Transcript – Submitting a Perkins-WIOA Combined Plan (August 22, 2019)

When Congress passed the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act in 2014, steps were taken to support the alignment and integration of programs in states workforce and talent development pipelines. WIOA allowed for the submission of a “combined plan” in conjunction with Perkins plans, which were designed to “communicate the State’s vision for the State workforce system and align and integrate the State workforce system across Federal programs,” particularly programs “that offer educational, training, employment, or supportive services...”

As a result of this language, six states submitted WIOA/Perkins Combined State Plans in 2016. Today, we are seeing these plans set the foundation for more useful programs and experiences for learners and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of workforce development systems across the states that have taken advantage of this alignment in their state planning processes.

For example:

* The Delaware Department of Education requires Perkins subrecipients to use Delaware Department of Labor provided labor market information by career cluster to assess their programs of study.
* Delaware and Minnesota CTE programs actively use state-developed labor market information to support and inform programs of study development. In addition, Minnesota organizes the secondary-postsecondary Perkins consortia by the state’s six regional workforce areas creating a foundation for conducting regional local needs assessments.
* In New Hampshire, the state’s Department of Education operates the WIOA Title I Youth program, and in Virginia, the state community college system manages all WIOA Title I programs.
* Ohio created [OhioMeansJobs.com](https://jobseeker.ohiomeansjobs.monster.com/home.aspx), to host information and resources related to career planning and was developed by 25 education and workforce development programs at 10 state agencies.  Additionally, in Ohio, the Governor’s Office of Workforce Transformation manages the Workforce Success Measures website that provides program administrators and policy makers with county-level and provider-level data on the performance of education and workforce development programs.
* Pennsylvania uses a list of “High Priority Occupations” identified by the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry to focus all WIOA Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker funds and a portion of state community college funding on preparing individuals for occupations that are “in demand by employers, pay a family-sustaining wage, and have higher skill requirements.”

Today you’ll hear from Alabama, a state that is currently going through the process of building a new combined Perkins/WIOA plan. They are having the right conversation and taking the right steps to ensure that their systems are aligned in order to maximize efficiency.

As you listen, think about what an aligned and integrated workforce system might look in in your state.

In July 2018, a clear vision for workforce development was put forward by congress with the passage of the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act, also known as Perkins V. Congress aligned the timing of the Perkin V plans with the timeline for submitting updated plans for the Workforce Innovative Opportunity Act. Alabama has chosen to capitalize on the timing and will submit a combined workforce plan for the first time. State Superintendent of Education Dr. Eric Mackey believe this combined plan will serve the students of Alabama.

Eric Mackey: Career and Tech has been one of the most consistent bright spots in Alabama education. I’m really hopeful that creating a combined workforce plan will help us build upon our existing partnerships and also help us create new ones to help serve our students.

One of those existing partners, Dr. Mackey is hoping to expand, is between the K-12 and Community College System of Alabama.

Jeff Lynn: So the Alabama Community College System and the State Department of Education are great partners already. We work together to connect our workforce programs through credentialing dual enrollment and articulation efforts across the state. We believe that this joining forces with other state agencies through our combined plan will strengthen and serve our students better across the state of Alabama.

Foundational workforce problems in the educational systems are the Perkins funded career and technical programs. Tommy Glasscock, Assistant Superintendent for Career Tech and Workforce Development, understands the intersection of workforce and education.

Tommy Glasscock: We know that any effective workforce development strategy must be built on a solid educational foundation. Our job is to make sure that Alabama graduates are prepared with the technical and employability skills to take advantage of the career opportunities available to them, right here in the great state of Alabama. We believe a combined plan will help us to do that and do it more effectively.

Alabama’s WIOA is housed in the Department of Commerce. Lori Bearden is serving as Commerce Liaison to the combined plan creation effort.

Lori Bearden: The Alabama Department of Commerce is pleased to be join forces with the states’ education providers. There is so much opportunity for us to play off each other’s strengths though work-based learning, individual training accounts, and lots of other innovative ideas on the table.

Coordinating the expanding connections between state agencies is the major focus of Governor Kay Ivey. In January, she established an Office of Education and Workforce Transformation headed by Nick Moore to synchronize the planning process.

Nick Moore: Governor Ivey is transforming our public workforce investment system by integrating Perkins V into our combined 2020 WIOA plan. We’re going from taking a Perkins V plan, as a compliance document, to ensuring that it is a vision statement for holding our entire public workforce ecosystem accountable.

There is a lot of work to create a combined plan. But getting this right will give out the tools to impact every Alabama citizen for an entire generation. Alabama has completed work on the transition plan and is beginning the development process to have the combined workforce plan completed by May 2020.

*Please reach out to the Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education if you have any questions.*