialized assessments of skills. ■ Must assess basic skills (including literacy, numeracy, and English language proficiency), aptitudes, abilities, and supportive service needs. ■ Must provide performance information on eligible training providers, providers of youth workforce development activities, adult education, postsecondary CTE and CTE programs for dropouts under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act, and vocational rehabilitation services. ■ Must provide usable data to participants regarding local area performance on accountability measures.

ESSA	Perkins V	IDEA	WIOA
States may fund the development of: - Assessments in any academic subject. - Balanced assessment systems that include summative, interim, and formative assessments. - Tests that emphasize mastery of standards and aligned competencies, including technology-based, performance-based, and computer-adaptive tests, and tests that embed projects or extended performance tasks. - State report cards that can be cross-tabulated by major racial and ethnic group, gender, English language proficiency status, and disability status, and that may include: - The number and percentage of students enrolled in Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate coursework. - College-going rate of students within 1 year of graduation, where available. - Any other information, including CTE proficiency attainment. TITLE I, PART B: GRANTS FOR STATE ASSESSMENTS AND RELATED ACTIVITIES AND INNOVATIVE ASSESSMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY DEMONSTRATION AUTHORITY States may fund efforts to replace statewide mathematics, ELA/reading, or science assessments with next-generation assessments, which may be competency based or performance based.	SUBGROUP REPORTING Performance results must be disaggregated by: - CTE program or program of study (or if not available, by career cluster area). - Subgroup membership, including major racial/ethnic group, gender, English learner status, disability status, status as an individual from an economically disadvantaged family, status as a participant in a program that prepares individuals for nontraditional fields, migrant status, out-of-workforce status, status as single parent or single pregnant woman, homelessness status, foster care status, and status as a member of a military family. TITLE I: CTE ASSISTANCE TO STATES May develop and enhance data systems to collect and analyze data on secondary and postsecondary academic and employment outcomes. May develop valid and reliable assessment of competencies and technical skills.	There also must be evidence that the student was invited to the IEP Team meeting where transition services are discussed, and that, if appropriate, a representative of any participating agency was invited to that meeting (with the prior consent of the parent, or of student if no longer a minor). PART B: ALTERNATE ASSESSMENTS The state must meet the following conditions for assistance: - Develop and implement guidelines for the participation in alternate assessments of those students with disabilities who cannot participate in regular assessments. - Align alternate assessments with the challenging state academic content standards under ESSA and alternate academic achievement standards, and measure the achievement of students with disabilities against the alternate academic achievement standards.	States Must provide assistance to state entities and agencies, local areas, and one-stop partners in coordination and alignment of data systems. Must fund various evaluation, monitoring, and oversight activities of local adult and youth programs that integrate the required performance indicators. TITLE II: ADULT EDUCATION AND FAMILY LITERACY Measures for adult education participants are the same as those established for the WIOA Title I youth, adult, and dislocated worker programs. TITLE I, CHAPTER 4: PERFORMANCE REPORTS The performance report for a state shall include: - Information specifying the level of performance achieved for each program's primary indicator of performance with respect to individuals with barriers to employment,⁸ disaggregated by each subpopulation of such individuals and by race, ethnicity, gender, and age. - The number of individuals with barriers to employment served by each of the programs, disaggregated by each subpopulation of such individuals.

⁸ Individuals with barriers to employment include: displaced homemakers; low-income individuals; Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians; individuals with disabilities; older individuals; ex-offenders; homeless individuals; youth who are in or who have aged out of the foster care system; English learners, individuals who have low levels of literacy, and individuals "facing substantial cultural barriers"; single parents, including single pregnant women; individuals within 2 years of exhausting lifetime eligibility for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF); migrant and seasonal farmworkers; long-term unemployed individuals; and any other groups identified by the governor.



Resources and Structures

Resources and Structures analyzes the **institutional assets necessary to prepare college- and career-ready students**, including the necessary funding, processes, people, and resources. Each of the four laws identify organizational, curriculum, and instructional alignment opportunities to support the development of academic, technical, and employability skills for all students.



ESSA | ESSA provides funding dedicated to the professional development of teachers and other educators and staff through Title II, Part A. Funding under Titles I and IV may be used to support collaborative professional development for CTE, higher education, and general education stakeholders focused on dual/concurrent enrollment, Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate, and early college coursework and STEM instruction. ESSA also allows funds to be used to support educator training on state and regional workforce needs, particularly for college and career counselors. Finally, ESSA allows professional development that supports (a) the integration of academic, technical, and employability skills, and (b) the capacity to provide work-based learning experiences and pathways that culminate in in-demand work placement. For schools implementing schoolwide Title I programs, support efforts must be aligned with needs assessments.



PERKINS V | Perkins V funding must support professional development at the local level for teachers, administrators, paraprofessionals, specialized instructional support personnel, postsecondary faculty, or guidance counselors. The content of training is flexible, with permissible uses of funds including supporting instructional strategies for integrating academic and technical content, supporting educators in understanding current industry needs, and providing effective instruction for disadvantaged CTE students

Perkins V also provides the opportunity to train career guidance and academic counselors and other educators in helping parents and students understand career and education pathways and opportunities. States must support the recruitment, retention and/or preparation of CTE personnel. States and LEAs may also improve institutional capacity through partnerships with intermediaries, including for support with systems development; and may coordinate CTE programs across agencies or local workforce boards. All such support should be based on local needs, which are required to be assessed every 2 years.



IDEA | IDEA Part B provides formula grants to support special education and related services for students with disabilities. These services may include supplementary aids and services to support the student within the regular classroom, including supports for participation in work-based learning opportunities. IDEA provides funding for personnel preparation and professional development in early intervention, educational, and transition services to reform and improve their systems. Professional development funds can be used for teacher mentoring, team teaching, reduced class schedules and caseloads, intensive professional development, use of standards or assessments for guiding beginning teachers, and the provision of training in how to facilitate the successful transition to postsecondary opportunities. Personnel development funds can be used for the preparation of beginning special educators, for interdisciplinary training, and for leadership preparation. Funds may also be used for assisting local educational agencies in meeting personnel shortages and supporting capacity-building activities.



WIOA | WIOA Title I does not identify explicit opportunities for integrating academic, technical, and employability skills into professional development. However, the law offers more flexibility in who can receive professional development, including staff and educators of local boards, offices of chief elected officials, one-stop operators, one-stop partners, and eligible service providers in local areas. Under WIOA Title I, capacity-building responsibilities fall largely to the State Workforce Development Board. Further, state WIOA Title II funds may be used to integrate literacy and English language instruction with occupational skills training.

Table 4 summarizes legislation and regulatory and nonregulatory guidance that addresses each of the Resources and Structures indicators.

RESOURCES AND STRUCTURES INDICATORS

Resources

- Human capital
- Fiscal
- Learning resources

Processes

- Professional development
- Community engagement
- Alignment of policies and programs
- Alignment across institutions

Table 4. Summary of Findings on the Alignment of Resources and Structures

ESSA	Perkins V	IDEA	WIOA
TITLE I: SCHOOLWIDE PROGRAMS The LEA may use funds to: ■ Provide joint in-service training for teachers—in collaboration with CTE educators and educators from institutions of higher education—on integrating rigorous content into a dual/concurrent curriculum. ■ Develop integrated, rigorous content to support dual/concurrent coursework and CTE educators. ■ Deliver instruction to support academic, technical, and employability skills. ■ Integrate academic and technical course content. ■ Address the needs of all students, particularly those at risk, through activities that may include specialized instructional support services. TITLE II: STATE PLANS The SEA may use funds to: ■ Improve instructional strategies of teachers, principals, and other school leaders to integrate CTE content into academic instructional practices, which may include training on best practices to understand state and regional workforce needs and transitions to postsecondary education and the workforce. ■ Support opportunities for collaborative discussion of the transition to elementary school, including school-readiness issues. ■ Provide instruction in STEM subjects and computer science. ■ Integrate CTE into academic content. ■ Improve students' peer interaction skills. ■ Help students develop skills necessary for learning readiness and academic success.	TITLE I: CTE ASSISTANCE TO STATES The state must broadly support recruiting, preparation, and/or retention of CTE educators and staff, while LEAs must fund targeted professional development. States and LEAs may broadly use funds for other resources and structures. States ■ Must support recruiting, preparing, or retaining of CTE teachers, postsecondary faculty, administrators, paraprofessionals, or career guidance and academic counselors. ■ May support professional development that is coordinated with ESSA Title II activities, that is evidence based (to the extent practicable), and that: • Promotes integration of academic and CTE content. • Improves educators' ability to stay current with industry standards and earn industry credentials. • Increases educators' ability to provide universal design for learning and other accommodations to disadvantaged students. ■ May partner with intermediaries to improve training, develop public-private partnerships, systems development, capacity-building, and scalability to deliver high-quality CTE. ■ May support elimination of barriers to equitable access for all students to CTE educators and staff. LEAs ■ Must provide professional development to teachers, faculty, administrators, counselors, specialized instructional support personnel, and paraprofessionals, which may include capacity building for: • Integrating CTE and academic standards and curricula. • Using evidence-based pedagogical practices. • Staying current on industry developments and labor market data. • Effectively teaching and providing accommodations for disadvantaged students.	PART B: STATE-LEVEL USE OF FUNDS Funds may be used: ■ For support and direct services, including technical assistance, personnel preparation, and professional development and training. ■ To assist LEAs in meeting personnel shortages. ■ To support capacity-building activities. ■ To provide technical assistance to schools and LEAs, and provide direct services. PART D: PERSONNEL PREPARATION AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SEAs shall use funding to provide professional development activities and personnel preparation: ■ SEAs shall use professional development funds to: • Provide support for special and regular education teachers of students with disabilities and principals through: – Teacher mentoring, team teaching, reduced class schedules and caseloads, and intensive professional development. – Guiding beginning teachers using standards or assessments. – Encouraging collaborative and consultative models of providing early intervention, special education, and related services. • Provide professional development activities that improve the knowledge of special and regular education teachers concerning: – The academic and developmental or functional needs of students with disabilities or effective instructional strategies. – Effective instructional practices that provide training on teaching students with different learning styles, involve collaborative groups, and provide training methods in the following: behavioral interventions and supports, scientifically based literacy instruction, early interventions, the successful transitioning to postsecondary opportunities, and parent involvement.	TITLE I: YOUTH ACTIVITIES The state has broad flexibility to fund efforts to train staff and educators of local boards, offices of chief elected officials, one-stop operators, one-stop partners, and eligible service providers in local areas based on their needs. TITLE I: ADULT ACTIVITIES The state is required to fund the development and training of staff of these entities, which may include training of staff to provide opportunities for individuals with barriers to employment to enter in-demand industry sectors or occupations and nontraditional occupations. TITLE II: ADULT EDUCATION AND FAMILY LITERACY States are required to establish or operate high-quality professional development programs to improve: ■ Instruction in essential components of reading instruction. ■ Other instruction related to specific needs of adults. ■ Instruction provided by volunteers or state personnel. ■ Dissemination of information about models and promising practices related to such programs.



ESSA	Perkins V	IDEA	WIOA
■ Build capacity, including through evidence-based practices, to deliver instruction for dual/ concurrent coursework, Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate coursework, or early college coursework that leads to college credit. ■ Integrate work-based learning experiences into academic and CTE coursework. TITLE IV: 21ST CENTURY SCHOOLS The SEA and LEA may use funds to: ■ Provide effective STEM instruction, including integrating STEM with other academic subjects. ■ Help students develop relationship-building skills, such as effective communication. ■ Support college and career guidance and counseling programs, including training counselors to effectively use labor market data. COMPREHENSIVE NEEDS ASSESSMENT Title I schools implementing schoolwide programs must conduct comprehensive needs assessments that take into account achievement against state academic standards.	■ May recruit and retain CTE educators and staff. ■ May purchase equipment, technology, and instructional materials aligned with business and industry needs. ■ May fund activities to coordinate CTE programs with workforce programs established under WIOA, including within-sector partnerships. COMPREHENSIVE NEEDS ASSESSMENT LEAs must develop and conduct a comprehensive needs assessment, in consultation with the state or local workforce boards, that describes: ■ Progress against targets for all secondary school accountability indicators, including achievement against state academic standards. ■ How CTE programs are sufficient in size, scope, and quality to meet the needs of all students, including progress toward equal access to CTE coursework and programs of study.	• Develop and implement initiatives to promote recruitment and training of special education teachers, including mentoring, induction, and support for beginning teachers, and incentives to retain teachers. ■ The Secretary shall award grants to SEAs, LEAs, charter schools, and other eligible entities to: • Ensure personnel have the necessary skills and knowledge to be successful in serving students with disabilities. • Encourage increased focus on academics and core content areas. • Ensure regular education teachers have the necessary skills and knowledge to be successful in serving students with disabilities in regular education classrooms. • Ensure that special education teachers meet the qualifications. • Ensure that personnel preparation programs include training in early intervention, educational, and transition services; in involving parents; and in positive behavioral supports. • Provide professional development for principals, superintendents, and other administrators. • Provide support for beginning special educators.	

Pathways and Supports

The Pathways and Supports quadrant analyzes **the coordinated system of supports and services that support individual student development**. In this sense, Pathways and Supports set the context wherein students determine career goals, master content, determine postsecondary options for accomplishing their goals, and overcome barriers to postsecondary success. The four laws reference supportive services related to receiving academic content, career awareness, work-based learning, and knowledge of postsecondary pathways. In addition to the education focus, the laws identify nonacademic support services necessary for student success, including health services, counseling, transportation, and housing.



ESSA | Title I, Part A allows LEAs to integrate work-based learning experiences into the WRE provision to support academic and CTE skill attainment. ESSA does not require career awareness activities; however, funds may be used for advanced coursework and other educational experiences that support transitions from high school to postsecondary education, training, or work. ESSA funding for career counseling can help students identify viable career pathways and establish partnerships among LEAs, businesses, and other stakeholders. Finally, Title I, Part A and Title IV, Part A provide funding for improving conditions for learning for disadvantaged students, including academic and nonacademic pipeline services that address readiness to learn. Certain sources of funding must be used to support evidence-based practices grounded in rigorous research.



PERKINS V | Under Perkins V, CTE must support student pathways knowledge by contributing to all students' knowledge of an industry. Local areas must provide at least one program of study that links integrated academic, technical, and employability skills instruction and training across secondary and higher education, training, and/or work opportunities. States must articulate program strategies specifically for special populations. Furthermore, embedded in the Perkins V definition of CTE is the requirement that sequenced coursework and training leads to industry-recognized postsecondary credentials. Finally, local funding may be used to support work-based learning experiences for CTE students, dual/concurrent coursework and early college opportunities, or nonacademic support services for disadvantaged and/or special populations (such as child care or transportation). In addition to these explicit uses, Perkins V includes "catchall" provisions that gives states and LEAs flexibility to fund activities that improve CTE and are aligned with needs assessments.



IDEA | Each student's IEP must include the provision of special education and related services and supplementary aids and services. Funds may be used for the development and implementation of programs that improve the transition from school to post-school activities, including the coordination of services with agencies involved in supporting the transition of students with disabilities to postsecondary activities, such as postsecondary education, vocational education, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation. Transition services are based on the individual child's needs, and take into account the child's strengths, preferences, and interests; and include instruction, related services, community experiences, the development of employment and other postsecondary adult living objectives, and the acquisition of daily living skills and functional vocational evaluation.

Other supports that are eligible to receive funding include the provision of behavioral interventions and supports and appropriate mental health services, and the promotion and coordination of health and mental health services by the educational system. Grants to states to provide special education and related services, such as transportation, developmental, corrective, and other supportive services (including counseling services) are also available.

PATHWAYS AND SUPPORTS INDICATORS

Academic Organization

- Curriculum, instruction, and assessment
- Pathways to postsecondary opportunities
- Work- and context-based learning
- Well-rounded education

Pathways Knowledge

- Awareness of pathway options
- Knowledge of personal interests and skills
- Personal goals and aspirations
- Postsecondary transitions
- Career pathways participation
- Guidance/career counseling

Supports

- Individualized pathways/learning plans
- Pipeline services
- Credit recovery
- Accommodations





WIOA | WIOA Title I requires one-stop providers to assess the supportive service needs of adults and youth, defined as services such as transportation, child care, housing, and counseling. One-stop providers must offer career services that connect the career aptitudes and interests of adults to in-demand career opportunities and must help adults and youth navigate these pathways. Work-based learning experiences are required components of these services. WIOA Title I also requires that local workforce development boards lead the development of career pathways by aligning employment, training, education, and supportive services for adults and youth—particularly individuals with barriers to employment. State and local workforce development boards may use funds to drive sector partnerships with businesses that help develop and participate in these pathways. In competitively awarding WIOA Title II funds to adult education providers, states must consider whether the provider will offer flexible schedules and coordinate with federal, state, and local sources of support services, such as child care and transportation.

Table 5 summarizes legislation and regulatory and nonregulatory guidance that addresses each of the Pathways and Supports indicators.

Table 5. Summary of Pathways and Supports Alignment Findings

ESSA	Perkins V	IDEA	WIOA
TITLE I, PART A: BASIC PROGRAMS LEAs ■ Must implement strategies to improve conditions for learning that may include a broad spectrum of support services. ■ Must, if appropriate, support academic and CTE content through experiential learning opportunities that promote skills attainment important to in-demand occupations. ■ Must, if appropriate, support programs that integrate work-based learning opportunities that provide in-depth interaction with industry professionals and, if appropriate, academic credit. ■ Must support transitions from high school to postsecondary education, including, where applicable: • Coordination with institutions of higher education and employers. • Increased access to career counseling to identify student interests and skills. Schoolwide Programs ■ May support counseling, mental health programs, specialized instructional support, mentoring, or other strategies to improve students' skills outside the academic subject areas. ■ Must address the needs of all students, but particularly those at risk. Doing so may include: • Awareness of opportunities for postsecondary education and the workforce. • CTE programs. • Broadening students' access to advanced coursework. Targeted Assistance Programs ■ May strengthen academic programs through expanded learning programs.	TITLE I: CTE ASSISTANCE TO STATES State plans must describe how they will coordinate with the State workforce development board (and with ESSA administrators, if applicable) to develop local career pathways that provide academic and nonacademic supports, as appropriate, for all students, including strategies for eliminating postsecondary readiness gaps with special populations. LEAs ■ Must provide and support equal access to at least one sequenced program of study integrating core academic and technical training, including employability skills, across secondary and postsecondary education that leads to an industry-recognized credential and meets local or state industry needs. ■ Must strengthen and integrate the academic and technical components of CTE programs. ■ Must provide career exploration and development activities, in collaboration with local workforce development boards, agencies, or one-stop delivery systems, including in middle grades (Grade 5 and above). These activities may include courses, programs, individual career plans, guidance, and counseling that provide information on occupational supply and demand and all other aspects of an industry. ■ May support local relationships among education, business, and one-stop centers, including sector partnerships, to align programs of study with industry demand. ■ May directly support out-of-pocket costs for special populations, including fees, dependent care, and transportation. ■ May support integration of employability skills into CTE programs and programs of study. ■ May expand opportunities to participate in dual/concurrent coursework, early college, Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate coursework, and CTE pathways and certification exams established through articulation agreements with postsecondary institutions.	PART B: RELATED SERVICES DEFINITION Related services are guaranteed to students with disabilities through access to a free appropriate public education. They include: ■ Transportation ■ Developmental, corrective, and other supportive services, including counseling services and medical services ■ Early identification and assessment The Secretary shall make grants to support the provision of special education and related services to students with disabilities. PART B: TRANSITION SERVICES ■ Transition services are a coordinated set of activities to facilitate the child's movement from school to post-school activities, including postsecondary education, vocational education, integrated employment, continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation. These services include instruction, related services, community experiences, the development of employment and post-school living objectives, acquisition of daily living skills, and functional vocational evaluation. ■ Part B requires that SEAs and LEAs develop and implement transition programs.	TITLE I: ADULT ACTIVITIES Local Areas ■ Must assess needs for supportive services. ■ Must provide information regarding the availability of supportive services and referral to these services. ■ Must provide career services, which may include career planning, internships, and work experiences that are linked to careers. ■ Must provide, if appropriate for obtaining employment, services to develop an individual employment plan, including employment goals, achievement objectives, providers of training services, and a career pathway. ■ May provide customer support to help individuals overcome barriers to employment. ■ May coordinate local services with programs for individuals with disabilities. States ■ Must assist local areas in developing, convening, and implementing industry or sector partnerships. ■ May use funds to articulate and implement pathways.



ESSA	Perkins V	IDEA	WIOA
TITLE I, PART A: WELL-ROUNDED EDUCATION (WRE) LEAs and Title I schools may include, in a WRE, Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate, dual/concurrent, or early college coursework; career exploration activities; work-based learning; or other programming that supports transitions to postsecondary education, training, or work. Additional areas within ESSA where WRE is referenced include: ■ Title II, Part A: Supporting Effective Instruction ■ Title IV, Part A: Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grants (SSAEG) ■ Title IV, Part B: 21st Century Schools TITLE I: SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT LEAs with schools receiving comprehensive or targeted supports and improvement must fund evidence-based improvement practices. TITLE IV, PART B: LOCAL FUNDING FOR SSAEG AND 21ST CENTURY SCHOOLS Promoting a WRE that may include: ■ Work-based learning and field-based experiences. ■ Service learning. ■ College and career guidance and counseling. ■ Evidence-based supports (to the extent possible) for mental health, drug, and violence prevention programs, trauma support, and reduction of exclusionary discipline practices. TITLE IV: PROMISE NEIGHBORHOODS AND FULL-SERVICE COMMUNITY LEARNING SCHOOLS Grantees must provide pipeline services to schools with high concentrations of low-income students. TITLE I: DIRECT STUDENT SERVICES FUNDS States may fund Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate, dual/concurrent, or early college coursework and CTE that leads to credentials.	■ May provide CTE to adults and out-of-school youth to allow them to complete secondary school or upgrade technical skills. ■ May support a continuum of work-based learning activities. ■ May support access to and success in STEM-related fields for underrepresented student groups, including integration of arts. ■ May support integration of arts and design skills. ■ May support other activities to improve CTE that are aligned with the local needs assessment. States ■ Must support, develop, or improve CTE programs, and promote equitable access to such programs for all students. ■ May develop statewide programs of study, support those established by state/local workforce boards, or approve locally developed programs of study. The programs may include standards; curriculum and course development; and career exploration, guidance and advisement activities and resources. ■ May establish statewide articulation agreements between secondary and postsecondary programs or between associate and baccalaureate programs. ■ May support CTE programs and programs of study identified by state and local workforce development boards under WIOA. ■ May establish sector partnerships among LEAs, institutions of higher education, adult education providers, and other entities—such as employers, labor organizations, intermediaries, parents, and local partnerships—to develop and support student completion of a program of study, work-based learning, dual/current coursework, or early college. ■ May support equitable access to high-quality programs of study, including through awarding incentive grants to encourage progress of special populations toward closing college and career readiness gaps. ■ May support and improve career guidance and academic counseling, including counseling regarding financial aid and direct support services for special populations.	PART B: BEHAVIORAL SUPPORTS AND HEALTH SERVICES The Secretary may support activities to: ■ Establish, expand, or increase the scope of behavioral supports and systemic interventions, by providing for effective, research-based practices, including stronger linkages between school-based services and community-based resources (such as community mental health). ■ Improve interim alternative educational settings by promoting interagency coordination and coordinated service delivery, including with community mental health providers. PART B: STATE-LEVEL ACTIVITIES USE OF FUNDS Funds may be used in the following state-level activities: ■ Assisting LEAs in providing behavioral interventions and supports and mental health services. ■ Development and implementation of transition programs, including coordination of services. ■ Alternative programming for students who have been expelled, are in correctional facilities, or are in charter schools. ■ Supporting the development and provision of appropriate accommodations, or alternate assessments that are valid and reliable.	TITLE I: YOUTH ACTIVITIES Local Areas ■ Must assess the need for and provide supportive services. ■ Must provide adult mentoring for at least 12 months. ■ Must provide guidance and counseling. ■ Must identify service strategies for each individual that identify career pathways that include education and employment goals. ■ Must provide activities leading to attainment of a secondary diploma or its equivalent, or a recognized postsecondary credential. ■ Must provide unpaid and paid work experiences that integrate occupational and academic education. ■ Must provide services, such as career awareness and career exploration services, that provide labor market and employment information about in-demand industry sectors or occupations in the local area. States ■ May support the delivery of career services in the one-stop delivery system. ■ May develop evidence-based programs for youth to re-enter secondary school and for individuals to graduate, enroll in postsecondary and training, and enter pathways to employment.

ESSA	Perkins V	IDEA	WIOA
TITLE IV, PART A: STUDENT SUPPORT AND ACADEMIC ENRICHMENT GRANTS LEAs may provide mentoring and counseling services for all students, including those who are at risk of academic failure. TITLE IV, PART F (PROMISE NEIGHBORHOODS AND 21ST CENTURY COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTERS): PIPELINE SERVICES The term “pipeline services” means a continuum of coordinated supports, services, and opportunities for children from birth through entry into and success in both postsecondary education and career attainment. Such services include, at a minimum, strategies to address through services or programs (including integrated student supports) the following: ■ High-quality early childhood education programs. ■ High-quality school and out-of-school-time programs. ■ Activities that support postsecondary and workforce readiness, which may include job training, internship opportunities, and career counseling. ■ Social, health, nutrition, and mental health services and supports. ■ Juvenile crime prevention and rehabilitation programs.	■ May support increased access to and success in STEM fields, including integration of arts and design skills, particularly for underrepresented student groups. ■ May support career academies. ■ May create, evaluate, and support competency-based curricula. ■ May support other activities that improve CTE, such as advanced coursework, work-based learning and STEM coursework, or other activities aligned with local needs. TITLE I: INNOVATION AND MODERNIZATION GRANTS States and LEAs must develop or implement evidence-based, field-initiated innovations in CTE, and rigorously evaluate them, with priority given to programs for students from low-income families. ■ May support dual/concurrent coursework, early college and Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate coursework and examinations. ■ May establish work-based learning opportunities and support their integration into programs of study.		TITLE II: ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY ACTIVITIES Uses the same definition of “individuals with barriers to employment” as WIOA Title I youth, adult, and dislocated worker programs. States ■ Must align activities for individuals with pathways that provide employment and training services. ■ May develop content and models for integrated education and training and career pathways. ■ May develop and implement a system to assist in the transition from adult education to postsecondary education. ■ May develop and implement programs and services to meet the needs of adult learners with learning disabilities or English learners.



Conclusion

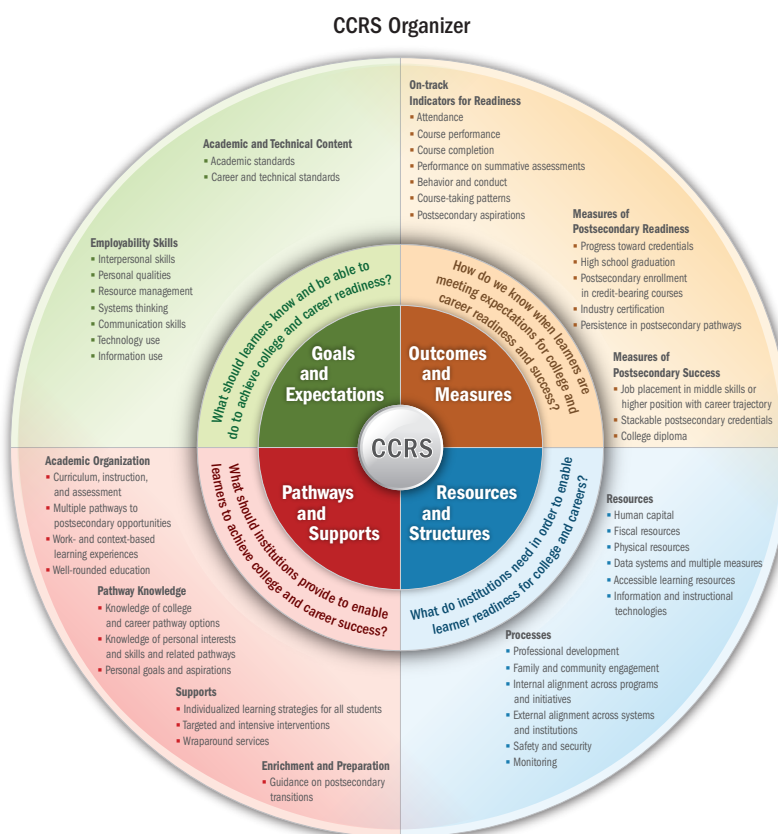
ESSA, Perkins V, IDEA, and WIOA play important and complementary roles in educating the country's workforce and providing the academic, technical, and employability skills needed to be successful. Creating this coherent education-to-workforce pipeline requires aligning implementation efforts across the four laws and their key stakeholders. To support this alignment, the most recent versions of these laws align various policies and key definitions, and provide requirements and opportunities to coordinate cross-agency work. This brief analyzes how each of the laws reflect key indicators of college and career readiness. Using the College and Career Readiness and Success Center Organizer as the framework for analysis, this brief and accompanying supplemental resources can be used by SEA and LEA teams to review their implementation efforts—including the general K–12 system, education for students with disabilities, CTE programs, 2-year and 4-year postsecondary institutions, technical training programs, adult education, and apprenticeship programs—to strategically coordinate education-to-career pipelines and ensure that more students are ready for the rigor and requirements of college and career. Finally, considering the intersections between these four laws provides stakeholders an opportunity to increase efficiency and coherence, and ensure that there is a seamless system of **academic, technical, and employability skills** preparedness.



Appendix

THE COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS AND SUCCESS ORGANIZER

The Organizer is a graphic that displays a consolidated overview of the many elements that impact a learner's ability to succeed in college and careers at both the institutional and individual levels. It is segmented into three increasingly specific tiers: strands, threads, and components. Strands (the four titles around the "CCRS" circle) are the overarching categories under which all college and career readiness and success topics are organized. Threads (bolded titles in the outer circle) highlight particular aspects of each strand, and components (bulleted) are the specific items that may be leveraged by state education agencies (SEAs), local education agencies (LEAs), and schools to impact college and career readiness and success.



The Organizer's four central strands are each driven by a guiding question:

- **Goals and Expectations:** What should learners know and be able to do to achieve college and career readiness?
- **Outcomes and Measures:** How do we know when learners are meeting expectations for college and career readiness and success?
- **Pathways and Supports:** What should institutions provide to enable learners to achieve college and career success?
- **Resources and Structures:** What do institutions need to enable learner readiness for college and careers?



COLLEGE & CAREER READINESS & SUCCESS Center

at American Institutes for Research ■

1400 Crystal Drive, 10th Floor
Arlington, VA 22202-3289
202.403.5000

www.ccrscenter.org



This work was originally produced in whole or in part by the College and Career Readiness and Success Center with funds from the U.S. Department of Education under cooperative agreement number S283B120034. The content does not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the Department of Education, nor does mention or visual representation of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement by the federal government.

Copyright © 2026 American Institutes for Research. All rights reserved.