



**SOUTH TEXAS
COLLEGE**

Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment

I have reviewed this document, and my signature conveys that the information is accurate and complete.

Name/Title	Signature	Date
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Comprehensive Needs Local Assessment (CNLA) Template

Template to help postsecondary institutions complete a thorough and meaningful assessment, as required by Perkins V, Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Public Law 115-224)

South Texas College (STC)

Applicant Designation: Independent

Introduction

The purpose of this document is to assist Perkins recipients prepare the content of a comprehensive local needs assessment. One of the most significant changes introduced in the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Perkins V) is the introduction of a comprehensive local needs assessment (CLNA) that requires data-driven decision-making on local spending. The CLNA must be completed at the beginning of Perkins V implementation. This updated process involves a wide group of stakeholders reviewing several elements, including student performance data, program quality, labor market needs, educator development and special populations' access to programs.

It must be completed by local recipients of Perkins funds at the beginning of the grant period and then updated at least once every two years. In conducting the comprehensive local needs assessment under subsection 134(c), and developing the local application described in subsection 134(b), an eligible recipient shall involve a diverse body of stakeholders, including, at a minimum—educators, business and industry partners, parents, and parents, among others. More importantly, local funding decisions must be based on the local needs assessment.

The goal of a needs assessment is to help educators identify, understand, and prioritize the needs that postsecondary institutions must address to improve performance. Identifying priority needs is the first in a series of closely tied steps that also include understanding root causes that contribute to the areas of need, selecting evidence-based strategies that address those areas, preparing for and implementing selected strategies, and evaluating whether those strategies are addressing improvement needs and achieving desired results.

The following pages contain information that will help Community and Technical Colleges (CTCs) understand and develop their CNLA.

Use the headings that have been provided in the template.

Institution's CLNA is due April 30, 2024.

CLNA must be on Institution's Official Letterhead

Executive Summary (1-2 pages)

Directions: Complete this section after all other sections.

Summarize the specific insight gained in the needs assessment related to each required element (below).

1. Findings: State the main findings arising from the CLNA process.

Upon various stakeholder engagement opportunities and available data, the following findings arose from South Texas College's CLNA Process:

- Streamline project planning efforts through alignment for sponsored initiatives, better aligned to federal and state requirements.
 - Not all stakeholders fully understand that Perkins is for supplemental purposes and institutionalization of costs (systemically embedded) and sustainability of CTE project practices should align with the Perkins Act as the framework to follow for institutional impact.
 - Not all stakeholders fully understand the importance of global competency and equality for all towards regional prosperity.
- Strengthen internal and external communications for more intentional support of CTE and Special populations, better aligned to federal and state requirements.
 - Not all stakeholders fully understand the importance of when, where, why and how to create, enhance and expand CTE program offerings applicable and necessary for 'local' area.
 - Not all stakeholders fully understand the importance of the types of access to student support services for special populations is available.
- Consolidate and simplify practices and processes to reduce delays with project success and increase overall impact, better aligned to federal and state requirements.
 - Not all stakeholders fully understand the role they play in Perkins.
 - Not all stakeholders fully understand the importance of the Perkins Act and allowability of funding.

2. Vision: State the institution's vision for CTE and how the CLNA fits into that vision.

STC's vision for CTE, aligns with the current Vision: "South Texas College will be a global model in educational innovation serving as a catalyst to drive regional prosperity, economic development, and the social mobility of those we serve." In that, STC continues to undergo transformative changes for clearer alignment of college practices with federal, state, local and private funding streams, to complement and help with the sustainability of Perkins/CTE initiatives. Institutional efforts revolve around the collaborative teamwork by THECB, TWC and TEA colleagues, and in consideration of the College's new direction. Overall, this will support the region it encompasses by providing a consolidated, yet comprehensive and more systemic approach that empowers everyone (most importantly, students) to achieve their fullest potential, prepares them for success in the workforce and meets the evolving needs of the CTE field (state and federal levels included).

STC had the opportunity to complete a SWOT analysis, refine institutional priorities (i.e. enrollment, college-readiness and completion) and development a new Mission Statement (processing through approvals) for an all-inclusive approach, for a student-centered environment (i.e. CTE and Special Population students). "South Texas College is a public higher education institution that transforms lives through innovative education, holistic learner support and cultural engagement. We empower our community and foster socioeconomic advancement through lifelong learning opportunities."

Executive and Administrative Leadership continue to encourage effective communication among administrative staff and faculty for effective teamwork and to provide opportunities for discussion and interaction regarding institutional policies, procedures, and progress toward institutional goals and strategic directions. The establishment of Institutional Planning and Effectiveness Committee (IPEC) (inclusive of the PD and FM of Perkins Basic to have the pulse on larger impact for CTE Programs, Services and Special Populations) was essential to bridge gaps for Perkins through stakeholders within Institutional Leadership Council (ILC).

Specifically, the CLNA has helped STC identify program focus, prioritize industries, occupational pathways, and skill gaps in the area, which informs decision-making related to the expansion, modification, or discontinuation of CTE programs. By conducting a thorough analysis of local needs and collaborating with stakeholders, STC can ensure that its CTE offerings are responsive to current and emerging workforce demands, thereby maximizing opportunities for student success and regional economic development.

3. Priorities: Indicate the institutional priorities that the CLNA uncovered.

- Empower others to streamline sponsored project alignment through considerations regarding institutional SWOT, systemic transformation and strategic planning, structuring all CTE programs under refined direction, to better fall in line with CLNA elements.
- Align efforts revolving around essential data pertinent to federal act and other requirements for CTE programs, performance indicators and special populations.
- Utilize existing resources to establish a better understanding of Perkins requirements, importance of the CLNA, and update stakeholders on major changes with grant, processes, and other resources they will provide input on, to better fall in line with CLNA elements.

4. Participants from your institution (Name, title, affiliation)

- Perkins/CTE Initiatives and Projects: Samantha B. Uriegas, Director of Project Alignment, STC; Stefani Ocon-Solis, CTE Projects Manager, STC; Ruben Aldape, CTE Grant Management & Compliance Specialist, STC; Carla M. Rodriguez, Executive Director of Sponsored Initiatives, STC
- Executive Leadership: Dr. Ricardo J. Solis, President, STC; Dr. Rodney Rodriguez, VP for Institutional Advancement and External Affairs, STC; Dr. Anahid Petrosian, VP and Provost for Academic Affairs, STC; Dr. Matthew S. Hebbard, VP for Student Affairs and Enrollment Management, STC; Mary Elizondo, VP for Finance and Administrative Services, STC; Dr. David Plummer, VP for Information Services, Planning, Performance and Strategic Initiatives, STC
- Perkins Liaisons: Ashley Gonzalez, Academic Initiatives Officer, STC; Lynell Williams, Director Center for Learning Excellence, STC; Dr. Nancy Garcia, Director of Comprehensive Advisement and Mentoring Services, STC
- Program and Service Stakeholders: Dr. Maricela Oliva, Manager- Parity and Access Career Technical Education, STC; Sara Lozano, Dean – Business, Public Safety and Technology, STC; Monica Benitez, Project Manager - Business, Public Safety and Technology, STC; Dr. Jayson Valerio, Dean – Nursing and Allied Health, STC; Regina Mason, Coordinator of Campus Center for Learning Excellence, STC; Celinda Eileen Salinas, Director of Career & Employer Services, STC, Santa Elisa Pena, Director Counseling and Student Accessibility Services, STC, Dr. Maricela Silva, Manager – Career and Technology Education PASS, STC

5. Local or regional collaborators in CLNA development

Hidalgo County Prosperity Taskforce and Hope Center Collaborators; Reconnect Convening Collaborators, including but not limited to, regional IHEs, ISDs, EDCs, LRGWFB, Non-Profit (VIDA); Workforce Summit Collaborators and Panelists

6. Geographic area: How do you define “local” for the purpose of this plan?

STC’s geographic or “local area” parameters encompass a diverse and dynamic region in deep south Texas, known for its cultural customs, economic vitality, and educational opportunities. Being situated, proudly, in the heart of the Rio Grande Valley, STC serves as a beacon of possibilities for individuals seeking a better quality of life through higher education and career advancement. The College provides primary service support to Hidalgo and Starr Counties but has relationships with neighboring Willacy and Cameron Counties. In essence, STC’s local area is a dynamic and inclusive tapestry of cultures, economies, and landscapes, where education serves as a catalyst for individual empowerment and community development.

NOTE: *Required supporting documents used in the needs assessment must be available on file for review during monitoring visits or upon request. Evidence of stakeholder engagement would include such documentation as meeting agendas, notes, and list of participants (names, Institution, title, phone, and email).*

Stakeholder Participation (1-2 pages)

In conducting the comprehensive local needs assessment under subsection 134(c), and developing the local application described in subsection 134(b), an eligible recipient shall involve a diverse body of stakeholders, including, at a minimum (**Refer to CLNA Guide page 4**)—

- representatives of career and technical education programs in a local educational agency or educational service agency, including teachers, career guidance and academic counselors, principals and other school leaders, administrators, and specialized instructional support personnel and paraprofessionals.
- representatives of career and technical education programs at postsecondary educational institutions, including faculty and administrators.
- representatives of the State board or local workforce development boards and a range of local or regional businesses or industries.
- parents and students.
- representatives of special populations¹
- representatives of regional or local agencies serving out-of-school youth, homeless children and youth, and at-risk youth (as defined in section 1432 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965).
- Representatives of Indian Tribes and Tribal organizations in the State, where applicable; and any other stakeholders that the eligible agency may require the eligible recipient to consult.

1. Please indicate the key stakeholders (individuals and groups) involved in the completion of this needs assessment.

All required stakeholder groups were connected with, directly and indirectly, throughout this round and/or previous CLNA rounds, through meetings, correspondences, surveys and other engagement opportunities. However, STC sees room for improvement in centralizing when meetings occur, how frequently and what details are highlighted to better align opportunities for future strategic planning for all CTE.

- Perkins/CTE Initiatives and Projects: Samantha B. Uriegas, Director of Project Alignment, STC; Stefani Ocon-Solis, CTE Projects Manager, STC; Ruben Aldape, CTE Grant Management & Compliance Specialist, STC; Carla M. Rodriguez, Executive Director of Sponsored Initiatives, STC
- Perkins Liaisons: Ashley Gonzalez, Academic Initiatives Officer, STC; Lynell Williams, Director Center for Learning Excellence, STC; Dr. Nancy Garcia, Director of Comprehensive Advisement and Mentoring Services, STC
- Program and Service Stakeholders: Dr. Maricela Oliva, Manager- Parity and Access Career Technical Education, STC; Sara Lozano, Dean-Business, Public Safety and Technology, STC; Monica Benitez, Project Manager-Business, Public Safety and Technology, STC; STC; Celinda Eileen Salinas, Director of Career & Employer Services, STC, Santa Elisa Pena, Director Counseling and Student Accessibility Services, STC, Veronica Rodriguez, Childcare Development, STC, Dr. Maricela Silva, Manager-Career and Technology Education PASS, STC

2. List, by name (and optional links to), any other stakeholder groups consulted with (but not directly involved) in the completion of the needs assessment:

- Professional Development Platforms: Brustein and Manasevit, Texas Association of College Technical Educators (TACTE) attendees and TACTE Board Members, Dream Makers Organization, National Association for Career & Technical Education Information (NACTEi) attendees; Jobs & Education for Texans (JET) Collaborators; Perkins Innovation and Modernization Partnership; Hidalgo Prosperity and Basic Needs Groups; Recompete Collaborator Convening Planning Group; Region One ESC; Texas Pathways Group

3. Summarize the key stakeholder feedback:

Stakeholder feedback provided valuable insight that the continuous strategizing around CTE is necessary to be at the forefront of strengthening existing workforce pathways and lines of collaboration. Narrowing down the themes that

surfaced from all the feedback gathered, validated the need to focus on the following areas in the next 5 to 10 years, with intentional collaborative engagement at all levels:

- Continue to create, enhance and expand program offerings applicable and necessary for 'local' area.
- Continue to streamline and strengthen access to student support services for special populations.
- Align prioritized CTE needs to strategic initiatives and project planning for funding opportunities to complement Perkins Act.
- Align efforts by integrating technology and innovation for effective and efficient practices targeting Perkins Core Performance Indicators through student, staff and faculty development and engagement.
- Explain, openly and transparently, to internal and external stakeholders, expectations around community engagement and partnerships to increase collaborative opportunities towards a regional practice framework.
- Explain, openly and transparently, the importance of global competency and equality for all towards achieving regional prosperity.

By addressing these areas of feedback, South Texas College can further strengthen its CTE programs and services, and better meet the needs of its students and community.

NOTE: Evidence of stakeholder engagement would include such documentation as meeting agendas and notes.

PART A: Evaluation of Student Performance (3-5 pages)

STUDENT PERFORMANCE DATA

Direction: Use the confidential data set provided by THECB to answer each question regarding student performance. Refer to CLNA guide page 7.

As part of the CLNA, institutions are required to assess their federal core indicator performance compared to state targets and outline strategies for improvement related to Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education. Each institution will log in securely into the [MOVEit Portal](#) to retrieve their data to answer the student performance data questions as it relates to the [Perkins V 3 Indicators of Performance](#). Refer to the [MOVEit Portal Guide](#) for instructions on downloading the data:

1P1: Postsecondary Placement

The percentage of CTE concentrators who, during the second quarter after program completion, remain enrolled in postsecondary education, are in advanced training, military service, or a service program that receives assistance under title I of the National and Community Service Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12511 et seq.), are volunteers as described in section 5(a) of the Peace Corps Act (22 U.S.C. 2504(a)), or are placed or retained in employment.

Note: Anything highlighted denotes underperformance.

2P1: Earned Recognized Postsecondary Credential

The percentage of CTE concentrators who receive a recognized postsecondary credential during participation in or within 1 year of program completion. *

*This means that a student gets counted under this indicator whether the student obtains the credential during participation or within 1 year of completion. The Department interprets “within 1 year of completion” to have the plain meaning of those words: “that the student would be counted if the student obtains the credential in the 1 year following that student’s completion of the program.

Note: Anything highlighted denotes underperformance.

3P1: Non-traditional Program Concentration

The percentage of CTE concentrators in career and technical education programs and programs of study that lead to non-traditional fields. *

*This means that a student gets counted under this indicator if individuals from their gender comprise less than 25 percent of the individuals employed in the related occupation or field of work.

Note: Anything highlighted denotes underperformance.

Results

1. Where are there gaps in performance among students from special populations? Why?

The special population gaps within South Texas College’s data, as shared by THECB, are displayed by each indicator below:

- 1P1 gaps-disabilities, English learners, homeless and youth with parent in active military
- 2P1 gaps- English learners, homeless and youth with parent in active military
- 3P1 gaps-females, single parents, out of workforce individuals, English learners and homeless

Despite inaccuracies in primary data, supplemental data from STC reveals performance gaps among special population students, rooted in socioeconomic disparities, resource access, prior education quality, learning barriers, and motivation levels. Acquiring additional funding is crucial to align efforts from local to federal levels and meet state plans for a prosperous future in CTE. To address such gaps, targeted interventions are necessary, such as increased financial support, improved campus resources, enhanced support services, and addressing gender-based stereotypes. Additionally, providing supplementary English language development and addressing physical and technological barriers can bolster performance and retention rates among special populations in CTE.

STC acknowledges the importance of aligning internal and external efforts to enhance support services and address differences in student motivation, engagement, and cultural backgrounds. Special populations, including English

language learners, low-income individuals, single parents, students with disabilities, and non-traditional career seekers, face significant challenges due to demographic, financial, and familial factors. Lower-income students at STC face challenges like limited access to resources and financial stress, impacting their academic performance. Variations in K-12 education quality affect college readiness, particularly for students with limited resources or lower academic standards. Limited English proficiency further exacerbates performance gaps.

Furthermore, some students with disabilities may not seek Student Accessibility Services, even if they qualify. The services are voluntary. Even with accommodation, some students may have academic difficulties. In addition, according to Excelencia in Education's 2024 Compilation of Fast Facts, a large majority of students, especially Latinos (74%) applied for financial aid. Latinos are more dependent on federal aid than institutional or state aid. However, Latinos received the lowest average financial aid award among all racial/ethnic groups. Because South Texas College serves a large Latino population, the students we serve are affected. The lower amount of financial aid may not be enough to cover tuition, books, pre-requisite exams and/or other program required tools or attire (uniforms, protective gear, etc.).

Some special population students may not complete their course of study or may not perform as well as others because they cannot afford to purchase their textbooks, ATIs (for healthcare students), tools required for their program of study, or may not have the funds to purchase a laptop/computer or other electronic devices. Additionally, transportation has been identified as a barrier for students trying to complete their clinicals, internships, and/or capstones, which are a requirement for completing their program of study. These issues may cause students to fall behind on assignments or prevent them from completing their program of study, thereby impacting performance or completion. Especially, with single parents, STC sees this population will more likely not have someone to care for their children while they attend College or lack the funds to pay for a daycare; therefore, they cannot attend class.

CTE students have shared the need for the services mentioned above to help them overcome the challenges they are facing to complete their program of study. Additionally, in meeting with CTE faculty members, many have stated that employers tell them that they are more likely to hire a student who owns their own tools than those who do not. To employers, a student who owns their own tools is much more prepared for the workforce and more likely to get hired. Students who do not own tools typically do not get interviewed.

2. Where are there gaps in performance among demographic subgroups? Why?

Analyzing performance gaps among demographic subgroups at South Texas College (STC) revealed disparities exist based on factors such as race/ethnicity, gender, age, and socioeconomic status. Demographic subgroups (race/ethnicity) have gaps due to the location of STC and typical student populations we serve locally (Hispanic dominant). RGV seems to have a more recent shift of other demographic subgroups entering RGV, not sure if this is related to major events/catastrophes (COVID/Hurricanes Katrina/Harvey) or being a border town/point of entry. Through various discussions, the following reasons for each subgroup surfaced:

- Hispanic/Latino students, who make up a significant portion of the student body at STC, face performance gaps compared to non-Hispanic white students. This could be due to various factors such as socioeconomic challenges, cultural differences, or disparities in educational opportunities prior to college. In the future, further dissecting data and disseminating interpretation is necessary for possible drilldown at the local level. For example, gaps may also exist between different Hispanic/Latino subgroups due to variations in cultural backgrounds, language proficiency, and experiences with the education system.
- Non-traditional or gender disparities in student performance are observed, with one gender outperforming the other in certain fields, courses or exams. Through faculty engagement, it was conveyed stereotypes or prejudices regarding gender roles will influence student performance and career pathway choices among male and female students.
- Older students, such as adult learners or those returning to education after a hiatus, face unique challenges in adapting to college-level coursework compared to traditional-age students. Balancing family, work, and educational responsibilities could contribute to performance gaps among different age groups. Furthermore, younger students oftentimes lack life experience and maturity, affecting their study habits and performance

compared to older peers.

- Students from low-income backgrounds face significant performance gaps compared to their more affluent peers. Economic disparities impact access to resources, such as textbooks, technology, and academic support services, and create financial barriers to education.
- First-generation college students, without a strong familial support system in navigating the college experience, could also experience performance gaps compared to students with parents who have higher education experience.

The presence of clear data interpretation and documented services for certain student groups, such as foster students and those with disabilities, is due to established mechanisms mandated by legislative statutes. However, other special populations like homeless, out of the workforce, ELL, and non-traditional students lack such mechanisms, leading to less effectively captured data. This lack of data hinders understanding and support for these groups, thus impacting student performance. At STC, ELL students struggle particularly in theory-based classes due to English literacy challenges, while equipment-dependent courses pose barriers for low-income students who may struggle to afford necessary materials. It is a delicate balance, as local funding is limited, and the need for more sponsored projects continues to increase.

Addressing all performance gaps all at once is impossible. STC still understands such demographic subgroups may involve targeted interventions aimed at providing equitable access to resources, culturally responsive support services, mentorship programs, and initiatives to promote equality for all CTE initiatives on campus. It is also clear to not stick to assumptions, but rather the data as we continue to prioritize based on need. In essence, fostering a supportive and inclusive learning environment that recognizes and celebrates the acceptance of students' backgrounds and experiences can help narrow all gaps over time.

3. Are there disparities in various populations' and/or subgroups' performance in specific programs? Why?

Yes, disparities in performance among various populations and subgroups exist within specific programs at STC. These disparities have come into question regarding data interpretation, but STC understands how CTE students are influenced by a variety of factors including demographics, socioeconomic status, prior educational experiences, and individual circumstances. Program descriptors do not always align with those locally used. For example, Human Services is an umbrella term used at the state level, but we do not use it. Furthermore, it includes data on Cosmetology, a new CTE program at STC. In our richly Hispanic region, some demographic groups show zero service, likely because their representation in the regional population is close to zero. Examples: American Indian/Alaska Native for 1P1 or English Learners and Homeless in 2P1 or Single Parents, Out of Workforce Individuals, English Learners, and Homeless Individuals in 3P1.

Disparities in various special populations within college workforce programs can arise due to a range of factors, including socioeconomic status, race and ethnicity, disability status, language barriers, and other unique circumstances. For workforce programs, especially programs that require manual dexterity, students with disabilities may experience disparities related to not having a desired accommodations for learning and testing and employment opportunities that can cater to their specific needs. English learners and students from diverse cultural backgrounds may face challenges in understanding coursework, meeting expectations for writing assignments and communicating effectively. Single parents and caregivers may struggle to balance academic responsibilities with caregiving duties leading to challenges in completing coursework and participating in extracurricular activities. Students from rural areas (geographic disparities) or underserved areas may face limited access to educational resources, internship opportunities, and networking opportunities compared to urban areas (access to urban resources). Low-income students, as noted elsewhere, are impacted by having to work and by not being able to immediately purchase books and equipment. Women in traditionally male occupations are impacted when the field must accommodate their needs as non-traditional workers, such as the need for women friendly policies regarding childbearing.

Addressing disparities in performance within specific programs at STC requires targeted interventions tailored to the unique needs of each program and its student population. This may include implementing support services, mentorship programs, academic advising, and initiatives aimed at promoting diversity and inclusion within each program.

Additionally, fostering a supportive learning environment that values equity and inclusion can help narrow performance gaps over time.

4. In what programs are there a disproportionate number of men or women enrolled?
How long have there been discrepancies in performance and what, if anything, has been attempted to remedy them?

There continues to be multiple programs with a disproportionate number of genders not meeting the State target such as: Child Development, Cosmetology, Automotive/Diesel, Manufacturing, AEDT, Construction Supervision, Electrician, HVACR, ADN, Sonography, HMAS, MAT, OTA, PCT, Pharmacy, PTA, Radiologic, Respiratory and VN. However, the data does show that for the overall indicator, STC has met the total target for non-traditional enrollment for many years. Now, with the clarifications from DOE and the pass-throughs, further dissection of primary data is needed to better proactively recruit, enroll, and target continuously through completion for underrepresented gender groups in CTE.

The Director of Project Alignment at South Texas College, continues to participate in multiple State Leadership Projects and on state boards, revolved around special populations, with emphasis on 3p1, non-traditional program enrollment as much as possible. Examples include the TEXASgenuine Board, Texas Association for Community College Marketers (TACCM) Board and the Texas Association for Career and Technical Educators (TACTE) Board. These participatory efforts in engaging with various statewide stakeholders provide clear perspectives on how to better promote programs and convey services specifically meant for underrepresented gender groups to thrive. This is where the STC *She Persists* campaign began, nearly ten years ago, with various stakeholders led by the Dean of Business, Public Safety and Technology and the Perkins Project Director. Over time, various pieces of marketing and program promotional collateral were developed and used. With new leadership and branding revolved around current workforce perspectives, CTE panel designs were created with the non-traditional populations in mind.

And, although internal stakeholders indicated Career Clusters do not indicate if the percent shown indicates males or females in the program, there is still support with clarification and interpretation needed of data disseminated at the local level, some programs were able to see beyond the numbers.

The Human Resources program and the Office Administration program have an overwhelming number of females as compared to males enrolled. As per the U.S. Dept. Of Labor, Human Resources Specialist occupations are expected to be filled by 60% - 80% of women. There is a lack of awareness about the occupation, advocacy opportunities, and initiatives among males that contributes to not understanding the potential benefit for men in terms of work-life balance. For example, a single father seeking full-time employment with a work week schedule from 8 am – 5 pm would benefit from working for an HR department or Office Administration office, so that he can be available before or after school, have weekends off, and have a stable predictable work schedule. At times, the titles of job-related roles advertised by the college (secretary or specialist) or titles of degree plans (title including words such as “assistant”) can deter a student from pursuing a program simply because it is perceived as a job for a female or one that does not have a living wage. It would be beneficial to find ways and funding to support recruitment for non-traditional male students. Over the last three years, eighty-three percent of enrollment is females. Similarly, over the last three years Office Administration has 92% female enrollment and Paralegal has 87% female enrollment; all could use funds to recruit and support enrollment of male students.

More intentional and collective effort is needed to support such disproportionate enrollment, but this is where STC can share details for better outcomes and more engaged dialogue and action from all stakeholders. AEDT perceived a noticeable shift towards greater gender diversity, with a rising number of female students enrolling because the AEDT department promotes the industry to women through participation in career and college fairs, as well as events hosted by STC. STC schedules events to recruit females and could use additional support. Other program areas, such as those in Design and Business Technology (Construction Supervision, Electrician Technology, and HVAC), Automotive and Diesel Technology, Architectural and Engineering Design Technology are male dominated in enrollment, but still work through how to better recruit and retain underrepresented

gender groups. Over the last 8 years, students in the Welding program account for 85% of enrollment while women in Advanced Manufacturing and Mechatronics are far less and underrepresented. Another program needing support is automotive/diesel. The program could utilize training with modern, up-to-date equipment that will help underrepresented women, and some men, in this male-dominated field to overcome physical strength limitations, as it enhances their real-world skills relevant to the automotive industry. The most significant performance disparity in the data pertains to women, and faculty observations suggest that this gap may stem from inadequate access to specialized training and work equipment already used in the field.

In the Diesel Technology sector, there is typically a disproportionate number of men enrolled compared to women. Discrepancies in performance have persisted for some time, with challenges particularly evident in physical labor tasks. A division-wide committee has been formed to explore ways this issue can be addressed. Members of the Committee met with executives from Holt CAT, a construction equipment company, to discuss solutions. Some of the topics discussed were mentorships for women, using existing women in the field to recruit and motivate future female employees, partnering with local schools to build internship programs.

Under the division of Social Behavioral Sciences, the “Equity in Childcare is everyone’s Business” released by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation and The Education Trust reports that 94% of childcare workers are female, and 40% are people of color. It examines how these childcare workers are heavily impacted by racial inequalities and sexism - including pointing out inequities exacerbated by the pandemic. Discrepancies have been present for quite some time. Women do three times as much childcare as men at home, so this spills over into the childcare job market. Not much can be done to have males major and work in childcare/development until overall wages increase substantially.

Strategies/Action Steps

Direction: Determine the Strategies/Action Steps to Reach the Goal of Element #1: Student Performance. We recommend no more than three strategies under this element. (One sheet per strategy).

STRATEGY:

Better utilize and centralize existing institutional resources and processes, in conjunction with existing and upcoming changes in alignment with addressing needs around student performance.

ACTION STEP/S:

- Discuss the development of framework for fundamental institutional awareness around CTE student performance relevant data, requirements and access to resources and services for underperforming programs:
 - Provide CTE students, within approved federal Special Population categories, enrolled in underperforming CTE programs (underperforming=within last three years of data, due to CLNA structure) support with instructional supplements, tools, transportation assistance (i.e. gas cards), and/or childcare assistance to minimize the gap in student performance and completion.
 - Develop a plan for a repository of all relatable convenings addressing CTE student performance, for areas of duplication it is recommended to streamline initiatives where possible for meaningful impact. (Childhood Development, Automotive/Diesel Technology)
 - Compile institutional platforms and meet with internal stakeholders to better capture essential data, i.e. Starfish and Suitable. There are opportunities to build in further stakeholder engagements such as 'membership' in special populations, encouraging self-identification and providing a script to explain the importance of participation. Preliminary discussions with Starfish Administrator indicate support for this approach.
 - Identify alignment opportunities for CTE professional development engagement to reinforce content with faculty and staff to continue being mindful of student performance disparities.

Reference Notes:

Data reported to THECB is performed by Admissions, where information is collected through: ARGOS Reporting for student demographics, major, some financial aid information but not all; PASS Intake and ranking systems; Counseling & Accessibility Services Intake. Gaps in data access and sharing show that not all special populations are adequately being captured and represented. Additional concerns regarding dual enrollment students being reported may be influencing student denominator. As a remedy to this, a unified intake process is recommended to capture students in the Special Populations could be used by all Perkins-funded departments and divisions that support Counseling, Academic Advising, Career Coaching, access to services, and other areas, which will help Admissions streamline data collection and processes when reporting to THECB on a semesterly basis, as it takes place after census of each term. This would include support of ISPPSI efforts to take the lead in identifying institutional gaps in data collection, access, and sharing, with the priority being Perkins related activities. Connections can be made for future CTE dashboard development and records repositories.

An evaluation of all intake processes must be evaluated and standardized for all departments and Programs supporting Special Populations. This includes but is not limited to: Career & Employer Services evaluating alumni services, employment services provided to CTE students, frequency in which CTE students utilize Career & Employer Services, placement of students after graduation, internship, and apprenticeship opportunities for students, etc. Academic Advising, Counseling & Accessibility Services, and other Perkins funded Academic Advisor staff, to evaluate current intake processes and methods in which we are capturing students who fight under the Special Population category during holistic advising and counseling sessions. Further, this will require Role Clarity Committee to re-establish regarding Advising, Advising Specialist, Guided Pathways Specialist, Student Success Specialists, and other related positions to define all student access points and create standardized coding in Banner (SPACMNT) providing valuable data for Perkins and other initiatives.

STRATEGY:

Communicate to all key stakeholder groups how to collectively impact CTE student performance, with new changes.

- Discuss the development of framework for fundamental institutional awareness around CTE student performance relevant data, requirements and access to resources, and services for underperforming programs:

ACTION STEP/S:

- Continue to analyze various supplemental datapoints for different special population groups
- Strengthen understanding of accountability needs for federal grant through collaborative planning
- Consider Train the Trainer or mentorship programs or workshop sessions to address gaps and promote equality for all, while being mindful of expanding work-based learning experiences and opportunities to gain more technical knowledge (Childhood Development, Automotive/Diesel Technology)

Part B: Evaluation of Program Size, Scope, and Quality (3-5 pages)

Texas defines size, scope and quality as follows:

Size: Provide a narrative on how your Two-year postsecondary institution offers one program of study.

STC addresses size by offering a diverse range of programs to accommodate the needs and interests of a large student population, consisting of dual enrollment, high school graduates, and adult learners. In order to accommodate the various groups, the College's flexible scheduling options consist of a variety of course modalities including face-to-face instruction, hybrid, 100% online (both asynchronous and synchronous learning), and competency-based education (CBE).

Face-to-face and hybrid course offerings offer an in-person component which allow students the hands-on experience for some of our CTE programs, particularly the technology-based programs, such as Automotive Technology, Diesel Technology, and Electrician Assistant. The courses for these programs have enrollment capacities that average 15 students to ensure an adequate student-to-teacher ratio and sufficient practice with the equipment to ensure a student quality experience.

The college has experienced an increase in demand, especially for CBE course offerings which allow students with workforce experience but are lacking a credential to complete their education in an accelerated manner. For CTE programs, we are gearing up for the next CBE program which will launch in Fall 2024 in Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning & Refrigeration (HVACR). The College is also leveraging technology to reach a broader audience through online education which allows us to work towards converting CTE programs to 100% online offering and increase class capacities to maximize efficiency.

With hopeful growth, STC will work towards increasing its enrollment numbers by implementing targeted recruitment efforts, expanding access to higher education through possibly some newer online and hybrid learning options, as planning continues, and reaching out to underrepresented groups locally for more intentional impact. Hopefully improved retention and graduation rates will allow for sustaining enrollment growth. STC will focus on providing comprehensive student support services for special populations, while enhancing advising and counseling, and implementing strategies to address barriers to persistence and completion.

Scope: Provide a narrative of the postsecondary institution CTE programs that includes the following:

- rigorous academic and technical standards employability skills
- opportunities for students to earn industry-recognized credentials
- opportunities for students to participate in work-based learning experiences,
- connections of secondary to postsecondary coursework.

STC addresses scope by ensuring programs cover a wide array of fields and specialties, reflecting the diverse economic and cultural landscape of South Texas. This may include offering programs in industries such as healthcare, technology, and public safety, as well as providing opportunities to further studying and engaging collaboratively.

The advisory committees for our CTE programs play a vital role in ensuring rigorous academic and technical standards. The collaboration between employers and the College ensures the curriculums of these programs are up-to-date with industry standards and practices. Advisory committee meetings held throughout the year allow the departments to share program outcome data, which sparks conversations with employers on how to improve instruction in the classroom. The College has implemented innovative ways to accomplish this, including embedding virtual reality (VR) in the Welding program where students can simulate welding activities to increase hands-on experience in the course.

The College's participation in industry-based organizations paves the way for ensuring alignment of employability

skills with industry standards by embedding industry-recognized credentials within the program's curriculum. The Information Technology program, for example, is a CISCO networking academy which allows us to utilize their curriculum and instructional materials. Students pursuing this program have the option of specializing in different areas including as a certified support technician (network) or certified support technician (IT Support) resulting in CISCO certifications which puts students at a competitive advantage for job opportunities. In some cases, these certifications are required for employment.

STC still plans to expand its program offerings to align with the diverse needs and interests of its student population and the workforce demands of the region, per CLNA efforts. New degree and certificate programs in emerging fields, enhancing existing programs, and collaborating with industry partners to develop specialized training initiatives are essential to the success of CTE, locally. In addition, aligning and strengthening partnerships with local school districts, employers, community organizations, and other stakeholders will broaden overall scope for elevated impact on the community. As STC identifies opportunities by actively engaging with stakeholders, for collaboration and leverage resources, existing programs will continue to undergo evaluation and refinement as needed.

Quality: Provide a narrative that your programs must meet two out of the following three criteria: the program develops (1) highly skilled individuals, (2) individuals who are competitive for high wage jobs, and (3) individuals who are trained for in-demand occupations.

- **High-skilled:** Programs that result in industry-recognized certificates, credentials, or degrees.
- **High-wage:** High-wage is anything that is above the median wage for all occupations.
- **In-demand:** Occupations that are identified in the [Occupational Handbook](#) and/or through comprehensive local needs assessment.

STC offers stackable CTE opportunities to students to complete Occupational Skills Awards, Certificates, Associate of Applied Science degrees, and relevant Bachelor programs. All new CTE awards undergo a rigorous data-driven and research-based process of development which takes into account various factors such as labor market data, short-term and long-term program demand, student demand conducted through a student survey, and opportunities for further education including awarding industry-based credentials or non-credit-to-credit pathways. The process aligns with the certification requirements of all new programs for Texas public community colleges maintained by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

Labor market data derived from the Lightcast™ application includes job projections for the next 10 years as well as salary/wage data for occupations mapped to the CIP code of the proposed program. The initial review of a proposed program requires that the salary/wage data exceed the published livable wage rate for Hidalgo and Starr counties. The College also references the annual Targeted Occupations List and Demand Occupations List to support the development.

The recent passage of HB8 resulted in a revised funding model for Texas colleges where funding is based on performance and completion. As part of the program development process, the College must reference any industry-recognized certifications or micro-credentials that would increase a student's opportunity for employment or leadership positions.

STC ensures the quality of CTE programs by focusing on several key areas:

- Developing rigorous and relevant curricula that align with industry standards and workforce demands.
- Hiring qualified faculty members with expertise in their respective fields and supporting their professional development.
- Providing state-of-the-art facilities, equipment, and resources for hands-on learning and research.
- Offering comprehensive support services to help students succeed academically, financially, and personally.
- Collaborating with employers, industry associations, and community organizations to provide internships, co-op programs, and real-world learning experiences.

By addressing these aspects of size, scope, and quality, colleges in Texas can effectively meet the educational and

workforce needs of their students and contribute to the economic development and prosperity of the state.

CTE Program Summary

1. Report on the **CTE programs of study** that will be used for Perkins funding.
2. For each program of study, provide information on the **course offerings** that the postsecondary institution is submitting for Perkins funding.
3. For each **CTE program to be considered funded for FY 2025**, provide the following:
 - a. CTE Program Name
 - b. Career Cluster
 - c. Course Offerings for the Listed in the Program of Study

Based on a review of Perkins Indicators 1P1, 2P1, and 3P1 along with other supplemental content, STC's Provost has determined underperforming CTE programs to be considered for funding. These programs and course offerings were submitted online via the Perkins CLNA POS Submission as directed by THECB.

The programs pathways include: Advanced Manufacturing Technology, Architectural and Engineering Design Technology, Associate Degree Nursing, Automotive Technology, Culinary Arts, Diesel Technology, Electrician Technology, Fire Science, Heating, Ventilation, A/C and Refrigeration, Information Technology, Law Enforcement, Office Administration, Human Resources, Business Administration, Survey & Geospatial Technology and Child Development.

Results

Refer to CLNA Guide page 9.

1. Do your programs lead to credentials of value in in-demand industries? How do you know?

Yes, STC offers programs that lead to credentials of value in in-demand industries. STC ensures programs are accredited by relevant bodies and offer industry-recognized certifications to validate graduates' skills. STC conducts labor market analysis to develop programs that meet current and future workforce needs in fields like healthcare, IT, business, manufacturing, and public safety. In addition, the college collaborates with local employers to ensure program curricula are relevant, resulting in high job placement rates and employer satisfaction with graduates. The Director of Curriculum and other key personnel continue to strive to elevate and complement credentials of value as defined by THECB.

STC CTE programs are accredited by relevant accrediting bodies and are aligned with industry standards. Accreditation ensures STC programs meet specific quality standards and prepare students with the knowledge and skills required for their CTE field. Tracking CTE student outcomes, such as graduation and employment rates, provides insights into program effectiveness. High job placement rates and employer satisfaction with STC graduates are indicators of the value of credentials obtained through STC programs. Positive feedback from employers suggests that graduates are well-prepared and equipped to succeed in their chosen CTE profession.

Moreover, STC integrates industry-recognized certifications into its curriculum, such as AutoCAD Certified User in AEDT and NCCER, EPA, OSHA, and NATE certifications in DBT. These certifications enhance students' employability prospects and demonstrate competency to employers. While some programs like Human Resources and Office Administration may not be considered "in-demand," they can still offer credentials of value, which increases a graduate's competitiveness in the job market. However, programs like the Paralegal program may face challenges in aligning credentials with high-demand jobs due to industry discrepancies. In the division of Social Behavioral Sciences, while the Childcare program certificate itself does not lead to a credential, optional courses are available for students to obtain third-party credentials, enhancing their qualifications for employment in the childcare field.

2. Do your programs feature up-to-date, industry-standard equipment, facilities, curricula, methods of instruction, and work-based learning opportunities? What more do you need?

Yes. Ensuring that STC's CTE programs equip students with the essential resources, facilities, and practical experiences is paramount. This entails maintaining state-of-the-art equipment and facilities that align with industry standards and practices, alongside consistently updating curricula to reflect current industry trends. Diversifying instructional methods and offering opportunities for work-based learning, such as internships and practicums, further enriches students' readiness for the workforce.

However, there are notable areas for improvement, particularly regarding cross-divisional understanding and collaboration to maximize impact. Some programs face challenges due to limited access to up-to-date equipment and technology, impeding students' ability to gain hands-on experience with industry-standard tools. Strengthening partnerships with employers is imperative to facilitate meaningful work-based learning opportunities, especially for programs like Human Resources, Office Administration, and Paralegal studies. Additionally, these programs require access to licensures, subscriptions, and software to enhance the overall learning experience.

While programs like Culinary Arts underscore the significance of industry-standard equipment, others like Diesel, Automotive, and Welding are actively seeking newer equipment to better align with industry demands and certifications. The support provided by Perkins's funding plays a crucial role in enabling programs to keep pace with evolving technological advancements and equipment requirements. For instance, initiatives such as the utilization of drones for surveying purposes or VR simulators for immersive training experiences showcase the comprehensive approach towards embracing cutting-edge technologies across various disciplines.

Specifically, programs like AMT and Welding emphasize the importance of industry-aligned equipment and provide opportunities for students to engage in practical, industry-based experiences. However, there are identified needs, such as the requirement for a laser CNC Engraver for metal in the AMT program and a Welding robot for enhanced hands-on experience in the Welding program.

Similarly, Diesel and Automotive programs recognize the necessity for updated equipment to better prepare students for ASE Industry recognized certifications. Local stakeholders advocate for access to newer heavy-duty construction equipment with the latest emissions systems to ensure students are adequately trained for the workforce.

Within the division of Social Behavioral Sciences, leveraging resources like the Mid-Valley Child Development Center provides valuable work-based learning opportunities for students in childcare programs.

In summary, enhancing STC's CTE programs necessitates increased funding for equipment upgrades, expanded employer partnerships, and access to relevant industry tools and technologies across programs like DBT, ELPT, HVACR, and SGT. By addressing these needs and bolstering student support services, STC can effectively prepare students for successful careers in high-demand industries while embracing valuable work-based learning opportunities within the division of Social Behavioral Sciences.

3. How will you meet the State's postsecondary definitions of Size, Scope, and Quality?

Meeting the state's postsecondary definitions of size, scope, and quality requires a multifaceted approach, and STC is ready to address each aspect effectively.

In terms of size, STC aims to boost enrollment through targeted recruitment efforts and expanded access to online and hybrid learning options. Enhancing retention and graduation rates is equally vital, and STC plans to achieve this by bolstering student support services and implementing strategies to overcome barriers to completion.

Expanding the scope of program offerings is crucial, and STC intends to introduce new degree and certificate programs aligned with emerging fields and workforce demands. Strengthening community engagement through partnerships with local stakeholders will further broaden STC's impact.

Maintaining academic excellence is a cornerstone of STC's commitment to quality. This involves upholding rigorous academic standards, recruiting highly qualified faculty, and regularly updating curricula to reflect industry standards. Investing in student success initiatives and maintaining accreditation are also essential components of ensuring quality assurance and continuous improvement.

Across various programs, STC is working to align offerings with industry standards and provide students with relevant, hands-on experiences. For example, in the automotive and diesel technology programs, multiple pathways are available to students, ranging from certificates to associate degrees, each tailored to meet the demands of the industry. These programs emphasize hands-on learning and prepare graduates for in-demand occupations.

Similarly, the Childcare program within the division of Social Behavioral Science offers various certificates and degrees, all aimed at promoting the quality of services for young children and families. Following national standards and emphasizing the core body of knowledge required for effective early childhood educators ensures that graduates are well-prepared for their roles.

Overall, STC's commitment to enhancing size, scope, and quality across its programs underscores its dedication to providing accessible, affordable, and high-quality educational opportunities for students while meeting the needs of the community it serves.

4. Do your programs meet local education or economic needs not identified by State boards or local workforce development? **section 134(c)(2)(B)(ii)(II)**

Locally, it would be impossible to meet all needs annually. However, STC can be more effective and efficient continuing to actively engaging with the local community, employers, industry partners, and other stakeholders to identify and address specific education and economic needs that may not be adequately addressed by broader state or local workforce development initiatives. The new CLNA process, THECB provided, will support with those connections to better identify emerging trends, challenges, and opportunities. This might involve coming up with more creative ways of gathering input from employers, community organizations, government agencies, and other stakeholders to understand their priorities and concerns.

Customized educational and training programs and initiatives currently exist, but there is room to align efforts to better address specific education and skill development needs identified within the local community, with a collective voice. Sharing the plan with industry regarding the full POS paths that align to needs of the region. Continuous feedback gained provides valuable input and guidance on program evaluation and development, curriculum design, and skill requirements.

As STC remains flexible and responsive to changing local needs by continuously monitoring labor market trends, economic indicators, and demographic shifts. This agility allows STC to adapt its programs and services in real-time, when possible, to address emerging challenges and opportunities within the community. Hence, aligned CTE sponsored initiatives, supported by the Director of Project Alignment and Perkins Project Director contribute to economic growth and CTE opportunities locally.

By actively engaging with the local community and stakeholders, South Texas College will continue to strengthen the development and implementation of CTE programs that address specific education and economic needs not identified by broader state or local workforce development initiatives.

5. Are your programs aligned to State, regional, Tribal or local in demand industry sectors or occupations? **section 13(c)(2)(B)(ii)(I)**

Yes, as the list of POSs in the submission was provided by the Vice President of Academic Affairs and Provost.

Section 134(c)(2)(B)(ii)(I) of the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act requires institutions to align their programs with in-demand industry sectors or occupations at the state, regional or local level. STC conducts thorough labor market analysis to identify in-demand industry sectors and occupations within our service area. Established industry advisory boards comprised of representatives from key local employers and industry associations provide valuable insight toward program development, curriculum design, and workforce training initiatives.

Strategies/Action Steps

Direction: Determine the Strategies/Action Steps to Reach the Goal of Element #2: Program Size, Scope, and Quality to meet the needs of all Students. *We recommend no more than three strategies under this element. (One sheet per strategy).*

STRATEGY

Streamline the collecting of feedback from students and other stakeholders who contribute to or benefit from program size, scope and quality. The progression towards a systemic process with immediate insights into the usefulness of different strategies, cross-divisionally for larger impact.

ACTION STEP/S

- Discuss consolidated data-driven approaches, including surveys, focus groups, and demographic analysis, to help with the prioritization of resource allocations for CTE sponsored initiatives, aligned with Perkins V requirements.

STRATEGY

Enhance student support services such as academic advising, counseling, tutoring, and disability accommodations to address the diverse needs of students and promote academic success.

ACTION STEP/S

- Develop targeted interventions to support underrepresented student populations, including first-generation college students, low-income students, and students from marginalized communities.

STRATEGY

Continuously assess and enhance program offerings to meet the evolving needs of students and align with industry trends and workforce demands.

ACTION STEP/S

- Develop new programs or expand existing ones to address emerging fields, technological advancements, and changes in the labor market.
- Foster innovation in teaching and learning by incorporating technology-enhanced instructional methods, experiential learning opportunities, and interdisciplinary approaches that engage students and promote critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving skills.

Part B-1: Labor Market Alignment (3-4 pages)

Results

Refer to CLNA Guide page 10.

1. What are the highest-growth industries in our area (refer to LMI data on [CLNA website](#))? Do we offer opportunities in CTE aligned to these industries?

According to the LMI data, the industries with the highest-growth rates for the Lower Rio Grande Valley are as follows: Diesel and Heavy Equipment maintenance at 37%; Hospitality and Tourism at 79%, Culinary Arts at 70%, Emergency Medical Technicians (i.e. Fire Science) at 36% and 36% for Health Science, Dental Assistances at 45% (not offered at the College), Home Health and Personal Care Aides at 39%, Information Technology – Software Developers 47% and Computer Occupations at 30%, Nurse Practitioners 76%, Medical and Health Services Managers 47%, Exercise Trainers and Group Fitness Instructors 44%, Respiratory Therapists 33%, Physical Therapist Assistants 33%, Business Marketing and Finance (i.e. Managers) 36%, Electrical Technicians 36%, Industrial Machinery Mechanics 33%, Audio and Video Technicians 42%, Law Enforcement 44%, and Logistics 54%. While most of these are programs of study offered at the College, there are some that are growing industries that the College does not offer Certificates or Degrees for and could be potential opportunities.

The highest-growth industry locally is Automotive Service Technicians and Mechanics, at 20%. Diesel Technology, “Bus and Truck Mechanics and Diesel Engine Specialists” shows a growth of 9%, and “Mobile Heavy Equipment Mechanics, Except Engines” shows a growth of 34%.

Yes, STC offers opportunities in CTE for credit and non-credit aligned to these industries. However, further review is needed to better align for acquiring more funding to sustain regional needs.

- a. Is the collection of CTE programs in our county aligned to regional labor market demand? Which programs show the highest student enrollment at postsecondary?

Yes, the collection of CTE programs in our county aligns with regional labor market demand. Presently, STC’s CTE boasts the most rapid growth rate and highest wage categories for various occupational titles. According to the CLNA data, the fields with the highest student enrollment at the postsecondary level include Health Science, Manufacturing, Business Management and Administration, Architecture and Construction, Transportation, as well as Law and Public Safety.

The Perkins Project Director understands that all CTE programs, for credit and non-credit, are aligned with the regional labor market demand, like the Electrician program, with an enrollment for Spring 2024 of 112% and has increased consistently. Some popular programs, like DBT, however, do not align with the demand of job opportunities and are low paying jobs. Some program areas (Automotive and Diesel) indicated that county labor market information was pending for data comparisons.

- b. Which existing programs are not well-aligned to labor market needs? Can adjustments be made to existing programs to transform and adjust them? How high is enrollment in these lesser-aligned programs?

The growth wage category and growth rate for public safety programs are above average and aligned to labor market needs. However, AEDT, AMT and SGT programs are not well aligned given the competitive education requirement, despite having high enrollment numbers. As manufacturing processes become more automated and digitized, it is important for programs in advanced manufacturing technology to incorporate training in robotics, computer numerical control (CNC) machining, additive manufacturing, and data analysis. Partnerships with industry can provide students with access to new technologies and practical experiences. Additionally, Construction Supervision is not well aligned with labor market information, as data shows low paying jobs for labor. However, the STC program focuses on management positions that offer high paying jobs in our regional labor market.

The Labor Market report for the Business programs has identified certain occupation titles that do not align with the needs of the labor market or have a negative outlook. Specifically, new Account Clerks and Data Entry Clerks in the Business, Marketing, and Finance field were highlighted. On the other hand, Automotive/Diesel seems to be in line with the labor market needs based on the data. However, Welding does not appear to be well aligned with labor market information, showing low pay and limited job placement opportunities.

Yes, there are opportunities for adjustments to be made. Some data referenced included Fall 2022 Enrollment, per THECB Dashboard: AEDT: 388; Auto/Diesel 522; SGT 97; AMT 129; CS 67; BA 623; Welding 821.

- c. How might we transform or sunset those programs across the regional area that are not tightly aligned to these industries? How might we work together in the community to achieve this?

Under President Solis's leadership, it is important to maintain a collaborative, systemic, and transformative mindset by staying current with industry trends, needs, and agency requirements. Following the example set by national colleague Dakota Pawlicki, integrating accountability measures will ensure clear alignment for sponsored projects and CTE initiatives. While most programs are focused on high-demand fields, any programs not currently aligned with industries will be re-evaluated and adjusted to target high-demand fields before considering sunseting. Partnering with local postsecondary institutions, such as Texas A&M, can be beneficial for preparing CTE students for the workforce or for further education toward a bachelor's in construction science, that starts at STC. By developing models based on best practices and sharing them with community stakeholders, we can ensure a prosperous CTE workforce moving forward.

Additionally, for programs that are not aligned, we will work collaboratively across divisions to understand community needs and explore opportunities for growth and reskilling the labor force. The Welding program, known for its high quality and adherence to international standards, may need to limit enrollment to match regional labor market demands or explore employment opportunities outside the area. The Automotive/Diesel programs align well with local labor market needs, but could benefit from further development through equipment upgrades, professional development, and curriculum enhancements. For example, adding a fully electric vehicle and charging station to the existing program would ensure students are prepared for recent technologies. Stakeholder feedback will continue to be valued in guiding our CTE programs' direction.

2. How many different programs exist for those programs with the tightest alignment to the key industries? What new programs should we consider offering to students?

Strategies for capturing feedback and interpreting data are needed to determine the most suitable programs to offer to students. The Automotive and Diesel program currently provides a Maintenance and Light Repair (MLR) Certificate, Automotive Certificate, AAS in Automotive Technology, Diesel Technology Certificate, and an AAS in Diesel Technology. It is possible to integrate new curriculum areas within current credentials or explore work-based learning opportunities for students aligned with student services that focus on special populations.

- a. How many different opportunities exist at different locations for students to enter CTE programs in the CIP codes associated with these top occupations?

There are opportunities available for Automotive and Diesel students at the main Technology Campus, with two more opportunities currently being constructed at the Mid-Valley Campus and Starr County Campus for the Automotive Program. The programs available include Automotive Certificate, AAS in Automotive Technology, Diesel Technology Certificate, and AAS in Diesel Technology. Some high-paying and high-growth occupations in this field include Construction and Building Inspectors (47-4011), Line workers (49-9051), and Plumbers (47-2152). Additionally, roles in low voltage alarms, fire alarms, and security cameras fall under OSA 49-2098.

- b. Can we duplicate these programs or increase enrollment opportunities in our service area? What opportunities for postsecondary transitions exist (dual credit, articulations, certifications, pre-apprenticeships, apprenticeships) in the in-demand areas?

It is possible to expand enrollment opportunities through the construction programs. For instance, AMT currently

functions as a dual credit program. Upon graduation, dual students receive a certificate that provides a solid foundation for either entering the workforce or pursuing an associate degree. STC offers industry credentials and a capstone opportunity in the final semester, where CTE students gain work experience by working with a local manufacturer. While welding students in the Dual Enrollment program already participate in this, there are challenges due to ISD's NCLB requirements, which may result in faculty needing to reteach courses within specific timeframes. It is suggested that students continue their education at the institution to fully develop and highlight their skills. The Automotive and Diesel Programs also offer dual-credit programs with local high schools. However, the cost of equipment for programs like Welding, Automotive/Diesel, and Construction Science may limit schools' capacity to offer these programs on site.

- c. How many programs beginning at the secondary level lead to opportunities at the postsecondary level? What guidance and support structures exist at the postsecondary level? What pathways are established?

All current programs are designed to provide opportunities at the postsecondary level and intentional collaboration, strengthening POS connections, with local partnering high schools helps students transition successfully or matriculating. The typical pathway involves a degree plan earning a certificate first and then progressing to an A.A.S degree. The AMT program dual enrollment certificate is stackable into our Associate degree. In the Certificate program, students gain exposure to industry credentials, starting with a Level 1 NIMS certificate. They can then build on these credentials in an Associate program, eventually completing their Level 1 certificate. In the Welding program, students can earn a Level I certificate while still in high school and can continue to earn a Level II certificate at the college level.

3. What resources (business/industry relationships, shared equipment/spaces, teacher talent and expertise, professional development, quality curricula) do we have to access to assist in the development of better aligned programs?

Under the division of Academic Affairs, the annual Workforce Summit and Apprenticeship Summit serve as resources for state officials, state education representatives, higher education partners, K-12 partners, industry partners, and the institution to come together to collaborate on issues facing the region. Additionally, these events provide an opportunity to share initiatives that South Texas College is working on.

The Culinary program has established relationships with local restaurants to gain insights into industry needs. Our advisory committee and BPST division advisory council serve as channels to engage with businesses that can provide scholarships/donation opportunities and influence curriculum decisions that impact student experiences in class, ensuring they are better prepared for the workforce. Generally, CTE programs have access to advisory committees, guided pathway specialists, instructors, surveys, advising, networking opportunities, VR/AR equipment, and simulated scenarios to help design aligned programs.

The Electrical Program requires space for program development and safety measures. The program needs resources for up-to-date electrical equipment, now required for a 2-student group due to code regulations. Some labs currently have up to 4 students per group due to space and equipment limitations. Additionally, faculty in the electrical program need additional professional development to stay current with industry standards. The electrical industry encompasses branches such as residential, commercial, renewable energy (solar or wind), industrial, instrumentation, and manufacturing, making it challenging to find personnel with experience in all these areas.

The AMT program maintains a close relationship with an Advisory Committee composed of local manufacturers with extensive industry experience. They provide valuable insights into local needs and opportunities for our graduates. Our workshop equipped with industrial-sized machinery gives students practical experience that helps them transition smoothly into the workforce. Our instructors bring diverse backgrounds and experiences, with many having worked in various roles in private industry, from manufacturing to design to engineering. This collective knowledge benefits students. The Welding faculty also has industry-based experience, providing students with a well-rounded learning experience.

4. Are there noteworthy practices or programs that can be replicated?

Several programs at STC offer book, equipment, and tool checkout systems that serve as valuable services for students who are unable to purchase them immediately or altogether. This is particularly helpful for low-income students, as it reduces barriers to completing their degrees. Expanding these resources to other programs, especially those with high costs, can help STC foster and maintain high completion rates across different degree fields. Additionally, it is effective to combine theoretical instruction with hands-on practice, as research shows that applying knowledge after learning it abstractly helps with retention. For example, in the welding program, students are asked to replicate what they have learned from faculty demonstrations, allowing them to master skills through practice. Virtual software and equipment also enable students to practice extensively without the need for costly materials. Another beneficial practice at STC is providing hands-on training during lab activities, such as with GMASEP students who receive on-the-job training while enrolled in the program.

Strategies/Action Steps

Direction: Determine the Strategies/Action Steps to reach the Goal of Element #3: Alignment to Labor Market Information (LMI). *We recommend no more than three strategies under this element. (One sheet per strategy).*

STRATEGY

Conduct strategic equipment assessment and incorporate efficient and effective measures around timely procurement for POSs listed:

ACTION STEP/S

- Develop a plan towards a framework to provide steps to identify gaps in alignment with industry standards (may include research reputable suppliers, obtain quotes, and allocate budget and align with reflective trends for more aligned decision-making opportunities.

STRATEGY

Confirm with Leadership to continue to prioritize purchases based on critical needs and immediate impact on student learning.

ACTION STEP/S

- Evaluate the feasibility of upgrading existing equipment to meet current industry standards.
- Work towards the development of an operational or initiative framework to better prioritize needs through institutional planning, ongoing engagement and acquiring of sponsored project funding to increase institutional capacity for elevation and centralize efforts around how STC addresses labor market needs.

STRATEGY

Provide training for faculty and staff on new equipment operation and maintenance.

ACTION STEP/S

- Involve students in the procurement process and encourage active utilization of equipment.
- Develop long-term plans for maintenance, replacement, and upgrades to ensure sustainability, embedded systemically with operational plans.

PART C: Progress Towards Implementing CTE Programs of Study (3-4 pages)

Results

Refer to CLNA Guide page 14.

1. What is your motivation or intent in establishing programs of study?

STC establishes CTE programs to meet various needs, including addressing workforce demands, promoting economic development, increasing educational access, and fostering equity and social mobility. These motivations guide the creation of programs that align with industry needs and offer pathways to meaningful careers. By providing hands-on training, industry certifications, and opportunities for career advancement, STC CTE programs empower students to succeed in high-demand fields and contribute to the region's economic growth.

There is not a routinized process for **deciding** when to create a new program of study, although a clear motivation should be needed for the likelihood of success. Once the decision to start a new program is made, a process exists for operationalizing that decision, with various institutional offices participating, and with a chair in the lead for program development. However, when the process for deciding to create a new program is not institutionalized in a way that subjects it to clear and accepted criterion, the process can be open to political or other influences that commit the program chair without the full agreement of the program chair and faculty. To avoid this, a simple, institutionalized and agreed to process should be implemented that makes the consideration of new programs a routine that considers key issues such as motivation behind new program, LMI, the availability of resources, the commitment to fund new faculty lines, a regional needs assessment showing the local demand, etc.

Currently, the Culinary program would like to establish a new certificate for cake decorating. Demand for cake decorating classes is high with students taking three cake decorating classes to fulfill that need. However, students will declare a baking certificate but stop taking classes because they only want the experience and not the full certificate.

The Human Resources program seeks to add technical competency-based curriculum such as information systems software but assistance exploring training-based learning management systems is needed. The AEDT program is motivated to cultivate a highly skilled workforce and raise the living standards of residents to meet the ever-changing workforce demands. As technology changes, so does the need for skilled laborers.

Public Safety aims to increase the number of personnel that will protect and serve the community for specific types of careers like basic county corrections, telecommunicators, fire fighters and police. DBT works to address the evolving demands of the workforce in tandem with technological advancements, which continually reshape the requirements for proficient laborers.

AMT seeks to provide industry with skilled workers and help our students become more marketable in high demand fields. Thus, the mechatronics certificate was lengthened to an 8-class certificate degree for Fall 2024. Classes added include Electromechanical Devices, Pumps, Compressors, and Mechanical Drives, AI for Manufacturing, and the Capstone: Internship. This change came to be because of local industry demands and included approvals from the AMT Manufacturing Board (industries).

Welding is a field that enables students to be in a good income driven career. Individuals that pursue a career in Welding live a comfortable life and with the programs at South Texas College, they can be educated and prepared for the future. The automotive department is well positioned with programming and is not looking into implementing a new program of study. The department already has dual enrollment, two occupational skills awards, two certificates, and two associates; the aim instead is to improve existing programs with the necessary equipment and technology.

2. What existing programs or dual credit articulations are not satisfying academic requirements or leading to credentials of workplace value?

With Welding, there are some schools that utilize a program for students to attain an AWS qualification. The issue is that a qualification is not recognized through AWS; certifications are different. ISD partners feel that all documented AWS credentials are the same although they are not. We see students that come to the program often with their “AWS Certification” and they have not found work, because their document is not an official certification.

The automotive maintenance and light repair certificate’s dual credit credentials fulfill academic requirements for both dual credit and non-dual credit programs while also providing significant value in the workplace. By systematically assessing programs and articulations and incorporating feedback from stakeholders, STC can ensure that its offerings are meeting academic requirements and leading to credentials of value in the workplace. This ongoing evaluation process is essential for maintaining the relevance and effectiveness of STC’s educational programs.

Due to clarifications and changes at various levels, STC plans to evaluate its dual credit articulation agreements with local high schools to ensure that courses taken through these agreements are rigorous and academically meaningful. Furthermore, we will continue to align our efforts for specific CTE initiatives for acquiring future funding.

3. Are students taking advantage of CTE dual credit opportunities? Why or why not?

Yes. Overall, STC CTE dual credit programs offer a valuable opportunity for high school students to jumpstart their college education, save money, and explore various academic interests before committing to a specific major or career path. However, most dual credit students take dual credit courses in high school leading to an associate degree in interdisciplinary studies, which covers most of the basics required for higher education. This is because most public schools push the interdisciplinary degree because it provides additional funding for the ISD’s. Thus, high schools aren’t actively encouraging students to pursue CTE programs that don’t provide AAS degrees.

The Human Resources program, the Office Administration program and the Paralegal program seek support to promote CTE dual credit opportunities within the high schools. Advocacy activities are needed to create literacy, awareness, and knowledge about employment opportunities within these fields. Currently only one high school is hosting a dual credit HR program. For the Culinary program, Vanguard Academy and PSJA are doing dual credit.

AMT students are taking advantage of the dual credit opportunities embedded into their high school schedule, making it more accessible for students to take a college course. Students can earn college credits or certificates before high school graduation to join the workforce and the certification exams are paid by the AMT department.

The Automotive Technology Program collaborates with multiple school districts for its dual credit program. Students can earn a Maintenance and Light Repair Certificate, with credits that count towards completing an Automotive Technology Certificate and/or an Automotive Technology associate degree.

Under the division of Social behavioral Science, CDEC does not currently have CTE dual credit with local high schools because CDEC courses are often electives for the student. The only course that could be offered as dual credit that fits a student’s schedule and aligns with the high school course curriculum is TECA 1354 Child Growth and Development, an academic course and not a workforce course. We would have to send faculty to teach the course if the high school does not have a teacher with a master’s degree in child development or related field.

Overall, students may take advantage of CTE dual credit opportunities to explore career pathways, prepare for college and the workforce, save on educational costs, and gain valuable skills and credentials that enhance their employability and future success. These programs provide a pathway to meaningful careers and opportunities for personal and professional growth.

4. Where are the labor market-informed opportunities to develop/expand programs of study?

Developing or expanding college programs of study based on labor market needs can significantly enhance the relevance and effectiveness of education in preparing students for successful careers. Labor market opportunities come from job postings, employment statistics, and advisory committee feedback, student surveys and databases such as O*NET,

Workforce Solutions, and Labor Market and Career Information. The programs listed above are seeking to incorporate professional certifications, credentials, or licensures into curriculum to enhance students' employability and readiness for specific roles in high-demand fields or fields that can benefit from nontraditional students. The programs listed above also seek to offer flexible learning models to accommodate working professionals and individuals with diverse scheduling needs. The programs want to emphasize applied learning experiences, such as hands-on projects, simulations, case studies, and industry specific workshops, to help students develop practical skills and problem-solving abilities.

Currently, the HR program, Office Administration program, and Paralegal program seek to establish industry partnerships by collaborating with local employers to identify emerging trends, skill gaps, and in-demand job roles. AMT – Mechatronics is a high demand field that is expected to grow within the next 10 years, which is why the certificate degree is lengthened with end goal to be become an associate degree. Welding students utilize the program knowing that they can go to work upon high school graduation if they have some coursework on their transcript. Students with the Structural certificate return to the college and complete the Combination, as well as associate degree. The students know that the ISDs will furnish them with the equipment and tools that are needed and there is no cost to them while they are in High School. Students take advantage of this opportunity because they understand the subject is beneficial to them if they can pass the credential exams. Presently, the automotive service sector is increasingly focused on expanding the adoption of hybrid and electric vehicles, alongside a demand for ADAS-certified technicians (Advanced Driver Assistance Systems). By integrating cutting-edge equipment and skilled instructors, we can meet the current requirements of the labor market effectively.

5. Who generally initiates the establishment or review of programs of study? Can you be more proactive or collaborative?

The establishment or review of programs of study is done by the programs chair, but this varies by program depending on chair experience/length of time in the role, local practice, and the culture of the department and its faculty. Initiation and review of programs of study usually comes from the chair after dialogue with partners. In some departments it is difficult to be proactive given the Chair responsibilities, so reviews can be reactive to a situation or request from the Office of Curriculum. To be more proactive, the chair role must be provided with help by a qualified individual.

The automotive programs actively gather feedback from the local automotive service community, including independent service shops, manufacturer service dealerships, and other partners. Their advisory committees provide valuable feedback and recommendations for the automotive technology program.

The AEDT program's view is that the department should evaluate and review all the programs of study internally and seek input from its advisory committee members to ensure that the needs of the local industry are being addressed within courses/program.

For Public Safety, reviewing programs of study can be initiated by internal conversation among faculty and administrative staff. Also, discussions with external stakeholders and advisory committees tend to generate discussions about the feasibility of programs of study. The DBT program suggests that each department program initiates the establishment or review of programs of study during their advisory committee meetings. For the AMT program, whenever the Advisory Board Committee raises an issue needing attention, the Department is proactive following the process of approval with the College and State.

Strategies/Action Steps

Direction: Determine the Strategies/Action Steps to reach the Goal of Element #4: Progress towards Implementation of CTE Programs of Study. *We recommend no more than three strategies under this element. (One sheet per strategy).*

STRATEGY

Draft framework for considerations for elevating CTE implementation of benefits for students and stakeholders for implementation POS.

ACTION STEP/S

- Strengthening and aligning efforts with Project Alignment efforts in collaboration with IEA, RAS, Curriculum with Credential of Value and Micro-credentialing, Learning Outcomes with Suitable, special populations and others.
- Expand existing CTE programs to accommodate increased demand and address evolving workforce requirements, ensuring that program offerings are comprehensive, relevant, and responsive to the needs of students and employers.

STRATEGY

Develop systemic operational layout in conjunction with process feedback loop plan regarding POS submitted, under Perkins.

ACTION STEP/S

- Forge partnerships with local school districts, employers, industry associations, and community organizations to support the development, implementation, and sustainability of CTE programs of study.
- Allocate resources, including funding, facilities, equipment, and personnel, to support the implementation and operation of CTE programs of study.
- Provide comprehensive student support services, including academic advising, career counseling, tutoring, and internship opportunities, to facilitate student success and retention in CTE programs.
- Invest in professional development for faculty and staff involved in CTE program delivery to ensure that they are equipped with the knowledge, skills, and resources needed to effectively support student learning and career readiness.

PART D: Recruitment, Retention, and Training of CTE Educators/Staff (3-4 pages)

Results

Refer to CLNA guide page 15.

1. Do your staff and instructors reflect the demographics of your student body?

When discussing demographics, it is important to note that the staff at South Texas College are reflective of the student body in terms of race and ethnicity. However, there may be some areas within the faculty where this reflection is not as clear. It is worth mentioning that most faculty are bilingual, which allows effective communication with students regardless of their demographic group. It is recommended to include data on faculty demographics and language fluency in the Manager Access/Advocacy report.

In the AMT program, 33% of the faculty are female, which exceeds the percentage of female students. Conversely, all faculty members in the Welding program are male, which does not align with the increasing number of female students in that area. The Automotive Program has instructors who accurately represent the student demographics, with many of them being alumni of the program.

Ensuring diversity among faculty and staff is a common objective for educational institutions like South Texas College. A diverse faculty and staff can serve as role models and mentors for students, enhancing their support system. It can also contribute to a more inclusive learning environment that is responsive to various cultures.

To evaluate the alignment of staff and instructors with student demographics, the college could analyze data on factors such as race, ethnicity, gender, age, language proficiency, and socioeconomic status for both groups. If disparities are identified, the college could implement strategies to enhance diversity through targeted recruitment, training programs, mentorship initiatives, and inclusive hiring practices.

Furthermore, ongoing efforts to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion within the college community can foster a supportive environment where all students feel valued and empowered. Providing professional development opportunities for faculty and staff on cultural competency and inclusive teaching practices can help create welcoming learning environments for students from diverse backgrounds.

2. What program areas will require recruitment of new faculty or staff? Are there emerging fields, and if so, would this warrant recruitment of specialized faculty and staff?

While the Office Administration Program—Legal Office Specialist Certificate is not an emerging field, courses within the degree plan do require an instructor to teach specific topics and knowledge not currently held by current faculty. Similarly, the Human Resources Program – AAS – is not an emerging field, but courses within the degree plan do require an instructor to teach specific topics and knowledge not currently held by current faculty. A recommendation of credentials of value acquired by the faculty is preferred so that it aligns with program goals to offer credentials of value to students. Our marketing department currently lacks qualified instructors based on our accreditation requirements. Efforts to hire instructors from industry have been stymied by the interpretation of accreditation requirements; we are working to understand options and overcome those limitations with experienced local industry leaders. Given the new expansions of Culinary at the Mid-Valley campus and more dual credit “s” sections on campus and at the high schools, our program will need additional faculty. The DBT department that houses Construction Supervision, Electrical Technology, and HVAC programs will need to recruit faculty and staff. Within HVAC, there are many specialties that local companies are starting to take on and need local people to hire. In the past, specialties such as chillers, test and balancing, building automation, and commercial refrigeration were done by companies outside of the area. As local companies take these and other specialties on, we need faculty prepared to teach students to work in those fields. AMT’s Robotics & Mechatronics requires an adjunct faculty for the newly lengthened certificate degree of two

semesters. This department falls under emerging fields. Rather than new faculty, the Automotive Technology Program department needs additional professional development support to stay up to date on the latest advancements in the automotive service industry, such as hybrid and electric vehicle integration.

Under the division of social behavioral science, we now have an AA in Early Childhood Education; we are having to open more sections of CDEC academic courses. We are also trying to expand offerings into the Mid- Valley and Starr County Campuses.

3. Are there professional development opportunities aimed to help faculty improve and update their knowledge, skills, and competencies in their field of specialty?

Yes. Professional development helps the programs keep up to date and develop curriculum to add any specific skill our advisory members are requesting from student graduates of the programs. In the future, professional development also will allow us to develop OSAs for specific specialties. Professional development, conferences, and resources are available to improve and update knowledge and skills. Some department meetings include specialized training for each of the subject areas in the department (accounting, economics and Business administration). There are professional development opportunities at STC like the Teaching and Learning Center and faculty internships with industry, as well as opportunities at other local, state and national conferences like the TACTE and NACTEi conferences. This will provide opportunities for many CTE professionals, over time, to stay current in the field and to garner ideas, strategies, innovations, and practices to improve the CTE programs and services for CTE Special Population students which, in turn, positively impact student performance and retention. Departments take advantage of all available opportunities to improve their knowledge, skills, and competencies. Where funding to support or enable such professional development is limited or faculty are not able to be released for external opportunities, it is not possible to take advantage of all desired or available professional development. Even though this question asks about faculty, CTE support staff will also need to keep abreast of emerging trends and best practices for supporting CTE students.

Under the division of SBS, faculty can attend conferences like the NAEYC Professional Learning Institute and the Early Educators Leadership Conference. NAEYC's Professional Learning Institute brings together seasoned and emerging early childhood leaders in a community of learners focused on deepening the early childhood knowledge base, addressing challenging and controversial issues facing the field, and developing skills to improve professional development and practice. The Early Educators Leadership Conference (EELC) is a national event that supports a broad vision to advance and unify the early childhood education workforce, inspire early childhood educators, elevate educational leaders, and foster professional development.

4. What resources/activities ensure that program content and delivery is current and relevant?

Faculty members maintain and utilize program advisory committees to check on the existing curriculum and to ascertain how relevant it continues to be. As needed, faculty and administrators respond with changes to curriculum that is out of date or that has content gaps. New training in AI and other facets of educational technology are being implemented into our courses to keep up to date with current needs. The HR, Office Administration, and Paralegal programs all seek to conduct regular program evaluations, gather feedback from employers and alumni, and make continuous improvements to ensure program relevance, quality, and alignment with labor market needs. Along with attending industry conferences to learn from peer colleges and programs, becoming allied members of industry organizations, and networking with potential employers, having an active advisory board allows us to evaluate and ensure that our programs stay current and relevant to the ever-changing needs required in the AEC industry. In addition, division leaders look for opportunities in emerging technologies. Having access to the most recent equipment, technologies, and training (such as electric and hybrid vehicles in Automotive) ensures that programs deliver content that remains current and aligns with present and future technologies. We consistently face challenges in acquiring up-to-date equipment because some industries, such as automotive, evolve at an extremely rapid pace.

The advisory committee provides us with up-to-date issues and trends to consider. STC provides workforce and apprenticeship workshops to attend. We have a Child Development Center and Lab School that is associated with

national accreditation and Workforce Solutions. Both provide policies and procedures of the latest best practices to be implemented in childcare programs.

5. How will you improve recruitment, retention, and training of CTE educators, faculty, specialized instructional support personnel? **section 134(c)(2)(D)**

This was a huge focus in many of the CLNA discussions. To enhance recruitment, retention, and training of CTE educators, faculty, and specialized instructional support personnel at STC, the institution must adopt a multifaceted approach aligned with the provisions of the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act. Here are some of the optimal strategies that will need to be incorporated in phases over the next 5 years:

- Develop a framework for recruitment and retention model targeted recruitment efforts to attract diverse candidates to CTE educator positions, including outreach to underrepresented groups. Offer competitive salaries, benefits, and professional development opportunities to attract high-quality candidates. Outline ongoing support and potential mentorship opportunities for CTE educators to facilitate their transition into their roles. Utilize existing platforms to foster a culture of collaboration and professional growth by encouraging faculty involvement in curriculum development and interdisciplinary initiatives.
- Develop a framework for Professional Development, training, recognition and environment for CTE professionals. In doing that, STC could offer targeted training opportunities for CTE educators and instructional support personnel to enhance their skills and competencies, as well as stay updated on industry trends and changes in educational practices. Celebrate achievements and milestones within the CTE faculty and staff community to foster a sense of pride and camaraderie. Through a model like this, STC, can work towards a workplace culture that has a growth mindset, promotes equality for all, foster open communication channels for collaboration among faculty, staff, administrators, and other stakeholders.

Additionally, collective efforts, college-wide will ensure strategic decision-makers and leadership support roles are in place to facilitate effective recruitment and retention practices, as it's essential to cultivate a workplace culture aligned with the college's mission and vision, promoting a sense of purpose and motivation among CTE professionals. Institutional support, particularly from leadership roles within HR or TLC, is crucial in ensuring good hiring practices and providing necessary resources for training and development. Moreover, intra-division professional development sessions can help new faculty and program chairs understand the role of advisory committees, curriculum maintenance strategies, and student-focused support initiatives. Leveraging adjunct staff and allocating funds for faculty training and equipment upgrades can further enhance faculty retention and instructional quality. By implementing these strategies comprehensively, STC can strengthen its CTE programs, improve outcomes for students, and foster a supportive and thriving educational environment for faculty and staff alike.

6. Are there industry trends, emerging technologies, curriculum shifts, learning modalities, etc., that your programs have not responded to? Why?

Divisional programs are beginning to address CBE and micro credentialing. With the support and guidance of Academic Affairs, more can be done to institutionalize micro credentialing within CTE programs.

For the HR, Office Administration, and Paralegal Dept. (programs of study), assistance with partnership between the college and workforce development agencies, community organizations, and government entities to access funding, resources, and support services (externally) for students pursuing education and training is needed. A role or position within the college that can help us make those connections is needed.

AEDT is currently offering different learning modalities and emerging technologies to students. The program is looking into incorporating some additional emerging technologies/trends into our program, such as the use of generative design in AI assisted design and the use of CBE courses and mini-mesters for our program, which will provide additional learning options for our students.

DBT sees several industry trends related to new emerging technology such as virtual reality-based curricula and new tools. An apprenticeship path with local business partners may provide a path for students to work while attending class part time. We are considering mini-mesters for completion of certificate in one semester.

For AMT and Welding, there are always trends that are emerging daily. The rise in fuel costs has been associated with a rise in automation, electrical, and energy efficiency opportunities in every field of employment. The programs could benefit from acquiring robotic welders and metal laser engraver/cutters. The benefits of utilizing these automated tools would train students; there is a significant increase in demand for skilled laborers.

The automotive service industry is continuously evolving with the integration of cutting-edge technology. This evolution encompasses alternative propulsion systems such as hybrid/electric vehicles, as well as advancements in vehicle technology like active engine management and powertrain systems with enhanced electronic integration. Therefore, acquiring newer vehicles would enable the automotive program to capitalize on these developments and better equip students for the high-demand areas in the industry.

Strategies/Action Steps

Direction: Determine the Strategies/Action Steps to reach the Goal of Element #5: Improving recruitment, retention, and training of CTE professionals, including underrepresented groups. *We recommend no more than three strategies under this element. (One sheet per strategy).*

STRATEGY

STC will diversify recruitment and improve outreach for CTE professionals through systemic approach aimed at elevating institutional capacity when working with CTE projects, initiatives or funding opportunities to provide more attracting and engaging experiences to support their role towards CTE success.

ACTION STEP/S

- Work with internal and external stakeholders on best practices to centralize resources and recommended opportunities for CTE for more aligned efforts with larger impact, i.e. OPOD and HR, Region One ESC, etc.
 - Consideration on adding to Perkins Hub or another platform for organizational awareness and understanding.
- Develop targeted recruitment efforts by clustering job openings based on program areas (e.g., business, public safety, technology) to streamline advertising processes.
 - Create a timeline for advertising job openings, ensuring timely and consistent outreach efforts to attract qualified candidates.
 - Establish partnerships with local, state, and national organizations to expand the candidate pool and reach underrepresented groups.
 - Allocate a budget for recruitment activities, considering costs associated with advertising, outreach events, and partnerships.

STRATEGY

Enhance hiring practices for Perkins and other CTE sponsored projects and curricular alignment for all CTE pathways.

ACTION STEP/S

- Develop hiring outreach strategies that reflect the diversity of the STC student population, considering the provisions of SB 17.
- Align curricular coverage with staffing expertise by assigning instructors to specialize in two or three content areas, ensuring depth of knowledge and staying up-to-date in specific fields possibly through avenues like advisory committees or industry partnerships.
- Guard against mission creep for program chairs by conducting a desk audit of chair duties to evaluate appropriateness, assign generic activities to staff, and identify training needs.

STRATEGY

Improve exposure and access to retention analytics and data-informed strategies for professional development.

ACTION STEP/S

- Propose recommendations for a compensation model that offers competitive pay, particularly for certifications and accreditations held by CTE faculty and staff.
- Develop a tiered compensation model based on industry-based certifications (IBC) to incentivize faculty attainment and retention.
- Establish standards for faculty and staff professional development targeting CTE student support, including annual training on teaching practices and support strategies.
- Provide resources and support for transitioning industry professionals into higher education roles, recognizing the disparity in compensation between industries and colleges.
- Organize regular workshops, seminars, and training programs internally and externally to ensure faculty/staff stay updated with industry trends and best practices.
- Enhance diversity recruitment initiatives by collaborating with community organizations and participating in targeted events and job fairs.
- Establish mentorship programs to support new CTE professionals, particularly those from underrepresented groups, and provide ongoing professional development opportunities.
- Foster an inclusive work environment that celebrates diversity, respects individual differences, and promotes opportunities for growth and advancement.

PART E: Progress Towards Closing the Gaps and Access (3-4 pages)

Results

NOTE: Review your data documented in Element #1: Student Performance on Required Performance Indicators.
Refer to CLNA Guide page 16.

1. What strategies do you have in place for CTE programs that are designed to enable student groups to meet local levels of performance? section 134(c)(2)(E)(i)

With limitations in the data for special populations makes it difficult to answer CLNA questions. Under the Division of Institutional Advancement and External Affairs, within the Office of Sponsored Initiatives the role in support of Access and Advocacy will directly report to the Director of Project Alignment for planning, analyzing, collecting, interpreting and distributing of data on all of the special populations, as well as with CTE initiatives.

The PASS Program offers an array of services, including a lending library of textbooks, laptops, and calculators. The PASS Program also pays a portion of childcare fees to allow students who are single parents to attend classes. These services could be further enhanced with centralized support by providing students with assistance with full-payment (as opposed to partial payment) for childcare fees, assistance with fees associated with pre-requisite requirements (i.e. tests, exams, vaccinations, etc.), tools, safety gear, and program specific attire (welding aprons, scrubs, etc.), and/or transportation/mileage reimbursement for students participating in clinicals, internships and/or capstones.

Strategies currently include proactively creating customized learning plans in select courses; these courses are identified by evaluation results of English-learners, disabilities, and those with economic challenges. Programs include various learning methods (e.g., visual, auditory, kinesthetic) and ensuring that online resources are accessible to individuals with disabilities.

It is important to implement flexible scheduling options to accommodate the needs of special populations, such as single parents or individuals with other responsibilities. This may include evening classes, part-time programs, or course schedule learning options. Also helpful is to facilitate internships and work experience opportunities that consider the unique circumstances of special populations. This could involve collaborating with employers who are willing to provide flexible arrangements, creating fictitious simulations in an online capstone course, or creating a simulated remote work learning environment (plan) with/for students that cannot fulfill on-site host-company internship hours. Another option is to utilize internal college resources that connect with financial assistance programs by redirecting students to information specifically targeted at economically disadvantaged students to reduce barriers to entry. It would be helpful to provide ongoing professional development opportunities for educators to stay informed about best practices in supporting special populations and adapting teaching methods accordingly. AEDT implemented a lending library to help students meet local levels of performance. The lending library aims to provide costly resources to students who otherwise could not afford to purchase the required equipment/ laptops. AEDT's program presentations include non-traditional students in the presentation. We are also utilizing our female instructors to participate in recruitment efforts to encourage more of the females to enroll in our courses. Culinary Arts just expanded Mid-valley campus to provide equitable access to all students including special populations, locally.

The Public Safety Department provides physical training opportunities to assist students of special populations. Public Safety programs have a heavy emphasis on physical training and abilities. For that reason, RCPSE has a dedicated gym with equipment for peak performance use and a trainer for non-traditional students. Public Safety also utilizes VR systems such as Virta, FLAIM, Police so that students have the means to have on hand experience without spending the costs of consumables to support that specific training. Within AMT, dual enrollment students have more nontraditional enrollment than our traditional college students in our manufacturing classes. The program will develop a recruitment strategy with a special focus on nontraditional students. We currently have manufacturing summer camps for high school students targeting females; to promote, we were able to do live marketing with a local Spanish TV station. Welding has been conducting summer camps with 9 – 12-year-old to start them at a younger age. Students are eager to learn the skill, enabling them to have a higher interest in the field while in high school and seek dual enrollment.

The automotive program is proactively working to ensure students are well-prepared to successfully obtain ASE industry certifications which aligns with local level performance. This includes providing access to the latest industry-standard equipment and tools, enabling students to be thoroughly prepared for the certification exams. Local Diesel Technician performance levels are assessed through collaboration with local stakeholders (Shop Managers). The Diesel Technology program is surveyed by stakeholders to ensure student skills meet the requirements of local jobs. Certain skills and technologies are prioritized by employers, this allows faculty to ensure we have the proper equipment and curriculum to teach these skills.

2. What strategies do you have in place to overcome barriers that result in lower rates of access to performance gaps in the courses and CTE programs for student groups? section 134(c)(2)(E)(ii)

Strategies are now in place to create more course sections at our Mid Valley and Starr County Campuses to allow access to students who may have difficulties in traveling to our Pecan Location or may lack access to internet connections to be successful in online courses. All our CTE programs are also 100% available online. Business Administration is also transitioning BUSI, BMGT and BUSG courses into OER courses to facilitate access to books for our lower income students. The AEDT department established a production lab space for student use during operation hours and hours outside normal operational hours, i.e. evenings and weekends. They initiated a Saturday morning open lab/tutoring program to improve the success rate of all students including special population students. The Automotive Program is also actively trying to acquire the latest service equipment to aid in closing such performance gaps.

3. Are you proactively offering accommodation and services or waiting for students to request them?

Some services are historically offered proactively, like book lending or childcare at some locations and until funding limits are reached. Others are offered when requested and IF resources are available. The initiative to open new course sections at various campuses was initiated by the faculty and administration. OER resources and shell creations have also been created at the initiative of faculty. Student input is always taken to support our decisions in a certain direction.

On the 1st day of class AEDT instructors go over the syllabus and under the "Institutional Policies", there are sections to support special population students. Instructors are all student advisors available to students during their office hours to guide them to any resources available. Within the automotive department, the limited number of accommodations and services are discussed, and information is provided to all students during the first week of class in all classes offered. All of this information is made available as part of the syllabus and on the Blackboard course.

Going through this CLNA round, we saw there is a need to be more intentional, proactive and collaborative, to not waste time and resources with activities and strategies we proceed with for CTE and special populations. For example, the PASS Program proactively recruits students to the Program by participating in college-wide events but can identify other opportunities to share other student support services within the same division. This is also the case with program promotion internally or externally with students, partners and regionally for more seamless connections to benefit the efficiency and effectiveness surrounding CTE efforts.

4. Do students have the opportunity to join affinity or support groups?

Manager Access/Advocacy indicated STC does not have student affinity groups associated with Perkins special populations. It could improve student retention and recruitment if some were available and adequately funded and staffed. Having them could contribute to a sense of belonging and problem solving among similar students.

In the programs' webpages (landing page), students are provided with information about discipline specific groups (e.g., local chapters, associations, industry memberships) in the resources tab. Similarly, students are provided with announcements and flyers with information about affinity or support groups in courses when information is available. Groups can include disability support groups, first-generations college students, veterans and military families, women

in non-traditional careers, single-parents and caregivers, and economically disadvantaged students. All related information is offered in all course shells in BlackBoard. AEDT students can join an AEDT club during the school year that meets on Tuesdays and Thursdays. CLE tutors are embedded in the course and can offer assistance every step of the way. Automotive students are referred to several different programs offered by the institution such as counselors, the PASS program, veterans departments.

5. How are you leveraging various sources of funding and financial aid to support special population students?

The division as a whole explores government, state, and local grants and programs designed to support special populations in education. Faculty contribute to grant writing and proposal submissions. Departments establish connections to emergency financial assistance programs that provide immediate support to special population students facing unforeseen financial challenges within the College or if possible, externally with state funded programs (e.g., Texas Workforce Commission). PASS program continues to collaborate with the Office of Financial Aid when we are unable to assist a student when funding has been exhausted or when students do not qualify for assistance through our program. In addition, students are also referred to external organizations, such as VIDA, Texas Workforce Commission, etc., who may be able to provide special population students with additional support.

The Starfish system at STC allows faculty to track attendance and report on performance for students. This allows faculty to identify students in danger of failing courses and losing financial aid. Students can be referred to tutoring services or advising sessions with professors or counselors. Additionally, the Threads career closet supplies students with interview-ready apparel for job opportunities and professional endeavors for economically disadvantaged students. To support learning and on-line coursework, libraries offer certain textbooks, hotspots, and laptops for checkout and CLE can tutor students in need of one-on-one help. The CLE also has a Perkins-funded Learning Excellence Specialist dedicated to CTE students, with a primary focus on providing support for RCPSE CTE programs. Program administrators have identified a need among police and fire academy participants for academic skills development and support as they develop field-appropriate writing skills. The AEDT program also offers laptops for checkout, so students have more access to their coursework and trade tools. Welding makes use of its budget for additional supplies and equipment to support students. The Automotive department keeps an eye out and utilizes updated equipment and technology that facilitates special populations to perform a task that might otherwise be difficult or inaccessible and is part of the field

Strategies/Action Steps

Direction: Determine the Strategies/Action Steps to reach the Goal of Element #6: Progress towards closing the gaps access to CTE programs for all. *We recommend no more than three strategies under this element. (One sheet per strategy).*

To make progress towards closing the gaps in access to Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs for all students at South Texas College (STC), the following top three strategies/action steps can be implemented:

STRATEGY

Manager for Access and Equity, shifting to report to the Director of Project Alignment will elevate opportunities for institutional advancement and project alignment needs, based on CLNA outcomes:

ACTION STEP/S

- Develop a pipeline for special population students to have payment assistance program established that require tests/exams as pre-requisites to CTE programs,
- Confirm relationships, clarify expectations and build rapport cross-divisionally for Perkins identified populations.
- Gather and organize College Special Population data
 - Understand who the SMEs are and where the gaps are
- Analyze current state and provide recommendations
- Create college-wide plan for special populations, inclusive of all stakeholders
 - Professional development for faculty and staff
- Set up student feedback hub for continuous improvement
- Compile and disseminate college-wide activities and resources for special population categories

STRATEGY

Expand the range of CTE programs offered at STC to provide a diverse array of options that appeal to students with varied interests, career goals, and learning styles.

ACTION STEP/S

- Develop articulation agreements and dual enrollment pathways with local high schools to facilitate early exposure to CTE programs and seamless transitions from secondary to postsecondary education.
- Implement flexible scheduling options, including evening, weekend, and online courses, to accommodate the needs of non-traditional learners, working adults, and students with family or employment responsibilities.

STRATEGY

Strengthen student support services, including academic advising, counseling, tutoring, and financial aid assistance, to address the unique needs of students seeking access to CTE programs.

ACTION STEP/S

- Provide targeted interventions and resources to support student success and persistence in CTE programs, particularly for those who may require additional assistance due to academic, financial, or personal challenges.
- Establish mentorship programs, peer support networks, and career exploration opportunities to help students navigate the transition into CTE programs and connect with resources that promote their academic and professional growth.

Conclusion/Insights (1-2 pages)

1. What went well in your CLNA process?

STC experienced better understanding which datasets to review, how to interpret them, and identifying complementary supplemental data. Further clarification from THECB was beneficial in moving forward with completing the CLNA and preparing for pending application requirements. The initial data provided allowed internal stakeholders to identify prioritized gaps for future planning needs. Our priorities moving forward will focus on addressing federal requirements to ensure accurate data within the Movelt Portal. While the original CLNA process was refined in November 2023, it impacted the quality of this round. However, it provided valuable insights for clear alignment for CTE. The outcomes from the CLNA process, federally required for Perkins V, highlighted the need for alignment with organizational strategic plans through IE processes. Recommendations on CTE initiatives and project experiences were provided by the Director of Project Alignment and Executive Director of OSI. Stefani Ocon-Solis and Samantha Uriegas, Perkins Directors, collaborated to provide structured sessions and materials to assist stakeholders in responding based on stakeholder engagement activities.

2. What could have been done differently to achieve better results?

There are a variety of issues that need to be addressed. Clarification on access to the Movelt portal from THECB, as well as the expectations and responsibilities associated with that access. FY24 marks the first time that THECB has mentioned this as a beneficial practice for Perkins. The Perkins Project Directors had difficulty identifying who the portal data contacts were. It was suggested during the TACTE meeting with THECB representatives that this information should be included on THECB webpage to streamline data alignment with college practices. As a larger institution with multiple CTE programs, it is important to refine the process by assigning data and groups for more efficient and cohesive responses. This will demonstrate the aggregation process more effectively, helping stakeholders understand the overall value and usefulness of CLNA. Centralized guidance can be offered to help adjust to the new CLNA and Perkins Basic processes and required content. Additionally, some departments and programs have struggled to interpret the data provided and determine who holds certain data internally and externally. For example, AMT and Welding have suggested including 'meta major' details aligned with approved program names to aid in reviewing data. We will collaborate with divisional support to streamline this process for college-wide efforts, similar to the work being done for all CTE.

3. What individuals or groups were invited but did not participate? Why did they not participate? What future steps will you take to engage them?

The Divisions of MSIT, NAH, LA, and Executive Leadership did not attend all CLNA response sessions, which OSI believes may be due to scheduling conflicts. Moving forward, it is expected that divisions will work closely together throughout the CLNA process to ensure that everything is appropriately vetted to identify the best next steps. The Perkins Liaisons will be working with Deans and VPs to help facilitate this collaboration. In the future, the Perkins Project Director and OSI-Project Alignment roles will recommend engagement activities with stakeholders based on input from Texas Colleges and CTE Conference. There will be greater clarity on the structure and purpose of these sessions to ensure that all necessary parties are engaged throughout. Departments such as Student Success Specialists, Financial Aid, Marketing/PR, and Data offices were not part of the process, but their involvement will be necessary going forward.

4. What other initiatives can be leveraged and aligned across sectors to make this work successful?

Many other initiatives exist within Curriculum and Dual for micro credentialing and IBC clarifications, Learning Outcomes for holistic student success points through Suitable platform, RAS and IEA with Data Management and

Integration Taskforce and leading IPEC and ILC. It is crucial STC focuses on better understanding the importance of CLNA data to address data gaps. Working with data generators, collectors and distributors to help with problem solving and possibly help train others for better alignment for strategic planning to cover all CLNA CTE elements. Further, more work will be needed to help with understanding and credentialing for compensation for those supporting Perkins and other CTE sponsored initiatives to elevate current institutional capacity to address prioritized local needs. STC is incorporating Workday to replace BANNER. Hopefully ERP system will assist in creating identifiers for key special populations, to be supplemental to data provided by THECB and should identify student needs within specific underperforming CTE programs or with CTE Special Populations.

5. How will you build connections to and through those other initiatives?

The creation of a new area focused on the alignment for the OSI will help with intentional planning for systemic change, mindful of CLNA and state/federal changes. A firmer, consistent structure of participants and groups will help ensure that all necessary individuals are consistently engaged. STC will work towards enhancing the resources, opportunities, and support available to professionals and students alike. STC will work towards streamlining awareness and transparency around processes in support of Perkins V, participating in State and National CTE Networks to facilitate collaboration and knowledge-sharing among CTE educators and stakeholders, leveraging technology and online platforms may expand STC's reach and facilitate connections, as well as forecasting and exploring additional grant opportunities and funding sources outside of the Perkins grant can provide STC with resources to support CTE initiatives and expand program offerings. Federal, state, and private grants are targeted for workforce development, education, and innovation in CTE.

6. On what established schedule will you continue to meet and work together?

Perkins Project Director role has been vacant, since March 2024. Acclimation to updates and changes continues to slow down STC's completion of the final draft of the CLNA. STC will follow the schedule of THECB laid out for this year but plans to align with institutional planning schedules for the following year, after submission of FY25 Basic Application. In addition, undergoing drastic changes for the CLNA to comply with newly established THECB requirements, caused OSI-Project Alignment to revamp for systemic change. Elevated expectations are necessary for more strategic planning for funding opportunities aligned with the act. Consideration for assigned or specialized staff (compensated appropriately) to be available to work on this year-round, will need be planned for alongside institutional budgeting. Chairs can meet quarterly with those individuals, who could meet monthly. CTE programs report division meetings are great to visit and collaborate on collective groups' thoughts.

7. How will you demonstrate collective commitment to on-going engagement in this work?

Through the direction of the Director of Project Alignment and ED of OSI and clearer compilation of documentation, STC will demonstrating collective commitment to ongoing engagement in the important CTE and special populations work, under the Perkins Act and THECB resources and guidance, while actively engaging various stakeholders and implementing strategies that promote continuous improvement and collaboration. It will be a consistent work in progress for the next 10 years as there is commitment for full institutional alignment revolved around strengthening connections for programs and services under CTE and Perkins requirements, including but not limited to: establishing strengthened stakeholder partnerships, embedding opportunities within advisory committee settings, engaging faculty and staff differently, promoting student involvement through various cross division strides, ongoing and systemic monitoring/evaluation controls and intentional continuous improvement practices.

Appropriate Signatures and Institutions Letterhead

Please attach all appropriate signatures that acknowledge the submission of your CNLA including any regional consortia contacts.

CLNA must have Institution's Official Letterhead.

Upload your CLNA Document [HERE](#).