

Combining Perkins and WIOA State Plans Part 1 – V2 Transcript

AMANDA BRANTLEY (NEW EDITIONS):

0:00

Thank you to everyone that has joined so far.

0:02

We will get started at 2:00, at 3:00.

0:25

All right, thank you everyone for joining today.

0:27

My name is Amanda Brantley and I'm a Senior Analyst for New Editions.

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We are proud to partner in our work with JFF and OCTAE to provide technical assistance to state CTE directors as part of our ongoing technical assistance webinar series.

0:43

We're excited to bring to you today aligning education and workforce with three presenters from different offices that are going to be able to give us a great overview of what Perkins and WIOA can do, especially when those efforts are combined.

1:07

So our session goals, like I said, we're going to hear from these three speakers.

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They've got some great information to share with you as far as inviting workforce into the educational space.

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And they will also have a Q&A session at the end of the presentation.

1:23

You can utilize the Q&A function down at the bottom of the Zoom screen to be able to submit any questions that you have throughout the presentation.

1:32

So Juliana, if you could advance the slide today with us, we have Nick Moore, Henry Mack, and Kim Vitelli, and I'm going to give them the opportunities to introduce themselves and then we'll get into the presentation.

1:46

So Nick, I'm going to hand it over to you.

NICK MOORE (OCTAE):

1:50

Hello, everybody.

1:50

Glad that you could join us.

1:52

We're very excited that you would spend some time with us unpacking the opportunities you have to integrate the talent system by submitting a combined plan for both Perkins and WIOA during the 2026 state plan modification process.

2:07

Or, you know, in lieu of that, if you're not quite ready to build up towards 2028 with a plethora of activities you can do to align your system.

2:16

So we're going to get into that, but we do hope that you will submit a combined plan this year and we're going to help you get there.

2:23

Turn it over to you, Doctor Mack.

HENRY MACK (DOL):

2:25

Yeah, thanks.

2:25

Nick Henry Mack, Assistant Secretary for the Employment Training Administration within the Department of Labor, president of the Nick Moore Fan Club and all things Career and Technical education, at least in terms of the merger.

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And the opportunity that really now exists between education and labor by way of turning out the kind of talent that industry needs across the nation and doing it hand in glove with Nick Moore in the Office of Career and Technical and Adult Education is nothing short of phenomenal.

2:54

It's an opportunity.

2:56

It's an opportunity almost in once in a lifetime, opportunity, at least within the history of the Perkins and real estate planning process, to think about this stuff really intentionally and deliver on the President's promise to produce the kind of talent that are again, our economy needs.

3:12

And I am joined gratefully by none other than Miss WIOA herself, Kim Vitelli, Why don't you introduce yourself?

KIM VITELLI (DOL):

3:23

Hi, everyone.

3:23

I'm Kim Vitelli.

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I'm the administrator for the Office of Workforce Investment within DOL's Employment and Training Administration.

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I have the pleasure of frequently working with really closely the our colleagues in OCTAE and Nick and his whole team.

3:38

So glad to be here.

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And I'll pass it back to you, Nick.

NICK MOORE:

3:41

All right, well, let's go ahead and get started.

3:48

And we want to put the slide deck up and we'll, we'll start taking you through the content.

HENRY MACK:

4:12

Nick, you want to start first, or you want me to go and hand it to you?

NICK MOORE:

4:16

Yeah.

4:17

And I think we're, we're just waiting on them to put the slides up.

AMANDA BRANTLEY:

4:23

Are you not able to see them, Nick?

NICK MOORE:

4:25

No.

ADAM FLYNN TABLOFF (OCTAE):

4:26

OK, At the top of your screen, just click on where it says new, different screen.

4:31

I think that will only be you have that option.

HENRY MACK:

4:36

I'll go ahead and get it started while Nick, you can figure it out.

4:38

I see the slides on my end.

4:40

I just want to be, and I don't mean to, Nick, steal your Thunder and please do a deeper dive after I'm done saying what I'm going to say.

4:47

But certainly we know the talent supply challenges.

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We know of the gaps that exist between the education and workforce sector.

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We know of the millions of adults that are out there that are neither enrolled in a post secondary institution nor employed, roughly about 5-6, maybe even somewhere 7 million.

5:10

We know of the high numbers of adults with low literacy and numeracy skills.

5:14

We know of those without a GED or high school equivalency that would be perfectly primed and well suited to enter an integrated education and training program so that they can currently get their basic skills and CTE credential.

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We know that the College for All model has failed us.

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We know that we need to do a better job of changing the cultural beliefs, the beliefs on the ground level or in the trenches, as it were, among high school counselors, families, friends, stakeholders, about the value of career and technical and workforce education and training programs.

5:49

We've talked about this for years.

5:51

I've talked about this for years at the state level.

5:53

I talked about this for years with Nick when Nick was in Alabama, about how do we really meaningfully make an impact?

6:00

How do we drive change in a way not otherwise envisioned?

6:04

Well, one thing.

6:06

There's one thing we can do one thing, combine both plants.

6:11

That's not to devalue Perkins.

6:13

It's not to devalue WIOA.

6:15

It's not to devalue education.

6:17

It's not to do anything other than complement the work that both departments of Education and Labor are doing to meet workforce and industry demand.

6:27

The combination not only is good for relationship purposes, it's good for us at the federal level to understand how to unite and combine accountability measures, how to streamline reporting and grant making processes, how to make everyone's lives easier and more flexible so that we can deliver on the promise to, again, our employers and the reindustrialization efforts of the president.

6:51

And again, I think to do what we all want to do, which is to sell a both and proposition to the next generation of students.

6:59

It's both college and university and career and technical education.

7:03

It's not an either-or proposition.

7:05

And so our ask of you to double down on what Nick said is to seriously push yourselves.

7:11

We will clear every barrier.

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We will provide any technical assistance you need, push yourselves to combine the plants.

7:19

Again, the funding will flow.

7:22

The incentives will be there.

7:24

And for those that do it, there are other additional things that will be added in terms of at least incentives for you to deliver.

7:33

Again, on the promises that we're making to the American public and to, I think frankly, apart from the promises to what's good, what's good for the lives that we're seeking to transform.

7:44

So maybe, Nick, if you want to go back and pivot through the slides, we could start there.

7:47

And then happy to take any questions after Nick and Kim do their thing.

7:51

Thanks again for our partners for hosting this webinar.

NICK MOORE:

7:55

Well, thanks and and I I appreciate you teeing that up so well.

7:58

And you know, so when we think about rationale for combining WIOA and Perkins planning, I think Dr Mack hit it spot on.

8:06

It's not just about creating new work.

8:09

It's about, you know, meeting existing requirements more coherently.

8:14

And under Perkins V states are already required to describe how CTE programs are aligned with labor market demand and supporting high skill, high wage in demand occupations and engaging employers and their stakeholders.

8:27

So we already have to do that.

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Under WIOA, states are already required to analyze labor market conditions, describe sectoral strategies, coordinate across partners, align education workforce program.

8:41

So these are parallel requirements, So why would we want to be approaching those separately, right?

8:47

And so when Perkins and WIOA plans are developed separately, states often do the work twice.

8:54

And so that's the first thing we want to just address is if you go to a combined plan, and we're going to get into this as we go, we've taken away some of the inertia that has heretofore limited the desire to do combined plans.

9:07

You know, there's nine that have them now we want to see, you know, at least half the country get there this year and and potentially have everybody there by 2028.

9:15

So we'll talk about what we have done to try to meet you halfway.

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And you know, sometimes we're we're approaching this now with different data, different stakeholder engagement.

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We're using LMI for the CLNA process that is removed from the stakeholder engagement and we're arriving at different conclusions.

9:35

So combined planning offers a way to strengthen pathways from education to employment, to increase coordination across your agencies, reduce duplication and analysis and engagement, and not having to ask the same employers to come to the same government meeting twice and to present a single coherent talent strategy that we're going to get into in the next slide around the president's vision through America's talent strategies.

10:01

And so, you know, from a statutory standpoint, again, this is not a new requirement.

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This is just us thinking flexibly and honestly living out the fact that these laws have been aligned by design from Congress.

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And then Congress expects us to do our part at the federal agency and the state level to live out that vision.

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So we'll move on to the next slide.

10:26

Talk a little bit about America's Talent Strategy.

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And so, you know, again, Perkins 5 and WIOA were aligned by design.

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They address different parts of the same pathway, serve overlapping populations, and respond to the same labor market reality.

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So combining planning is possible because the statutes themselves are aligned.

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So America's Talent Strategy, which we were proud to work on with our colleagues from the Department of Labor, and the Department of Commerce lays out a vision.

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We're having one big, beautiful talent development system in this country from pre-K through the workforce.

11:04

And that's important because there are points of slippage along that system and the fact that, you know, we get about 10% of federal funding if we look at overall aggregate state funding.

11:17

But in many cases, 90% of the rule.

11:20

So we're trying to reverse that and make sure that States and grantees understand that you're not our client, right?

11:26

You're, you're not, this is not some fiefdom to where you're reporting up to some federal master.

11:31

We're partners.

11:32

And what we want to do is return control of these programs over to you so that governors and States and those of you that are in the field doing the work are able to deploy these limited federal resources at the right point in that talent development pipeline to meet your labor market needs and the needs of your citizens.

11:51

And that could mean that you need to do more of a focus on youth, since we've got one out of 10 youth in this country, they're not employed or not in education and training.

12:01

Or it could be that you need to do more to re engage adults or, you know, more senior Americans.

12:07

55 plus.

12:08

So that is ultimately something that you at your state are going to know a lot better than some bureaucrat like me up in Washington.

12:15

So this partnership between the Department of Education, the Department of Labor is about enabling states to coordinate more effectively across these systems while preserving program authority and accountability.

12:28

And so with that framing, we'll turn a little bit about the workforce system perspective and how we owe a planning flexibility outcomes connect and strengthen education and employment pipeline.

12:39

So would love to ask, you know, if Kim or Dr. Mack has anything they'd like to add or extend out on America's talent strategy or just our general theory of action here?

HENRY MACK:

12:51

No, I'll turn it over to Kim in a minute, but certainly invite everyone to read the talent strategy and the pillars that are headed there in and align those pillars to your own internal planning purposes for potential combination or unification of both Perkins and WIOA.

13:07

And again, at the end of the day, it's about the mobility of the resident that we're serving.

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It's about innovation in a way that provides maximum flexibility to states, returning education to the States, and allowing the federal government to play a supportive and complementary role to what is already happening at the local level.

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And we're practicing what we're preaching up here.

13:33

If you're following the partnership between the Department of Education and the Department of Labor, it's a phenomenal thing, and we need you to be hand in glove with us to make it all work.

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Don't shy away from the opportunity to do this now.

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Doing it now will yield better results in the long term while we can wait for the next cycle.

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As Nick said at the outset, I would encourage everyone on this call to double down.

14:03

Do it over the next couple weeks.

14:04

And if you need any help, any help whatsoever, don't hesitate to call us again.

14:10

It's, it's, it's a once in a lifetime opportunity, I think to do this, to do it right, to do it well, but to do it quickly so that we can get students and faculty and students what they need to deliver on a quality career and technical education and to develop those programs that are synergistically aligned to industry's needs through the WIOA side house.

14:32

And so with that, Kim, happy to turn it over to you to emphasize anything you want to say now.

KIM VITELLI:

14:38

I couldn't have said it better.

14:39

I think that that's, that's exactly right.

14:42

You know, as we get into the unpacking a little bit more, what it looks like to combine

these plans in the ways that you might be able to like find a hook in order to be able to do this.

14:51

I think we're going to be able to share even more details.

NICK MOORE:

14:55

All right, well, let's take it to the next slide then team.

14:59

And so just, you know, to to the risk of belabor in this just to to restate that federal law has has long allowed a state to submit a unified or a combined plan under WIOA.

15:12

And when I was in the governor's office, when I first started getting involved with WIOA planning, I always thought that those terms were kind of odd because you would think that the unified plan would be more comprehensive because it sounds that way, but it's not.

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It's just the unifies, the bare bones of the core programs.

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And with a combined plan, the governor and, and working with partners has the opportunity to add additional programs.

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And one of those includes Perkins CTE.

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And so since the reauthorization in 2018, that's really been an option on the table.

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But, you know, again, not as many have taken us up on that because sometimes the timeline for submitting the Perkins plan or that we have a plan, we're not fully aligned.

15:57

Sometimes, you know, states have received somewhat dissonant feedback from one agency or another on the same point.

16:07

And so those things have been resolved.

16:10

You know we're going to be integrating our technical assistance in our state plan review for the common elements and the strategic elements, and we have also aligned the timeline.

16:22

And so you'll see in the state plan revision TEGL that went out and soon you'll see in some it's a program memo from OCTAE that we are allowing extensions through April 30th to account for the fact that you may need a little bit more time than the March 3rd date in order to consider integrating Perkins into your combined plan.

16:44

Plus figuring out which waivers that you want to take us up on from TEGL-525.

16:50

And so when you complement the waiver options under under TEGL-525, adding Perkins to your combined plan, plus the fact that we are helping you try to get to yes, if you've got a, you know, and that's something that used to frustrate me to at the state levels, you ask the feds a question and sometimes it's, you know, hard to figure out exactly what the answer is.

17:13

So we want to give you clear answers about if you've got a, an idea, maybe it doesn't take a waiver, maybe it just takes a little bit different way of doing something, but we want to help you get there.

17:23

So this is not just about checking the box of having a 500-page compliance document and send it something in through a black hole portal and you never hear anything back.

17:33

This is about us working with you to make a nimble strategic document that you can use to actually guide and align the, you know what the expectations of whether it's labor force participation, which I hope everybody is focused on, particularly we're in tight labor markets.

17:49

I mean, that's something I used to work on in my own state is that, you know, if you're at 3% unemployment and everybody's talking about the unemployment rate, that's kind of like the weather man bragging that it didn't snow in July.

18:03

It's like, OK, that's not the thing we really need to be focused on when you're in a tight labor market, like we're in hottest economy we've ever had.

18:11

We need to be looking at how do we use the common definitions of special populations

to get people off the sidelines to, to help turn these benefit cliffs that people are facing when we've got this plethora of means tested transfer payments that people need, you know, to help them meet their basic needs.

18:31

But the problem is that when they enter into paid employment, the pathway to self-sufficiency can cause those to taper off more quickly than they can make up for and paid employment.

18:40

So part of our job and the public workforce system is not to have 43 disparate programs spread across 9 agencies, kind of like 1 little jar of mayonnaise over 10 loaves of bread, but it's to help deploy those resources more aggregately to bridge somebody from being in a poverty trap to actually self-sufficient.

19:01

That's easier said than done, but we had the opportunity to make that happen.

19:05

But we can put out all the TEGs and TENs and guidance that we want.

19:10

But it's kind of like if you yell in the forest and nobody hears it.

19:13

Did you actually?

19:13

Yeah, Well, that's the same thing for us.

19:15

If we put out all these waiver opportunities and you don't take us up on it, than what have we actually accomplished?

19:21

So this is a partnership that takes us both rowing in the same direction.

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And despite, you know, some of the groups that write white papers up here in DC, these are things that y'all have been asking for in the States for a long time.

19:33

This is not anything new.

19:35

This is something that, you know, many governors have been begging for.

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So now is our opportunity where the opportunity and the moment meet.

19:43

So we'll, we'll turn it over to see if, if our DOL colleagues have anything to add there.

KIM VITELLI:

19:52

You know, I would only add that it's a challenge to bring together.

19:57

It can be a challenge to bring together different programs, but this is the opportunity to do it.

20:01

And when those programs don't fit so neatly together, you can spend a lot of time and effort, you know, sort of haggling over logistics.

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This is the time to be able to bring them together.

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The flexibility that we're trying to bring to this process is to help you smooth over those rough edges either with, as Nick said, sort of.

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A conversation to sort of make clear what flexibility already exists in the law or where needed to be able to provide a flexibility specifically, of course, in the WIOA program to be able to provide waiver opportunities to smooth those rough edges.

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But as Dr. Mack said, this is this is our opportunity.

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This is our chance to really to really bring things together so that learners and job seekers can find the better jobs, make more money and have better lives.

NICK MOORE:

20:47

Well, thanks, Kim and I'll, I'll ask that the team would skip the next slide and let's move

on to the foundational planning element since I kind of rift a bit and covered that other slide previously.

20:59

So you know, several as I mentioned and I'll just briefly recapitulate the several recent updates have made combined planning more feasible than in previous cycles.

21:11

So first guidance from ETA and soon you'll see a complementary program memo, as I said from OCTAE that says Perkins V is a partner program can be added during the WIOA modification process.

21:26

As some states were wondering can you make that type of a change during the combined planning process.

21:32

Plus OCTAE has also recently reinterpreted what the threshold is for a substantial modification or revision to the Perkins plan.

21:42

So I think, you know, something like going to combined plan would be substantial, but there's other things that you may want to do to align your Perkins and wheel of planning that would not be a substantial revision or modification that you could do without doing the full sort of notice and comment that you would need to do.

22:00

So this is important just as an additional flexibility, but also just the the timelines were not fully linked up.

22:07

They are now.

22:09

Second, federal agencies have worked to align the planned content and expectations.

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And so while Perkins and WIOA remain distinct statutes, there's a growing recognition that states should not have to write duplicative narratives about particularly labor market demand, stakeholder engagement, or systems coordination.

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So one thing you could do is local area level, since OCTAE will accept a regional CLNA, whether in the embodied world or whether virtually.

22:38

Get together your Perkins and your WIOA it stakeholders, you know, members of special populations, CTE directors and use common set of LMI to come up with a state and regional list of in demand jobs.

22:52

Define what your process is for putting the meat on the bone for what's high skill, high wage, you're in demand.

22:58

And then define what your state means by a credential of value.

23:02

And then that also is going to serve as the basis of teeing you up for workforce Pell, which is going to be very strong opportunity.

23:11

But also if we don't have these processes laid out, you're going to be behind the curve of other states.

23:17

So it's important for your governor's office, state workforce board to understand that there are some really big roles for them to play.

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And WIOA or not only in the, WIOA Perkins planning process, but also implementing Workforce Pell.

23:31

So Kim, anything you'd want to add there?

KIM VITELLI:

23:39

No, nothing to add.

23:40

That sounds good.

NICK MOORE:

23:41

OK, we'll move on.

23:49

OK, so we'll talk a little bit about some examples.

23:52

And so that's some big things.

23:55

And, and again, I keep talking about our subsequent program memo, but what you'll see is a lot of examples about how to make this work.

24:02

So we're not just talking in theory about these different integrated planning elements, but what you'll see here is sort of a side-by-side view of the planning elements that exist in both Perkins and WIOA and why doing these concurrently can help make your system work better, you know, just more aligned.

24:21

So under Perkins V, the state must align CTE programs of study with high skill, high wage and in demand occupations.

24:29

Under WIOA, the state plan must analyze labor market conditions and identify in demand sectors and occupation.

24:37

So these are, yeah, really the same question often answered separately just because we're using different terms of art.

24:44

But combined planning helps states establish one shared economic narrative.

24:48

So education workforce strategies are pulling and are not pulling in different directions.

24:53

And what's the number one question that site selectors and economic developers ask when they are talking with your state?

25:00

How are you going to ensure that you have got an organic and iterative talent pipeline that's going to make sure that we've got the skilled workforce not just in demand or sort of on demand training, but that we've got the K-12 system, the post secondary system working hand in hand to provide ongoing supply of talent.

25:20

And the same question or asked by our students and families, how are we making sure that this system is serving to have not just a one-off programs that we've got secondary to post secondary pathways that lead to fully self-sufficient employment and a career pathway that allows somebody to choose their own adventure.

25:41

And if they earn one credential they can stack that up to the next one.

25:45

And you could begin in a six-week welding class and end up with a PhD.

25:49

So that's the idea is that we're showing academic and technical skills are not mutually exclusive.

25:54

They're complementary.

25:56

And we're not living in a world of tracking people in the non degree and degree or credit noncredit.

26:03

We don't even need to use those terms of college and career ready.

26:06

We're talking about career pathway readiness or talent development.

26:10

And so let's just talk about state examples of of Labor market alignment.

26:15

In some states, education and workforce agencies have agreed to use a single labor market framework, often developed through the workforce system to inform both CLNAs and sector strategies.

26:27

Sometimes that can result in the governor appointing sectoral partnerships that are reflective of the sort of face of the industry in that state.

26:38

And that results in fewer debates about which industries are priority and has more of a whole economy approach of not just cherry picking four or five sectors, but how are we making sure that the talent system is responsive to the needs of every industry.

26:54

And then with stakeholder engagement, a lot of states, you know, are beginning to to consult with employers, educators, workforce partners and community stakeholders together.

27:05

So that process is also required by WIOA through the stakeholder engagement and public comment process.

27:12

And so, you know, for example, what we did in Alabama is that we had a regional meeting in every one of our seven local areas and we had that combined stakeholder engagement process and we collected comments directly from the participants.

27:26

But then also allowed for there to be virtual comments and we were very deliberative about reviewing those comments and imbuing the feedback into our state plan revisions and to our regional CLNAS.

27:41

And so when we talk a little bit more about stakeholder engagement, we want to again, just to make sure that when we're talking about Perkins CLNA requires us to look at things like program quality, workforce alignment WIOA, it requires regional planning and designated regions.

28:00

So when those are aligned, regional priorities can be set across education and workforce together rather than be developed in parallel.

28:09

And it gives leaders a better leg to stand on if you do a gap analysis and you realize that, you know, some of your CTE programs aren't aligned with your labor market.

28:20

It's very tough for a local director or Superintendent to add or subtract programs if you don't have an empirical basis to do so.

28:28

And the support of your business community and you know, your political leadership.

28:33

So you, this is something that if we're going to make tough decisions, which sometimes we have to with scarce resources to make sure that we're serving our communities well, this helps you get there.

28:43

And it's not always about a deficit mindset.

28:46

It's if you've got new resources, what's the best way to, and sometimes it's more difficult when you've got more money than the than you thought you did to make decisions and when you've got less.

28:57

So having data to help guide those discussions is very important.

29:00

And then when we're talking about something like credentials of value, you know Perkins requires programs of study to align with labor market needs.

29:09

We over require sectoral partnership.

29:12

So when those are planned together, education, supply, workforce demand are aligned by design, not by chance.

29:18

And also, we've got to put a little bit more context on not only the qualitative and quantitative factors, but what do we want for our states to be true when it comes to not only credential quality, but transparency?

29:34

And how do we make credentials a wrapper for a bundle of competencies that actually have the value in the labor market?

29:40

Not just a credential as a proxy for learning, but being able to connect students, job seekers, employers, institutions together through a common currency of, of competencies by mapping programs to credentials, credentials to jobs descriptions, and then all of that leading back to what competencies have been mastered by individual students.

30:07

And you know, and again, I can't say enough that the employer experience is important and we've got to make sure that our employers understand that what's in it for them on the bottom line of being involved in the combined planning process.

30:20

So being able to organize and engage our employers in one sort of government sponsored meeting for combined planning, that's a better use of their time.

30:29

And I think it creates a better sense of value for employers whenever they see that all of these education workforce programs are working hand in hand to help them meet their needs.

30:41

And also helping to create some signaling mechanisms between the employer demand and then also how we're working with them to co-design programs on the supply side.

30:52

So it's much easier to know how to do things like credit for prior learning or dual enrollment policies or making sure that we do have an opportunity to award post secondary credit for credentials earned through CTE programs of study.

31:09

If we have our employers and we have our CTE and WIOA stakeholders engaged upfront in the combined planning process.

31:19

Anything you'd like to add, Kim?

KIM VITELLI:

31:22

You know, in addition to these being really great touch points between Perkins and WIOA, these are also ingredients for successful implementation of Workforce Pell and also are the kind of ingredients that you would want to have at the table when you're trying to open up more opportunities for folks to move into registered apprenticeships and all the great jobs that that pop out at the other end of that.

31:42

So just really great sort of sequence of things to be thinking about on this combined planning, right?

NICK MOORE:

31:48

Well, let's talk a little bit about labor market information.

31:54

And so under under Perkins V, states have to ensure that programs of study are aligned with high skill, high wage and in demand occupations.

32:05

Under WIOA, states must analyze labor market conditions and identify in demand industry sectors and occupations.

32:12

But all of those terms give a little bit for the state to add their context, right?

32:18

So they're not fully defined federally.

32:21

There is some state context that must be added.

32:24

And so combined planning allows states to use a shared set of Labor market assumptions, avoid conflicting definitions of in demand.

32:32

If everybody's got a different list of in demand jobs, that's the Tower of Babel means nothing to to no one, particularly employers or site selectors.

32:40

And so if we're going to sort of have an aligned education workforce, investments around shared economic priorities, we need to be clear between Perkins and WIOA about what jobs and sectors are in demand.

32:53

And this also, you know directly reflects Perkins V, Section 3 and Section 122 and how that overlays.

33:02

But WIOA Section 102 in case we've got any of our lawyers on here that are comparing notes there.

33:09

So let's let's move on and talk a little bit about stakeholder planning.

33:18

The stakeholder engagement is a statutory requirement under both laws and under Perkins 5.

33:24

States must consult with a wide range of stakeholders, including employers, educators, workforce representative, community partners as part of the state planning and local needs assessment.

33:35

Under WIOA, states must engage stakeholders in the development of the modification and implementation of the state plan, including required public comment.

33:44

So what combined planning can allow you to do is to coordinate that engagement so that stakeholders are consulted only once.

33:50

That's a common theme you'll hear from us throughout.

33:53

This input is shared across programs and engagement leads to aligned decisions.

33:58

And so this does not reduce stakeholder voice, it strengthens it, amplifies it by ensuring feedback influences multiple systems.

34:09

So let's talk then a little bit about employer convenings by career cluster.

34:16

So employer engagement is central as as you are probably aware by now since we've we've made that point several times, central to both Perkins and WIOA.

34:25

And under Perkins V employers play a key role in validating programs of study and ensuring relevance.

34:32

Under WIOA employers are essential and sector strategies and workforce service design.

34:37

And so combined planning supports coordinated employer engagement often by career cluster industry sector.

34:44

Very glad to see the modernized national career cluster framework through advanced CTE and was personally involved in the redesign of that process.

34:54

What was personally valuable to me out of it is how engaged employers were and how much that redesigned framework is married to labor market design.

35:06

And you know, when we were at 16 sectors, some of those like STEM, it's like, well, how do you design it or define a STEM job?

35:13

That could be anything, right?

35:14

If you think too hard about it, every job could be a STEM job.

35:18

And so I think the modernized cluster more organically reflects the way that employers organized by sector.

35:27

So let's let's go on a little bit about identifying non degree credentials of value.

35:36

So both statutes place an emphasis on credentials, but with slightly different lens.

35:42

Perkins 5 focus, although I will say there's a shared definition of a recognized post secondary credential and that is the wellspring from which a lot of this alignment can happen.

35:53

And so I would encourage you to key in on that definition.

35:56

But just like the definition of high skill, high wage, high demand, there's some context that as a state you need to put onto there.

36:03

And a lot of that can be say, recognize post secondary credential and then of value.

36:08

So that of value part is where you get to put your context on there.

36:14

And a lot of that comes down to making sure that the credential is grounded employer validation, labor market demand and outcomes data.

36:23

And as Kim mentioned, that's going to tee you up for workforce Pell.

36:26

So there, every state has a slightly different definition of what a credential of value means.

36:33

There's been a great deal of work that's been done on it.

36:36

And I won't start naming different partners because they'll leave somebody out.

36:40

But there's been enough work done on this to where really what it comes down to is organizing your stakeholders to make sure that you're taking stock of all of the collateral that's out there and coming up with the definition that works for your state, but also recognizes that commuting patterns don't stop at political boundaries.

36:59

So if you're a state that is, you know, like I, I crossed through three sub national entities on my way to work today.

37:07

So if you know, if each of those have a drastically different definition of what a credential of value is, that's going to create some noise in the labor market.

37:15

So there is a degree of, you know, cross pollination that needs to happen, but that's certainly up to you how far you go there.

37:23

But that's something you should just think about is not only your own state's definition, but where it makes sense for there to be some regional planning and for governors to get together like they're going to have to do on forming bilateral agreements in some cases on workforce Pell to make sure that we have a good sense of what's a value across state lines.

37:43

That's also going to help us federally.

37:44

Not that we're going to prescribe some definition to rule them all, but for us to give you technical assistance on how to interoperate these systems.

37:54

So let's talk about collaborative regional CLNAs.

38:02

So Perkins requires comprehensive local CLNAs to identify gaps and program quality and alignment with labor market demand.

38:10

And WIOA on the other hand, emphasizes regional planning and regional labor market analysis as the foundation for workforce strategies.

38:19

And when these processes are conducted collaboratively, states are going to have a clear, more consistent picture of your regional needs.

38:25

So rather than education workforce partners coming up with their own priority and people that aren't connected to labor market, just deciding what credentials and jobs go on the list.

38:36

Collaborative assessment support, shared regional strategies, aligned investments, and you just have a clear messaging strategy to employers, learners, families, economic developers.

38:47

So win, win for everybody across the system.

38:51

Programs of study gap analysis so program aesthetic gap analysis becomes critical as part of the combined planning process to make it more actionable by reviewing programs.

39:05

A study for CTE alongside labor market demand credential requirements.

39:09

Employer input states identify or can't identify where programs are well aligned, where the updates are needed, and where pathways may be required.

39:19

And that's where you have the opportunity to add or subtract different programs of study based on your labor market demand.

39:25

And so this process supports continuous improvement under Perkins V and strategic investment under WIOA without changing statutory authority.

39:35

And this aligns with the Perkins V continuous improvement expectations and WIOA strategic planning and service alignment requirements.

39:43

And so to close combined planning is not a requirement, but is clearly permissible.

39:49

It's increasingly common, although we've only got 9 states doing it, but we're we're a lot of very close.

39:54

They're almost there as strategically powerful option.

39:58

The federal expectation is that we have intentional alignment.

40:03

And if there's one take away from day, it is this start the conversation from the cross agency working groups.

40:10

Get your governor engaged.

40:11

Get your Legislature, your CTE director, your State Workforce Board chair.

40:16

Identify where the combined planning process could reduce fragmentation and that exploration alone strengthens your system.

40:25

And then lastly, I would say we want you to engage us and help you find out how to get to yes.

40:32

And so I'm going to turn it over to Dr. Mack and Kim to kind of go through the combined planning and workforce strategy from the DOL perspective.

KIM VITELLI:

40:45

Dr. Mac, is there anything that you want to be able to say here first?

HENRY MACK:

40:52

All yours, Kim.

40:53

Thanks.

KIM VITELLI:

40:55

So I want to share a perspective from the workforce system lens that's really going to echo many of the things that you've heard from Nick.

41:04

Combined planning under Perkins V and WIOA supports workforce strategy without us having to change any statutory authority.

41:12

We don't even have to change the accountability.

41:14

The accountability structure allows for this.

41:16

So this is just really a great opportunity for us to dive in on from a workforce standpoint, strategy really has to start with labor demand.

41:23

Employers are looking for talent.

41:25

Regions need workers, states need systems that can respond quickly, and learners and workers need to be able to rely on predictable systems that that that give them the opportunity that they're looking for.

41:39

So what combined planning helps do is explicitly collect, connect that labor demand with the education and training pipelines that already exist and to help shape labor supply.

41:50

The combined planning isn't about treating education as some sort of adjacent system or that these are two different siloed systems that sometimes talk to each other, but as core parts of an education and workforce strategy combined.

42:05

Now, when we think about sector strategies, they're they're really sort of the foundation of a lot of work and the workforce system.

42:13

So sector strategies are how we focus resources, engage employers and target training where it matters most.

42:21

I don't know if it's shape changing for you, but I think we can move to the next slide about sector strategies.

42:26

There might be a delay on my end.

42:28

Combined planning allows sector strategies to be informed and sort of consume 2 things at the same time, at least two things that that current labor market demand and the reality of the education and training supply.

42:41

When Perkins and WIOA plan separately, it's easy for sector priorities to drift or to get out of sync with each other.

42:48

And combined planning helps ensure that once a state combines or identifies its priority industries that those priorities are then reflected sort of across the gamut across all the different touch points of education and workforce preparation.

43:02

So that it's just consistently in our workforce investment and education pathways.

43:09

When sector strategies are really jumping, then we'd expect a lot of employer driven training, which is on the next slide.

43:15

Employers are central to both Perkins and WIOA, but they often experience employers experience those systems separately.

43:24

Combined planning helps ensure that that employer input shapes training across education and workforce and the talent, the whole talent network, whether that's work based learning or pre apprenticeship or registered apprenticeship or short-term industry recognized training.

43:40

We want all of those things to be able to reflect employer input.

43:44

So when education and workforce systems can send aligned signals, then employer engagement can become more meaningful and can become more holistic rather than sort of having separate conversations with different systems.

43:56

Employers can see how their input translates into programs and credentials and pipelines rather than, you know, just being these, these one-off conversations.

44:04

So it's producing the talent that employers need, which also then creates opportunities for workers to move into decent paying jobs.

44:12

And this sort of beneficial cycle can improve trust and strengthen the long-term partnership.

44:17

We, we don't, you know, we're, we're training for, we're learning for people are moving into jobs that employers have.

44:22

So we have to be able to keep employers in that cycle.

44:27

Let me talk a little bit about the visibility into into talent pipelines at an education and workforce pipeline which is on the next slide.

44:36

From the workforce perspective, one of the biggest benefits of combined planning is, is visibility into where talent pipelines originate.

44:46

Secondary and post secondary CTE programs are often the front door into other workforce strategies.

44:51

But workforce agencies don't always have a clear picture of how these pipelines function and combined planning can help close that gap.

44:59

Bringing everyone to the same table, allowing workforce agencies to better understand

how CTE programs work and how they feed into sector strategies and but also to be able to spot where additional supports and transitions and work based learning opportunities might be needed.

45:15

The goal here is, is fewer disconnects between education and training and jobs, which again creates opportunities for workers to move into decent paying jobs.

45:28

Now let's talk a little bit about how to make that happen and the flexibility that you can gain through through combined planning on the next slide.

45:35

Flexibility is, is often discussed in the context of of waivers, especially WI OA waivers, but combined planning can offer flexibility at at a more foundational level and sort of throughout the planning itself.

45:48

When you've seen us try to align planning timelines, hopefully that can shape sort of how states come together and they're planning by aligning those planning timelines and sharing labor market analysis and coordinating stakeholder engagement.

46:01

Hopefully this is reducing duplication and freeing up capacity to focus on the big picture, the strategy and outcomes rather than just all the different boxes to check.

46:10

So where appropriate, combined planning can also support coordinated use of allowable flexibilities, including waivers.

46:18

You know, the flexibility is is fully allowable within our existing statutory authority.

46:23

There's a lot of flexibility within the words of the statute as written.

46:27

And flexibility is also a thing that that we are allowed to provide.

46:32

The feds are allowed to provide states that the statutory authority allows us to provide that flexibility.

46:38

So this is not ever about bypassing requirements.

46:41

This is about using the tools that we have more more effectively.

46:45

You know, ultimately the workforce system is judged by outcomes that we talked a little bit about on the next slide.

46:51

And we owe our learners and job seekers better jobs and higher incomes as a result of the time that they spend with our programs.

46:58

It's not always easy to get access to our programs or to do all the things that are programs require of the people that participate in them.

47:05

And what we owe those learners and job seekers at the end of that time with us and that time with our program is a better job and more money in their pocket.

47:12

So the employment matters, earnings matter specifically in placements into jobs that are aligned with with the training that that states are focused on and the sector priorities.

NICK MOORE:

47:28

So let's tell a little bit about clear outcomes and storytelling.

47:34

So, one one challenge that states face is telling a clear outcome story across programs.

47:41

When Perkins and WIOA state plans are done separately, outcomes are often reported in parallel rather than as a coherent talent system.

47:29

Combined planning helps connect the dots from education to workforce pathways, helps to increase labor force participation, and also helps to increase employment and earnings.

48:03

So the integrated story is easy to explain to policy makers, employers, and the public, and it better reflects how people actually move through the system.

48:12

States often report outcomes program to program rather than as a system.

48:17

This can create fragmented or competing narratives.

48:20

It can cause competition for resources among partners at the state level.

48:24

And combined planning helps to create a clear through line from education to employment, better explanations the policy makers, legislators, employers and the public about what programs offer the best return on investment.

48:40

And it also helps to answer the important question of how does our talent system feed our education, workforce and economic development strategy.

48:50

And it improves credibility and transparency without changing the required core program metrics.

48:57

So let's talk about accountability.

49:02

It's important to be clear about what combined planning does not do.

49:07

It does not change Perkins or WIOA performance indicators.

49:11

It does not alter statutory requirements.

49:15

And what it does do is strengthen accountability by improving coherence across program narratives and reduces conflicting goals.

49:23

Combined planning improves transparency and credibility without changing how our performance is measured.

49:29

And it's important to explicit to be explicit about what it does not change.

49:34

Performance indicators remain the same.

49:37

Statutory requirements remain intact.

49:40

Combined planning strengthens accountability by aligning goals, reducing conflicting priorities, and improving coherence across narratives.

49:50

And so bottom line.

49:52

Accountability improves through clarity, not by adding new measures.

49:59

So let's close this out with a coordinated approach.

50:06

Combined planning is about intentional coordination, not consolidation.

50:10

It allows states to align strategy without merging programs, coordinate planning without changing governance and strengthening outcomes without rewriting accountability frameworks.

50:21

For the workforce system.

50:22

This is an opportunity to plan more deliberately with education partners and build a stronger, more coherent talent system.

50:29

Combined planning is a planning tool, not a governance change.

50:33

It allows states to coordinate strategy without merging programs, to align investments, without blending funds and strengthening outcomes, without rewriting accountability.

50:44

The core value is intentional coordination across systems that already serve the same people and employers, leaving full control with states to decide how to scope and time.

50:54

So I'll stop there and hand it back to Amanda

AMANDA BRANTLEY:

50:57

So moving into our next steps, we do have a feedback survey that informs what we're doing on this technical assistance.

51:04

So if you could take a moment to fill out our survey, Juliana should be dropping that in the chat, but you'll also get that in the recap e-mail.

51:15

Anyone that would like to have a little more information, specifically on the Perkins V side and the CTE side, we do have our inbox set up at cteta@neweditions.net

51:28

And look out for our next webinar invitation.

51:30

It will be on March 12th and we will be highlighting some of the states that already have submitted a combined Perkins and WIOA state plan.

51:38

So you'll be able to hear directly from those that have already engaged in this type of planning and it'll be a panelist type presentation where you will be able to ask questions of their experience as well.

51:52

So again, we want to thank all of you for joining us today.

51:56

We had a great presentation, great Q&A.

51:59

We will get those questions out to everyone via e-mail and we will let you know when this is posted on the CTE website.

52:08

Thanks everyone, have a great day.