

February 4, 2008

President Unveils FY09 Budget - Proposes Elimination of CTE

The President's FY 2009 budget proposal was released earlier today, requesting \$59.2 billion in discretionary appropriations for the Department of Education. This figure represents level-funding from the enacted FY 2008 Labor, HHS, and Education Appropriations bill.

U.S. Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings states, "This budget provides the necessary resources for critical programs that equip American students with the skills they need to compete and succeed in the knowledge-based economy."

Some key increases in the FY 2009 budget include:

- Provides a \$406 million increase for NCLB Title I grants;
- Requests \$300 million for the proposed Pell Grants for Kids to enable low-income students in low-performing schools to transfer to a public or private school of their choice or receive intensive supplemental services; and
- Restoration of full-funding for Reading First Grants, an increase of \$607 million.

Within the \$59.2 billion proposal for education, the President proposes to eliminate funding for career technical education. This follows last year's budget request of \$617 million in FY 2008, and repeats his calls for eliminating career technical education in FY 2006 and FY 2007.

Career and Technical Education

(in millions)

	FY 2007	FY 2008	FY 2009 Request
Basic State Grants	\$1,182.55	\$1,160.91	\$0
Tech-Prep	\$104.75	\$102.92	\$0
National Programs	\$10.00	\$7.86	\$0
Tribally Controlled Postsecondary CTE Institutions	\$7.37	\$0	\$0
Total	\$1,304.67	\$1,271.69	\$0

Why Cut Perkins?

The Administration's rationale for these cuts is clarified on White House's Office of Management and Budget website [here](#) for vocational education and [here](#) for Tech Prep.

Their rationale for cutting funds for Perkins:

- **Evaluations show the program does not provide advantages in terms of academic achievement.** The National Assessment of Vocational Education reported that students in vocational education programs did not perform better in reading, math, and science achievement between grades 8-12 than students who were in general education programs.
- **Annual performance data show that many States are not making adequate progress in achieving positive student outcomes.** 15 States did not meet their performance targets for academic achievement at the secondary level; 17 States did not meet their targets for high school completion for school year 2003-04.
- **The validity and reliability of program performance data are limited.** The previous program statute gave States the flexibility to define performance measures, so States use varying performance measures that do not share a common standard for validity and reliability and do not allow for aggregation. The Department will seek to implement the new statute in a manner that produces better data.

The Administration also cites these reasons for eliminating Tech Prep funding:

- **Evaluations show the program does not provide any advantage in terms of program outcomes for students: high school completion, postsecondary enrollment, and academic achievement.** For example, the 2004 National Assessment of Vocational Education reported that Tech-Prep and non Tech-Prep students pursue college at comparable rates.
- **Program activities are redundant with allowable activities under the existing Vocational Education State Grant program.** The law allows Vocational Education grantees to establish programs that support two years of secondary education transitioning into two years of postsecondary education.
- **The validity and reliability of program performance data are limited.** The program statute gives States the flexibility to define performance measures resulting in States using varying performance measures that do not share a common standard for validity and reliability and cannot be aggregated. The Department will seek to implement the new statute in a manner that produces better data.

This justification is flawed, as the majority of the National Assessment of Vocational Education (NAVE) data related to CTE's impact on academic achievement and college enrollment was nearly a decade old – before the passage of Perkins III.

The evaluation reports released today also indicate that as part of the Department of Education's "actions to improve the performance of the program" for both vocational education and Tech Prep that they are planning on "(i)ssuing regulations on implementation of performance measures systems under the new Perkins law."

Next Steps

The President's budget proposal has repeatedly called for the elimination of Perkins funding, naming either the Secondary Technical Education Excellence Act or a High School Reform initiative as the replacement. Congress has resolutely rejected these recommendations each year, and in fact, Congress had marked career technical education for a \$25 million increase in its initial version of the FY 2008 Labor, HHS, and Education Appropriations bill, which was vetoed by President Bush.

Call To Action

In order to restore full funding to Perkins, it is critical that the career technical education (CTE) community remain committed to educating the Congress on the importance of CTE. Please contact your legislators and the White House to express your concerns with the President's proposal, noting the impact the proposed cuts of this funding would have on your state's career technical education programs.

For contact information, please visit the following websites: Congress – www.congress.org; the Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings - www.ed.gov and the President - www.whitehouse.gov.

If you have any questions or comments, please contact Domenic Giandomenico, Director of Government Relations at Domenic@careertech.org.