



Grant Information Guide

Maryland Career and Technical Education (CTE) Perkins Reserve Grant Program

Maryland State Department of Education
200 West Baltimore Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21201

Deadline
July 31, 2025
No later than 5:00 p.m. EDT



MARYLAND STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Carey M. Wright, Ed.D.

State Superintendent of Schools

Tenette Y. Smith, Ed.D.

Deputy State Superintendent
Office of Teaching and Learning

Wes Moore

Governor

MARYLAND STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Joshua L. Michael, Ph.D.

President, Maryland State Board of Education

Monica Goldson, Ed.D. (Vice President)

Chuen-Chin Bianca Chang, MSN, PNP, RN-BC

Susan J. Getty, Ed.D.

Nick Greer

Dr. Irma E. Johnson

Dr. Joan Mele-McCarthy, D.A., CCC-SLP

Rachel L. McCusker

Samir Paul, Esq.

Clarence C. Crawford (President Emeritus)

Abhiram Gaddam (Student Member)

Table of Contents

Program Description	3
Use of Funds	8
Program Requirements	10
Application Requirements.....	12
Budget and Budget Narrative	24
Appendices.....	26
The Review Process.....	27
Scoring Rubric.....	28
Reporting Requirements.....	35
Grant Application Timeline.....	36
Non-Discrimination Statement.....	37
The General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) Sect 427	38
Customer Service Support Sessions	39

Program Description

The Governor's Workforce Development Board (GWDB), Career and Technical Education (CTE) Committee, and the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) invite eligible applicants to submit proposals for funding under the Perkins Reserve Grant program for Fiscal Year 2026 (FY26). The purpose of this grant is to support local education agencies (LEAs) in testing or expanding innovative solutions to barriers in achieving key goals under The Blueprint for Maryland's Future. Specifically, this grant asks applicants to focus on establishing or expanding Registered Apprenticeships and/or quality pre-apprenticeship programs that lead directly to a Registered Apprenticeship within a Maryland public school district. Applicants must target establishing or expanding Registered Apprenticeships and/or pre-apprenticeship programs within secondary schools in preparation for Maryland's high-demand priority sectors or other sectors with high regional demand.





Grantees may apply for a grant in one or multiple of the following areas, each of which was identified as common areas of need during the first year of CTE Expert Review Team district visits:

1. **Expand Accessibility of Related Instruction for Apprenticeships**
2. **Address Transportation Hurdles for Students**
3. **Build on Existing Support for Students in Special Populations**
4. **Establish an Intrastate Peer Observation and Collaboration Project**

The intended purpose of these areas is to directly support local innovation that is in alignment and supports the *Blueprint's* 45% goal, wherein by the 2030-2031 school year, 45% of public high school students shall complete the high school level of a Registered Apprenticeship or another industry-recognized credential before they graduate (MD Code, Education, § 21-204).

Defining the *Blueprint's* 45% Goal

High school students must complete one of the following by graduation to be counted

Options	Details	In 45% Goal
Registered Apprenticeship (RA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gold standard for fulfilling the <i>Blueprint's</i> 45% goal - Requires 144+ hours of related instruction (RI) and 250+ hours of on-the-job training (OJT) before graduation¹ - Does not require completion of entire RA during high school 	
Industry-Recognized Credential (IRC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - IRC that validates skills for in-demand occupations and is recognized by employers, as approved by the GWDB CTE Committee¹ - Student must earn an IRC on the approved list - Student can also complete as part of a YA (see below) - Should be pursued when a RA is not available 	
	<div>Youth Apprenticeship (YA) + IRC</div> <div>- Student must have completed an IRC, per above, as part of their YA</div>	
YA Only	- Completion of YA without an IRC may still be a valuable experience for some students and employers, but cannot count toward the <i>Blueprint's</i> 45% goal ²	

The CTE Perkins Reserve Grant tasks applicants with creating innovative solutions that other LEAs may adopt to effectively meet the *Blueprint* goals.

Registered Apprenticeship Goal: Registered Apprenticeships must meet the definition under the GWDB CTE Committee’s apprenticeship policy issued in December 2024. Per this policy, the completion of a high school level of a Registered Apprenticeship is defined as completion of at least 144 hours of related instruction and a minimum of 250 hours of on-the-job training prior to their high school graduation, with the remaining requirements of their Registered Apprenticeship to be completed following high school graduation.

Pre-Apprenticeships Goal: High school-level Pre-Apprenticeship opportunities must meet the criteria set forth in the GWDB CTE Committee’s Industry-Recognized Credential Policy. As such, the Pre-Apprenticeship must already be approved on the IRC list, or must meet the following criteria with a plan to be approved when the IRC application opens August 1, 2025. The seven required criteria to be approved as an IRC are as follows:

1. Align with in-demand occupations
2. Provides documented outcomes
3. Validated by industry
4. Assessment-based
5. Standards-driven
6. Attainable and accessible
7. Portable

Pre-apprenticeship programs for high school students prepare them, while in high school, to enter into a Registered Apprenticeship either during or after high school. According to USDOL, and as cited under the GWDB CTE Committee’s IRC policy, quality pre-apprenticeship programs for the purposes of this solicitation and *Blueprint* goals include the following components:

- Partnership with Registered Apprenticeship sponsors.
 - A pre-apprenticeship program’s educational and pre-vocational services prepare individuals to meet the entry requisites of one or more Registered Apprenticeships and must be developed with input from at least one sponsor.
- Sustainability through partnerships.
 - To support their ongoing sustainability, quality pre-apprenticeship programs establish partnerships with entities to collaboratively promote the use of Registered Apprenticeships as a preferred means for employers to develop a skilled workforce and to create career opportunities and pathways for individuals.
- Meaningful training combined with hands-on experience replicating a workplace that does not displace paid employees.
 - Quality pre-apprenticeships provide hands-on training to individuals in a workplace, simulated lab experience, or work-based learning environment, which does not supplant a paid employee, but effectively simulates the industry and occupational conditions and standards of the partnering Registered Apprenticeships while observing proper supervision and safety protocols.

- Access to career and supportive services.
 - Quality pre-apprenticeship programs provide or otherwise ensure access to career and supportive services during the program, which may continue after a pre-apprentice enters a RAP.
- Strategies that increase Registered Apprenticeship opportunities for underrepresented or underserved populations facing significant barriers to employment in the Registered Apprenticeship labor force.

Applicants should note that pre-apprenticeship opportunities in high school lead directly to a Registered Apprenticeship.

Priority Occupations: This proposal must focus on programs that support progress toward goals within the Blueprint for Maryland's Future ("the Blueprint"), and to prioritize occupations within high-demand sectors for the state or within the grantee's local region, and drive industry leadership and partnership to shape and deliver workforce solutions.

Maryland's diverse economy provides many different career pathways for residents. The State's priority sectors include the following "lighthouse sectors" for economic growth and high-demand sectors as defined by the GWDB:

- Cybersecurity and Information Technology
- Healthcare
- Life Sciences
- Infrastructure
- Manufacturing
- Aerospace and Defense
- Transportation and Logistics

The proposed program must also make a clear and distinct connection to the LEA's CLNA and goals identified within the FY26 Local Application. If the proposed program does not prioritize high-demand sectors or emerging occupations in the state, applicants should explain and provide documentation of how this project directly relates to their Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment and is focused on a regional demand.

GRANT OVERVIEW

Name of Grant Program

Career and Technical Education (CTE) Perkins Reserve Grant FY26

Purpose

The purpose of the CTE Perkins Reserve Grant is to provide seed resources to Perkins formula-funded LEAs and Community Colleges to establish or expand registered apprenticeships and/or to establish or expand pre-apprenticeship programs in alignment between Perkins V and the Blueprint. Develop and scale at least one high-leverage CTE strategy that will, in turn, establish sustainable systems, processes, and policies that will outlast the performance period of this grant program and, if successful, will serve as a model for other Maryland LEAs to follow.

Authorization

Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act [[Perkins V; P.L. 115-224](#)]).

Dissemination

This Grant Information Guide (GIG) was released on June 16, 2025.

Deadline

Proposals are due no later than 5:00 pm on July 31, 2025.

Grant Period

July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026

Funding Amount Available

\$500,000

Estimated Number of Grants

Two to Four grant awards

Eligibility

MSDE reserves the right to take into consideration several reserve grant priorities detailed in Maryland's Career and Technical Education Four-Year State Plan when making awards: LEAs and community colleges in rural areas; areas with high percentages of CTE concentrators or CTE participants; or areas with high numbers of CTE concentrators or CTE participants.

Submission Instructions

Grant applications must be submitted by 5:00 p.m. on July 31, 2025. The completed application should be saved as a PDF document and uploaded to the FY 26 Grants folder for your LEA or community college, located in SharePoint. Please notify your School Support Coordinator once your application has been uploaded to SharePoint. Beginning in June, completed applications will be accepted, reviewed, negotiated, and approved on a rolling basis.

Program Contacts**Richard Kincaid**

Assistant State Superintendent
Division of College and Career Pathways
(410) 767-0426

Richard.kincaid@maryland.gov

Megan Cameron

Manager of Grants and Finance
Division of College and Career Pathways
(410) 767-6581

Megan.Cameron@maryland.gov

State Responsibilities

MSDE is responsible for providing required information, data, documentation, and technical assistance to facilitate the grantee's performance of the work. MSDE program staff will be available and make every effort to support on demand additional assistance when requested throughout the grant period. In addition, MSDE will monitor program implementation throughout the grant performance period to ensure each council is on target to meet its goals and fully expend its awarded program resources.

Use of Funds

The following are examples of approved uses for the grant funds in accordance with the grant's purpose. Other costs not listed here may be presented to the grant manager in the MSDE program office for determination of allowable expenditures. Funds should be utilized for supporting CTE programs that meet the criteria of size, scope, and quality. This includes purchasing equipment, developing new programs, improving existing programs, and other activities that enhance program effectiveness.

Funds may be used for:

- Administrative costs, including indirect costs, should not exceed 5% of the total grant
- Career guidance and counseling
- Communication, marketing, and outreach activities (long-term outcomes, focused on the program information)*
- Curriculum Development.
- Equipment for administrative purposes
- Equipment for instructional purposes*
- Furniture (bookcases, chairs, desks, drawers, file cabinets, lateral files, etc.). This item is allowed only for special-purpose equipment used exclusively for CTE programs of study. Prior approval from MSDE is required for items with a unit cost of \$10,000 or more.
- Industry-recognized credentials (IRCs) included on approved list (class sets, NOT for individual students)
- Instructional Materials and Supplies
- Professional development to enhance CTE knowledge or skill set
- Professional services, such as contractors
- Program evaluation
- Salaries, wages, and fringe benefits of CTE staff
- Software*
- Stipends for extra-duty CTE work*
- Student expenses/direct assistance to students (fees and insurance - has to benefit all students)
- Transportation aligned with CTE coursework (business/industry tours, career fairs, field trips, work-based learning)*

* Restrictions apply. MSDE Pre-approval is required.

Funds may not be used for:

- Assessments and credentials not included on the approved list
- Child care
- Consumables for CTE Courses (food for culinary, 3D printing materials, etc.)
- Construction, renovation, and/or remodeling of facilities
- General operations (general maintenance/repair, insurance, janitorial, security, utilities)
- Goods or services for personal use
- Items retained by student (calculators, clothing/uniforms, supplies, tools)
- Memberships and subscriptions (business, professional, technical)
- Monetary awards
- Remedial courses (instructional remediation courses in reading, writing, and mathematics)
- Rent/lease of buildings and equipment
- Student wages

Program Requirements

Applicants must provide a comprehensive proposal that addresses the following required elements:

COMPREHENSIVE LOCAL NEEDS ASSESSMENT (PREREQUISITE)

As a fundamental prerequisite, every secondary program must conduct a comprehensive local needs assessment every two years before accessing federal CTE funds. This assessment should guide all other areas of the program, ensuring alignment with community needs, labor market demands, and educational outcomes for students.

PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY

Programs are required to meet specific performance indicators, such as academic proficiency, graduation rates, technical skill attainment, placement in postsecondary education or employment, and participation in nontraditional fields.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Active engagement with a wide range of stakeholders, including parents, students, academic and CTE faculty, and local businesses, is essential to ensure the program's relevance and effectiveness.

Include letters of support or memoranda of understanding (MOUs) where applicable.

ACCESS AND EQUITY FOR SPECIAL POPULATIONS

Programs must ensure equitable access to all students, including special populations. This includes targeted support and resources to enable successful participation and completion of CTE programs by students from these groups.

CAREER GUIDANCE, COUNSELING AND COACHING

Offer students career guidance and academic counseling to help them effectively navigate their educational and career pathways that is in conjunction with the career counseling program as envisioned under the *Blueprint*. Describe how the program will incorporate career exploration, planning, and guidance services.

ALIGNMENT WITH STATE AND LOCAL NEEDS

Align with the economic needs of the state and locality, facilitating skills development that match local and state industry requirements, like the CLNA, Local Plans, *Blueprint* goals, and the State's high-priority sectors.

The State's priority sectors include: Cybersecurity and Information Technology; Healthcare and Life Sciences; Infrastructure; Manufacturing; Transportation and Logistics; Hospitality and Tourism. To further examine specific in-demand and emerging occupations within Maryland, please refer to the 2024 WIOA State Plan.

If the occupation is outside the state, in-demand or emerging industries, applicants should demonstrate alignment by providing local workforce data.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Programs should continually assess and refine their approaches to improve student outcomes and overall program quality.

FISCAL REQUIREMENTS

Programs must adhere to specific fiscal rules, including provisions for matching funds and restrictions on the use of funds for certain types of expenditures. Describe fiscal oversight procedures, including internal controls and financial reporting. Submit a detailed budget and budget narrative using MSDE templates.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provide adequate professional development to teachers, career coaches, and other staff to ensure they are equipped with the latest teaching methods and industry-relevant skills. Applicants must also provide adequate training for students to develop the soft skills necessary to be successful in professional spaces.

CONNECTION TO APPRENTICESHIP AND INDUSTRY-RECOGNIZED CREDENTIALS (IRC)

In alignment with initiatives like *the Blueprint for Maryland's Future*, programs should strive for at least 45% of students participating in apprenticeships or achieving industry-recognized credentials, integrating practical, hands-on learning experiences that enhance employability and skill acquisition.

Getting Started

LEARN

- Read this document in its entirety as it provides a comprehensive overview of the various opportunities to participate, the application process, and the grant program timeline.
- Explore the links to additional resources and readings identified as “Inspiration from the Field” for each of the four grant strategies.

CONSIDER

- Examine each program of study offered in your organization and evaluate the strength of outcome alignment with [Perkins V](#), the [Maryland CTE Four-Year State Plan](#), and the [Blueprint](#).
- Evaluate the organization's most recent CTE student enrollment data by career cluster and campus, and disaggregate by gender, race/ethnicity, and special population. Analyze root causes for any program and/or student gaps discovered through the most recent Perkins Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment (CLNA).
- Consider how the CTE Perkins Reserve Grant could be combined with other MSDE grant programs, such as the Perkins formula, Blueprint, and Maryland Leads.

COLLABORATE

- Identify the primary point of contact and key collaborators responsible for the application submission.
- Build in opportunities to gather input from educators, industry leaders, and other stakeholders.

APPLY

- Attend one General Information Session and appropriate Strategy Information Session. (Required)
- Submit the online grant application by the application deadline with all required appendices. (Required)

High-Leverage Strategies

STRATEGY 1: EXPAND ACCESS TO RELATED INSTRUCTION FOR APPRENTICESHIPS

A required component of a Registered Apprenticeship or pre-apprenticeship is to provide related instruction that complements on-the-job training (OJT). One of the preliminary findings from the CTE Expert Review Team (ERT) visits over the 2024-2025 School Year (SY) uncovered that many of the CTE programs that are primed to be the related instruction for a Registered Apprenticeship, such as those in electrical, nursing, and automotive tech, are often the ones that LEAs report are oversubscribed. These are the programs that year-over-year have a waitlist, some in the hundreds of students. LEAs are challenged in their capacity to expand these popular programs because of various funding limitations, including: the physical space required for certain programs; the cost of the technology required to outfit an additional space or modernize current spaces; school schedules and graduation requirements that limit students' time; the method and modality of instruction; and a limited talent pool of instructors to pull from. For this grant proposal strategy, applicants will design and propose innovative, high-impact strategies to increase accessible related instruction for apprenticeships.

In the preliminary findings for the CTE ERT, analysis in the form of focus groups, interviews, data reporting, and observations found that there are multiple instances across the State where there are CTE Centers with equipped instructional space that are underutilized at times, leaving spaces empty during some of the day and evenings. This is due to a multitude of factors, including student schedules, restrictive transportation options to/from tech centers, and limited CTE instructors to provide instruction. Conversely, there are also Registered Apprenticeship sponsors who have strong programs, but lack the physical space for a training facility. In their Final Report of the Apprenticeship 2030 Commission in March 2025, the Commission recommended "maximizing registered apprenticeship classroom instruction in high schools and community colleges" because these spaces and CTE programs are publicly funded. Therefore, maximizing the proportion of Registered Apprenticeship classroom related instruction in these spaces will support efficient use of public money, maximize access to high quality instruction, and reduce the burden on employers.

These recommendations, paired with the CTE ERT's preliminary findings, have led to this CTE Perkins Reserve Grant high-leverage strategy. Applicants for this grant should find innovative, high-impact strategies to increase accessible apprenticeship instruction.

The process for creating more accessible related instruction for apprenticeships can begin with several early steps:

1. Maximize the use of CTE Technical Centers, comprehensive high schools, and/or local Community Colleges during, after, or before school hours to expand related instruction opportunities.
 - a. Additionally, consider time outside the traditional school week, including nights, weekends, or summer.
2. Find innovative ways to transport students to a location for their instruction.
3. Find innovative ways to expand instructor capacity, including working with Community Colleges and/or employers/Registered Apprenticeship sponsors to provide some or all of the instruction.

4. Create alternative methods of instruction for apprenticeship curriculum, like hybrid curriculum, synchronous or asynchronous virtual learning, etc.

Applicants should note that this strategy specifically calls for increasing accessible related instruction opportunities that meet the criteria for apprenticeship instruction and are part of a MSDE-approved CTE program. As such, the curriculum must already be approved by MSDE and/or MATC, or must meet the criteria set in COMAR 09.12.43.05 with a plan to apply to be approved when the curriculum is set to begin instruction. Because each industry has different needs, these standards are agreed upon by the employer and the Apprenticeship Coordinator(s) at the LEA, and post-secondary institutions.

According to COMAR 09.12.43.05.E, for Registered Apprenticeships, “a minimum of 144 hours of instruction for each year of apprenticeship or the number of hours necessary to cover related courses required by the program sponsor is required.” Quality apprenticeship instruction can come from community college classes, trade school programs, third party curriculum, high school courses, or employer delivered training. In all cases, instruction must be distinct from On-the-Job Training (OJT) activities.

Some best practices to consider for providing quality apprenticeship instruction for high school students include :

- Training and curriculum based on industry standards and approved by the documented sponsor that will prepare students with the skills and competencies needed to complete one or more Registered Apprenticeships.
- Valuable occupational skills and opportunities leading to credentials and certifications.
- Curriculum that is in alignment with in-demand occupations, pedagogical practices, assessment-based, and standards-driven.
- Collaboration among employers in in-demand occupations, Apprenticeship Coordinator(s), and other stakeholders to design quality curriculum.

This high-level strategy is focused on expanding access to related instruction within the requirements for Registered Apprenticeships and qualifying Pre-Apprenticeships. Curriculum for apprenticeships needs to be developed in collaboration with key stakeholders. Secondary and/or post-secondary credits that are earned based on dual or concurrent enrollment agreements or articulation agreements established between local school districts, post-secondary institutions, and Registered Apprenticeship programs, can help accelerate success in both the RI and OJT.

Applicants must address each of the following in their application:

- Validate that the CTE program in question aligns with an existing or desired Registered Apprenticeship or pre-apprenticeship (as defined above) curriculum, and/or describe how the LEA plans to align it and use it for such opportunities
- Describe student demand, such as waiting lists for programs
- Document alignment to either one of the state’s high-demand priority sectors described above, or a local area need, including with labor market data
- Describe the proposed solution to be funded, including any tentative or committed partners

Inspiration from the field and additional readings

- [Investigating the Impact of a Professional Learning Community \(PLC\) of a High School's Core Academics and Career Technology Education \(CTE\) Teachers in the Implementation of Project-Based Learning \(PBL\) Coupled with Cross curriculum Blended Learning](#)
- [Lessons on Expanding Quality CTE and Work-Based Learning](#)
- [Professional Development Needs of CTE Teachers in Idaho: A Literature Review](#)

STRATEGY 2: ADDRESS TRANSPORTATION HURDLES FOR STUDENTS

Issues revolving around transportation have plagued Maryland LEAs and have proven to be a hurdle in reaching Blueprint goals. Whether it is transporting secondary students from their home school to the CTE Technical Center or another location where they are enrolled in a CTE course, getting students to on-the-job training (OJT), or dealing with absenteeism, transportation has proven to be an issue across the state. Some LEAs have attempted to address these transportation hurdles, like in this high-leverage strategy, applicants must propose innovative, high-impact solutions to their transportation hurdles that can be modeled in other LEAs within the State of Maryland. Applicants should create connections among their CLNA, their students' needs, and their proposed plan for an innovative solution to overcome transportation barriers.

The GWDB CTE Committee Annual Report identified transportation as a major barrier that limits student participation. In this Annual Report, it was specifically noted that transportation barriers were one of the biggest hurdles to expanding Registered Apprenticeships. Transportation is an issue for urban, suburban, and rural communities in Maryland, but their specific needs vary according to their context. For instance, Baltimore City students face a "Transit Nightmare" as some students have a 90-minute commute each way, despite a distance that normally takes 17 minutes by car. In the CTE Expert Review Team (ERT) visits conducted in the 2024-2025 school year, focus groups with students and staff revealed the difficulties students have with transportation at all 11 LEAs visited. Some students remarked that lack of transportation options kept them from participating in apprenticeship programs and that inconsistent bus schedules were even impacting their academic performance.

The process to establish a proposal to address transportation hurdles can begin with several early steps:

1. Identifying the most pressing transportation needs from the CLNA and from student feedback.
2. Reviewing what is allowable and what is not allowable within the Perkins Reserve Grant.
3. Reviewing what is permissible and what is not permissible according to any local restrictions.
4. Engaging families and communities to find solutions to transportation hurdles.
5. Collaborating with other institutions, like community colleges, neighboring LEAs, and other relevant parties.
6. Identifying the needs of special populations, especially those with disabilities.

LEAs should apply to the CTE Perkins Reserve Grant to support innovative strategies for LEAs to overcome transportation barriers for students. This will lead to increased participation in CTE programs, increased completion rates, increased IRC attainment, and increased participation in Registered Apprenticeships. Applicants should propose a detailed plan to transport students to OJT, to CTE Centers and/or CTE programs offered at a different school in the same district, job sites, and other activities associated with CTE programs to help them achieve Blueprint goals. This proposal must be in alignment with Perkins Reserve Grant allowable uses and any local restrictions.

Applicants must address each of the following in their application:

- Validate that the CTE program in question aligns with an existing or desired Registered Apprenticeship or pre-apprenticeship (as defined above) curriculum, and/or describe how the LEA plans to align it and use it for such opportunities
- Document alignment to either one of the state's high-demand priority sectors described above, or a local area need, including with labor market data
- Describe, with evidence available, the nature and scope of transportation need and that lack of transportation impedes access to Registered Apprenticeship or pre-apprenticeship related instruction and/or on-the-job training
- Describe the proposed solution to be funded, including any tentative or committed partners

Inspiration from the field and additional readings:

- [Tennessee Department of Education Perkins V Reserve Grant FY24 Application Guide](#)
- [The Department of Transportation \(DOT\) Notice of Funding Opportunity \(NOFO\) for Fiscal Years \(FY\) 2024-2026 Promoting Resilient Operations for Transformative, Efficient, and Cost-Saving Transportation \(PROTECT\) Program](#)
- [New Hampshire Department of Education Bureau of Career Development - Career and Technical Education \(CTE\) Transportation Incentives Grants Request for Applications \(RFA\) 2023-2025.](#)
- [Navigating New Frontiers: A Narrative of CTE Administrators Leading Rural Innovation](#)

STRATEGY 3: BUILD ON EXISTING SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS IN SPECIAL POPULATIONS

As Maryland continues to expand its Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs to reach Blueprint goals, this high-leverage strategy for the CTE Perkins Reserve Grant seeks applications that prioritize expanding access and increasing success for special populations. Perkins V emphasizes recruiting special populations and ensuring their success, which is what this high-leverage strategy aims to accomplish. Currently, recruitment for CTE programs in many Maryland LEAs begins in 5th grade or 8th grade. In 2024, 39.5% of all students enrolled in Maryland classes were categorized as “Economically Disadvantaged”. In the same year, 13.1% of all students in Maryland were multilingual and 12.7% were students with disabilities. These types of students face systemic barriers that keep them from successfully completing their CTE program, earning industry-recognized credentials, and enrolling in apprenticeship programs. This high-leverage strategy seeks to address these barriers by recruiting students in special populations and strategizing a way to ensure their success to complete CTE programs, earn industry-recognized credentials, and enroll in apprenticeship programs.

The Governor's Workforce Development Board (GWDB) has made addressing barriers to employment experienced by underserved populations one of its focus areas under the Moore-Miller Administration. In addition, the CTE Expert Review Teams (ERTs) observed, using focus groups, interviews, observations, data collection, and other research methods, the strengths and challenges LEAs face. One of the important challenges that consistently came up for LEAs was recruitment of students who represent special populations and ensuring their success in completing their CTE program, earning an IRC, and/or enrolling in an apprenticeship program. Preliminary findings from CTE ERT visits have shown that word of mouth is a popular and inexpensive strategy for recruiting most students, yet an ineffective strategy for recruitment of students within special populations. In keeping with these priority focus areas and in order to overcome these challenges in providing quality career-connected learning opportunities to all students, the CTE Perkins Reserve Grant seeks applications that can help special populations have real access to fulfilling and family-sustaining careers through participation in CTE and apprenticeship and ensure their success.

Perkins V defines the following learner groups as special populations:

- Individuals with disabilities
- Individuals from economically disadvantaged families, including low-income youth and adults
- Individuals preparing for careers that are non-traditional for their gender
- Single parents, including single pregnant women
- Out-of-workforce individuals
- English learners
- Homeless individuals
- Youth who are in, or have aged out of, the foster care system
- Youth with a parent who is a member of the armed forces and is on active duty

The process for creating more access and success for special populations can begin with several early steps:

1. Developing marketing strategies that specifically target special populations to enroll in CTE courses, earn IRCs, and place into apprenticeship programs.
2. Creating a pathway for special populations to achieve success in Registered Apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs, as defined above.
 - a. Providing professional development for CTE teachers to adapt to the needs of special populations, especially those with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) and 504 plans.
3. Collaborating with CTSOs and student-led organizations.
4. Coordinating with career counselors/coaches, teachers, and other informed stakeholders to place students from special populations into programs that fit their strengths and interests.
5. Engaging families and communities to support special populations.
6. Supporting the staff who work most closely with special populations.
7. Identifying through the CLNA what CTE pathways align with regional high-skill, high-wage, and/or in-demand career pathways for students in special populations.

Applicants who target this high-leverage strategy should come up with a plan to both recruit students from special populations and ensure their success in a Registered Apprenticeship or pre-apprenticeship, as defined above. Success in this situation will mean completing their CTE course or program of study that serves as the related instruction of a high-school level of a Registered Apprenticeship or pre-apprenticeship, or completing other supported related instruction, as well as required on-the-job hours for their high-school level Registered Apprenticeship or pre-apprenticeship. Because of the nature of Perkins Reserve funding, applicants must consider how their proposal can serve as a model for other LEAs to prioritize recruitment and support of special populations and create a pathway for success for those students.

Applicants must address each of the following in their application:

- Describe, with evidence available, the nature and scope of need for supports for special population students and how this impacts their participation in Registered Apprenticeship or pre-apprenticeship as defined above, including which specific special populations will be supported through this grant
- Describe the proposed solution to be funded, including any tentative or committed partners
- If proposing an effort that is attached to a specific CTE program of study, validate that the CTE program in question aligns with an existing or desired Registered Apprenticeship or pre-

apprenticeship (as defined above) curriculum, and/or describe how the LEA plans to align it and use it for such opportunities

- If proposing an effort that is attached to a specific CTE program of study, document alignment to either one of the state's high-demand priority sectors described above, or a local area need, including with labor market data

Inspiration from the field and additional readings

- [Improving Equity and Access to Quality CTE Programs for Students with Disabilities](#)
- [Engaging Families and Communities to Support Special and Underserved Populations in CTE](#)
- [Maximizing Access and Success for Special Populations in Career and Technical Education](#)
- [Supporting Economically Disadvantaged Learners in Career Technical Education](#)
- [Navigating New Frontiers: A Narrative of CTE Administrators Leading Rural Innovation](#)

STRATEGY 4: ESTABLISH AN INTRASTATE PEER OBSERVATION AND COLLABORATION PROJECT

The Career and Technical Education (CTE) Committee has made it a priority to fundamentally reimagine and redesign career-connected learning and career pathways to ensure all of Maryland's students have real access to fulfilling and family-sustaining careers. In order to do this, CTE programs across the State have made innovative, high-impact changes to reach towards the Blueprint's goals. While LEAs have developed innovative and commendable revisions to their CTE programs, there is a need for further collaboration and peer observation amongst Maryland's LEAs. CTE administrators, staff, and faculty understand innovation happens best in collaboration, yet there is a need for these folks find space, time, and funding to share their best practices; therefore, this grant seeks to establish peer observations and collaborations on CTE programs, pedagogies, curriculum, etc. that share best practices. Ultimately, the goal would be to help the applicant and other LEAs meet Blueprint goals. This high-leverage strategy for the CTE Perkins Reserve Grant seeks applications that propose a plan to conduct peer observations and meaningful collaborations with other LEAs to help increase CTE program enrollment and completion rates, the number of industry-recognized credentials students earn, and the number of secondary students enrolled in apprenticeship programs. Applicants should propose a detailed plan with specific CTE administrators, staff, career coaches/counselors, and teachers with a similar purpose as the CTE Expert Review Team (ERT): 1) to observe how other LEAs implement CTE programs to align to the Blueprint vision, 2) identify promising practices in schools and LEAs to adopt, and 3) collaborate on how to overcome common challenges. Applications that create a model for other LEAs to conduct similar projects will be prioritized.

In 2025, the Maryland Governor's Workforce Development Board's CTE Committee released the new Maryland CTE Framework, which lays out the State's vision and priorities for CTE and supports the goals of the Blueprint. In response to these strategic priorities, many LEAs have already begun making revisions to their CTE programs; however, there is clearly a need for LEAs to collaborate with other CTE programs within the state to observe how their peers navigate these changes. Maryland's six strategic priorities for CTE are:

1. Maximize the percentage of students who meet the state's College and Career Readiness (CCR) Standard by 10th grade, and ensure that all students have the opportunities and support necessary to meet the CCR Standard.
2. All students participate in high-quality, expert career coaching starting in middle grades and continuing through high school.
3. All students have access to a comprehensive continuum of career-connected learning and exploration opportunities starting in middle grades or earlier.

4. Provide high-quality CTE and other career preparation pathways, particularly those that support Registered Apprenticeships or other industry-recognized credentials.
5. All students can access robust technical instruction opportunities across content areas.
6. CTE and career preparation pathways are aligned with industry needs.

It is key for LEAs in Maryland to prioritize these six strategies en route to accomplish Blueprint goals and the CTE Perkins Reserve Grant is meant to promote innovative strategies for applicants to observe the work of their peers and collaborate with key stakeholders, like CTE administrators, career coaches/counselors, teachers, and staff.

The CTE Expert Review Team (ERT) finished their LEA visits for the 2024-2025 school year in April 2025 and will continue conducting ERT visits for the 2025-2026 school year. The ERT is required to have 1-3 CTE Committee staff, 1 CTE teacher, 1 school leader, and 1 employer, with optional team members including CTE Committee members, CTE directors, Local Workforce Development Board representatives, Local community college representatives, MSDE representatives, and AIB representatives. The most common feedback CTE staff received from ERT members was how positive the experience of visiting, observing, and researching CTE programs were. CTE directors were eager to take their findings back to their programs, teachers were ecstatic to implement new pedagogies, employers celebrated student success and planned more apprenticeship opportunities for high school students, and Local Workforce Development Board representatives were able to witness the impact of their decision-making. The collaboration and research as a product of these ERT visits have already opened many windows for both the hosts and the ERT to find opportunities for growth.

In order to maximize collaboration and peer review, the CTE Perkins Reserve Grant is seeking applications that follow a similar model as the CTE ERTs to share best practices and strategize how to effectively align with the Blueprint's vision. With this high-leverage strategy, applicants should consider how they will develop their own version of an Expert Review Team, conduct similar research as ERTs with focus groups, observations, interviews, data reporting, etc., and plan to visit multiple LEAs over the 2025-2026 school year.

The process to establish an intrastate peer observation and collaboration project can begin with several early steps:

1. Identifying the most pressing needs from the CLNA, along with what CTE pathways align with regional high-skill, high-wage, and/or in-demand career pathways.
2. Conducting an informal self-assessment for strengths and challenges.
3. Reviewing the CTE Committee Expert Review Team Deployment Plan School Year 2024-2025.
4. Collaborating with CTE Committee staff to determine best practices for conducting focus groups, interviews, observations, data collection, etc.
5. Focusing on improvement in two Blueprint success markers: IRC attainment and enrollment into registered apprenticeships.

Applicants who target this high-leverage strategy should create a plan to visit other LEAs to observe alignment with the Blueprint's goals, identify best practices to adopt, and collaborate to overcome common challenges. Because of the nature of Perkins Reserve funding, applicants must consider how their proposal can serve as a model for other LEAs to conduct peer observations and collaborations.

Applicants must address each of the following in their application:

- Describe, with evidence, the current barriers that limit student access to Registered Apprenticeships or pre-apprenticeship opportunities, and how a structured intrastate peer observation program could address these disparities, particularly for students in special populations.
- Create a plan for who will be involved in conducting research and collaborating. Explain why this application involves them and what they need to make useful observations and conduct effective research.
- Create a list of vetted focus group, interview, and possibly survey questions the group will ask.
- If the observation program will focus on specific CTE programs of study, describe how these programs currently align, or are intended to align, with Registered Apprenticeship or pre-apprenticeship models, and how peer learning will support expansion or improvement to access.
- If the observations will emphasize programs tied to specific industry sectors, document how the selected areas reflect alignment to state high-demand sectors or local labor needs, and how increased educator collaboration will lead to improved student entry points into Registered Apprenticeships and/or pre-apprenticeship pathways.

Inspiration from the field and additional readings

- [GWDB CTE Committee Expert Review Team Deployment Plan SY24-25](#)
- [University of Rochester Peer Observation Fellowship](#)
- [Strengthening Implementation Through Cross-District Collaboration](#)
- [Cross-Sector and interprofessional collaborations: A powerful tool for the teaching profession?](#)
- [The Power of Peer Learning Networks: Using connections to drive educational innovations](#)

Application Requirements

PROPOSAL COVER PAGE

Applications must include the Proposal Cover Page provided in the application for participation, which includes a project statement. The project statement should briefly describe the project's outcome(s) and strategies (i.e., what the project will do and how it will be accomplished). Do not exceed the 100-word limit. The Proposal Cover Page should be printed and signed by the Director of Career and Technical Education for the LEA or IHE Perkins Contact for postsecondary proposals.

PROJECT ABSTRACT (1-PAGE)

In the Project Abstract, introduce the project to the reader. The abstract should be factual, brief, and focused on the organization's efforts. Do not assume the reader is familiar with the proposed project. The project abstract should cover the core aspects of the proposed project, such as the populations served, a brief description of the goals, the strategies to meet them, and the roles of the partners.

PROJECT NARRATIVE

The project narrative consists of the following sections. These sections will be scored by reviewers.

- Extent of Need
- Goals, Measurable Outcomes and Milestones
- Plan of Operation, Key Personnel, and Project Timeline
- Evaluation and Evidence of Impact

EXTENT OF NEED

Create a bridge between the Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment (CLNA) and this proposed project. This section must include both quantitative and qualitative data to support claims about needs and how they will be addressed in this proposal. It may be helpful for applicants to draw a connection between what this project is focused on and the long-term goals in the Blueprint to help support claims about needs. Applicants should acknowledge and account for the needs of "special populations". Below are some tips for writing goals:

- Tie claims about needs directly to the CLNA and Blueprint.
- Use a combination of qualitative and quantitative data to support claims about needs.
- Identify and explain the unique needs for "special populations".
- Support every claim about needs with evidence and an explanation.

GOALS AND OUTCOMES

Goals: State the overall goal of the project. The goal should address the main problem identified at the beginning of the needs assessment. While there should be at least one goal, it is possible to have multiple goals; however, the more goals established, the more complex the project becomes. Goals must have specific deadlines within the first year of allocated Perkins Reserve Grant funds, but should also explain how this project helps accomplish the Blueprint's and GWDB's long-term goals and outcomes. Below are some tips for writing goals:

- The strongest applications will directly connect to the Blueprint.
- Tie your goals and objectives directly to your need statement.

- Include all relevant groups and individuals in your target population.
- Think about how you will measure the change projected in each objective. If there is no way to measure a goal, it is not measurable and should be rewritten.

Measurable Outcomes: Measurable Outcomes are the anticipated outcomes to be accomplished within the first year of Perkins Reserve funding and explain how these measurable outcomes help accomplish Blueprint and GWDB's long-term goals. While the measurable outcomes must be specific within the first year of this project, it should also explain how these outcomes connect with the long-term goals in the Blueprint and the CLNA. Outcomes break the long-term goal into steps or address the factors contributing to the problem addressed by the goal. It is imperative that outcomes be established for every target population the project is designed to affect. For instance, if the project seeks to increase student achievement by training teachers, there must be outcomes for both students and teachers.

Below are some tips for writing objectives:

- State your outcome in quantifiable terms.
- Outcomes should specify the result of an activity.
- Outcomes should identify the target audience or community being served.
- Objectives need to be realistic and capable of being accomplished within the grant period.

Milestones: Ongoing evaluation is essential to the management of a project. Since goals and outcomes are not evaluated until the end of the year, milestones must be established to measure progress during the year. Milestones should be evaluated during the year, either quarterly or semiannually.

Since milestones are intended to indicate progress toward an outcome, each milestone must be related to a stated outcome. Keep in mind that milestones are indicators of progress and may not use the same measurement tool as the objective to which they are related. A project may take months before there is an impact on clients, or the rate of improvement may level off over time. Milestones should anticipate this and be gauged accordingly. Be sure that milestones are ambitious yet attainable.

PLAN OF OPERATION, KEY PERSONNEL, AND TIMELINE

The Plan of Operation includes the strategies and activities that will be implemented to achieve your goals, outcomes, and milestones. Create a plan of operation in chart form that addresses, at a minimum, the key components of the program's implementation or expansion.

- Include a timeline and the key personnel associated with each component of the plan of operation. For key personnel, include the program instructor(s) (if known), the program contacts for the school system, the principal of the school where the program will be implemented, and any other personnel who will be involved. Indicate names, titles, affiliations, roles, and responsibilities.
- Convene the Program Advisory Committee (PAC) and describe the extent to which the PAC will be involved in the implementation/expansion or improvement of the program.
- Secondary – Work with the MSDE team to:
 - Identify the equipment and/or materials of instruction to support the program of study and develop a reasonable budget request.
 - Submit to MSDE, before the end of the grant period (June 30, 2026), the Maryland CTE Program of Study Proposal that aligns with the program being implemented.
- Identify the appropriate professional learning that aligns with the program of study.

EVALUATION AND EVIDENCE OF IMPACT

- Secondary: How will this project assist the Local Education Agency in reaching the goal that by 2030, 45% of high school graduates will have obtained an industry-recognized credential or completed the high school level of a Registered Apprenticeship program?
- What other measurable improvements are expected to occur once the program has been fully implemented?
- What data will be collected to prove that the program/activity has had the intended effects?
- How will these data be collected?

Evidence of impact identifies the consequences of the actions taken and the extent to which program or project goals were achieved. Evidence of impact is made clear through outcome evaluation, which includes being clear about evaluation standards and identifying improvement.

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION INFORMATION

Deadline for Submission: 07/07/2025

Format: PDF

Contact for Questions:

Richard Kincaid

Senior Executive Director
Office of College and Career Pathways
(410) 767-0426
richard.kincaid@maryland.gov

Megan Cameron

Manager of Grants and Finance
Division of College and Career Pathways
(410) 767-6581
Megan.cameron@maryland.gov

Budget and Budget Narrative

The project's budget should detail all related project expenses in a separate itemized budget. It should demonstrate the extent to which the budget is reasonable, cost-effective, and integrates other sources of funding. All costs described in the project narrative should appear in the budget narrative and must have a corresponding entry in the itemized budget for that year. Reviewers should be able to see a clear connection between the management plan and the budget line items.

Provide content justifying any line-item expenses that are not obvious from the project narrative. Discuss and align line-item activities in the budget narrative. Explain how the estimated cost of each line item was derived if the rationale is not obvious. An MSDE [Grant Budget C-1-25 form](#) must also be completed, signed, and submitted as an appendix.

Following the budget narrative, include a line-item description using the format in the example below. Group line items according to the following categories: Salaries & Wages, Contracted Services, Supplies & Materials, Other Charges, Equipment, and Transfers. Total each category.

Each line must be detailed and specific. General expenses should be broken down into specific line items. For example, "meeting expenses" can be broken down into room rental, photocopying and refreshments.

Clearly show the requested funds and in-kind contributions for each line item. Indicate the source of the in-kind contribution. Both requested and in-kind funds must be reasonable with current market prices. Show how the expense was calculated for each line item. Reviewers will use this information to determine if the budget is reasonable and cost-effective. There is no page limit for the budget, so be as detailed as possible.

Use the format indicated by the following excerpt from a sample Budget Narrative.

Salaries and Wages (list separately for each position)

Line item	Calculation	Requested	In-Kind	Total
Project Manager	\$50/hr. x 40 hrs. per week x 52 weeks	\$83,200	\$20,800	\$104,000
Total for salaries & wages:		\$83,200	\$20,800	\$104,000

AMENDMENTS

Unless a division implements a stricter policy, the grantee must receive prior written approval from the MSDE Program Manager for any budgetary realignment of \$1,000 or 15% of total object, program or category of expenditure, whichever is greater. The requestor must support the request with the reason for the requested change. Amendments and budget realignments must be submitted at least 45 days before the grant period ends. In addition, any re-aligned monitoring plans reflecting the amended or extended grant should be considered and communicated to the grantee.

Fiscal amendments must be accompanied by an approved C-1-25, C-1-25-A, and C-1-25-B form. The forms must include the appropriate signatures, show the revised funds, and show correct math and totals. Program staff must review submitted requests and work with their program-level colleagues to initiate, approve, and return administrative and fiscal amendments in the NOGA system. MSDE will notify the grantee regarding their request by returning a signed C-1-25, C-1-25-A, C-1-25-B, and the amended NOGA. All budget forms can be found in the [Grant Budget Forms Workbook](#) on the [MSDE grants webpage](#).

NO-COST EXTENSIONS

A no-cost extension is when the project end date is extended (changed to a later date) but no additional funds are added by the agency to cover the extension period. For first-time requests for an extension, for a grant that has not expired and is under the general terms and conditions of the grant award, MSDE may approve a one-time no-cost extension. The request must be received at least 45 days before the grant expiration date.

FINAL INVOICES

Final invoices must be submitted no later than 60 days after the grant period ends.

Appendices

The following appendices must be included but not apply to the page limit of the Project Narrative. Include other appendices as deemed necessary.

- Appendix A: [A signed C-1-25 MSDE budget form](#)
- Appendix B: Evidence of status of a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization, if applicable
- Appendix C: Resume(s) of Key Personnel
- Appendix D: [Current W-9 for the organization](#)
- Appendix E: A completed [GEPA Section 427 Statement](#), if applicable

The Review Process

The review of proposals will be a three-part process:

1. Written applications will be pre-screened for submission requirements and inclusion of all required sections. Applications not meeting all pre-screen requirements may be returned to the applicant for revisions.
2. A review committee established by MSDE will evaluate applications using the scoring rubric. The scoring rubric is tailored to the grant program, its intent, and intended impact on the target population.
3. Final approval for awards will be determined by the review committee.

MSDE reserves the right to take into consideration geographic distribution when making awards.

REVIEW COMMITTEE

The committee will be composed of representatives from MSDE, the Governor's Workforce Development Board (GWDB), and the CTE Committee. Reviewers will assign numerical scores to each proposal based on the criteria in the scoring rubric. Each application will be reviewed and scored based on all documents submitted. Applications may be returned to the applicant if some or all criteria are not met.

Scoring Rubric

EXTENT OF NEED

Level 3 Exceeds Criteria	Level 2 Meets Criteria	Level 1 Does Not Meet Criteria
A needs assessment was conducted that identifies multiple related problems. Both quantitative and qualitative data are presented that align with the selected strategy and demonstrate a need for the proposed program. The application makes multiple references to CLNA and GWDB CTE Committee materials to support the extent of need. The applicant directly aligns to high-demand industries/occupations and the needs of “special populations” with Blueprint and Perkins Reserve goals.	A needs assessment was conducted that identifies a problem. The extent of need meets the guidelines of the identified strategy in the Grant Information Guide and aligns with the Blueprint and Perkins Reserve. There is a clear and direct link between the CLNA and the proposed project(s). There is a clear and direct link between the application and the GWDB CTE Committee's and Blueprint's needs and outcomes. The applicant acknowledges and accounts for the needs of “special populations.”	No needs assessment was done, or they failed to identify a problem. The applicant provides a problem, but the data presented does not align to the problem. Applicant does not reference GWDB CTE Committee or Blueprint needs and outcomes. Applicant does not contextualize pre-apprenticeships programs into their CLNA.

GOALS, MEASURABLE OUTCOMES, AND MILESTONES

Level 3 Exceeds Criteria	Level 2 Meets Criteria	Level 1 Does Not Meet Criteria
The application articulates multiple exemplary measurable goals, outcomes, and milestones. All goals are directly aligned to the Blueprint, the guidelines for that strategy under Perkins Reserve, as well as the core indicators for success. Milestones create a clear pathway to achieve outcomes. Goals, outcomes, and milestones are supported effectively. Goals, outcomes, and milestones can easily adapt to different contexts. Special populations are specifically identified and engaged in the measurable goals, outcomes, and milestones.	Program goals are clear, measurable, and align with a strategy and include quantitative, measurable goals along with qualitative support. Program outcomes identify the steps to achieving the goal, and milestones measure progress toward meeting the goal(s). Goals are directly aligned to the Blueprint and GWDB CTE Committee, the guidelines for that strategy under Perkins Reserve, as well as the core indicators for success. Goals, outcomes, and milestones are informed by communities of practice, peer-reviewed scholarship, or other credible sources. Special populations are identified as part of the measurable goals, outcomes, and milestones.	Program goals, outcomes, and milestones are not clear, measurable, or attainable. Goals, outcomes, and milestones do not align with the Blueprint or follow the guidance for that strategy under Perkins Reserve. Program goals, outcomes, and milestones are unfocused, unsupported, or unrelated to the goals of this grant.

PLAN OF OPERATION, KEY PERSONNEL, AND TIMELINE

Level 3 Exceeds Criteria	Level 2 Meets Criteria	Level 1 Does Not Meet Criteria
Proposed activities are innovative, evidence-based, and serve as a model for other LEAs in the State. The application provides a clear timeline for each phase of the program, and the individuals responsible are listed. The plan of operation clearly scaffolds every step in the timeline with milestones and responsible parties. Key personnel have considerable experience related to career and technical education. A training/mentoring plan is in place for inexperienced staff. The application identifies key collaborators and specifies exactly what their role will be and how they will help achieve outcomes.	The proposed activities are evidence-based and meet the requirements for the selected strategy. The plan of operation clearly articulates dates, activities, and responsible parties. There is a timeline for all key activities, which is synced with milestones. Key personnel who have relevant experience in the field are selected. The names and titles of personnel are provided, along with the percentage of time they will dedicate to this program. The application identifies key collaborators and their roles.	Proposed activities are listed and may not be clearly aligned to a strategy. There is no clear plan of operation. The timeline is either missing or does not include dates for key activities. Key personnel information is incomplete or absent.

EVIDENCE OF IMPACT

Level 3 Exceeds Criteria	Level 2 Meets Criteria	Level 1 Does Not Meet Criteria
It is clear how the program will lead to accomplishing the goals outlined in the GIG. There is significant data on how this type of program has been successful elsewhere. There is a plan to capture data on the education and employment status of students in this program and track their progress. The application makes clear and specific considerations for special populations.	The applicant provides measures of success for prior work completed in their proposed program and describes how the proposed strategies are research-based. There is data on how students in the program have progressed in prior years and a description of what the intended impact of the proposed activities will be on this population. Performance indicators and data collection methods are clearly articulated. The application addresses data collection on special populations and their success in this proposed program.	There is no evidence that the proposed program would lead to the intended impact. There is no evidence-based - communities of practice, peer-reviewed sources, etc. - support to validate this application. There is no articulation about how or what data will be collected.

EVALUATION AND DISSEMINATION

Level 3 Exceeds Criteria	Level 2 Meets Criteria	Level 1 Does Not Meet Criteria
There is an evaluation plan that includes clear questions, a description of proposed data instruments, collection processes, and analytic methods aligned with the goals. The applicant is explicit about who is assigned to this task and the timeline to complete it. The application has a clear plan for evaluations of special populations. There is a plan for disseminating formative and summative results to stakeholders. The evaluation is in alignment with extent of need.	There is a plan for how the applicant will measure the program's success per selected strategy. Evaluation measures align to the extent of need and the stated goals. There is a plan that details the timeline for when the responsible individual will disseminate results and data to stakeholders. There is a clear plan for who will be gathering, analyzing, and disseminating data. Evaluation and dissemination are in alignment with the application's proposed timeline and evidence of impact.	The evaluation plan does not measure the success of the program and is disconnected from the goals and plan of operation. There is not a plan for disseminating results to stakeholders. The dissemination plan does not clearly identify how findings will be shared.

ALIGNMENT TO THE BLUEPRINT FOR MARYLAND'S FUTURE

Level 3 Exceeds Criteria	Level 2 Meets Criteria	Level 1 Does Not Meet Criteria
The application demonstrates a strong and clear connection between the proposed program, student access and opportunity, and the Blueprint's goals. Applicant provides evidence of proactive measures to increase student enrollment in CTE courses, particularly targeting special populations. The application includes comprehensive strategies to support students that lead to completing apprenticeships or industry-recognized credentials; and demonstrates potential to exceed the 45% goal, with measurable objectives and a clear plan for tracking progress. The proposed program may be used as a model for other LEAs to adopt so they can achieve Blueprint goals.	The application shows alignment between the proposed program, student access and opportunity, and the Blueprint's goal. The proposal includes a plan for increasing student enrollment in Registered Apprenticeships, pre-apprenticeship, CTE courses, and promoting diversity among participants. The application includes strategies to support students in completing apprenticeships or industry-recognized credentials. The application demonstrates the LEA's potential to meet the 45% goal, with measurable objectives and a plan for tracking progress. There is articulation for how special populations will achieve success in this program.	The application does not clearly demonstrate alignment between the proposed program, student access and opportunity, and the Blueprint's goal; lacks a concrete plan to increase student enrollment in registered apprenticeships or to promote diversity among participants; insufficient strategies to support students in completing apprenticeships or industry-recognized occupational credentials; and does not demonstrate the potential to meet or exceed the 45% goal or lacks measurable objectives and a plan for tracking progress.

BUDGET AND BUDGET NARRATIVE

Level 3 Exceeds Criteria	Level 2 Meets Criteria	Level 1 Does Not Meet Criteria
The budget includes sufficient resources for the successful execution of the proposed program. The application includes plans that thoughtfully braid one-time funds from this grant program with existing, recurring funding from other programs – citing clear strategic alignment while avoiding supplantation. There is a clear and detailed articulation for budget oversight.	The budget reflects all program activities per strategy and does not exceed the allowable aggregated grant amount. Justification is provided for all expenses. The costs are reasonable, allowable, and allocable. All line items contain the calculations used to derive the expected cost. There are no mathematical errors. No more than 5% of administrative costs (including indirect costs) of the overall budget has been taken. The application includes or makes general reference to plans for braiding funds without specific identification of fund source and the strategic alignment of the related program and its funding being used for braiding. There is a clear articulation for budget oversight, including responsible personnel and a timeline for financial reporting.	The budget reflects some program activities and/or exceeds the allowable amount per strategy. There may be missing calculations and/or mathematical errors. There is no reference to explicit and intentional planning associated with braiding existing, recurring funding with the proposed plans, activities, and funds of this grant program. There is little-to-no articulation for budget oversight.

Reporting Requirements

Grantees must comply with the following reporting requirements:

Date	Reporting Requirements for Each Year
Ongoing	Fiscal and program monitoring; all invoices must be accompanied with supporting documentation.
January 30, 2026	Interim progress report (C-1-25 C) reflecting the months of September through December is due.
July 31, 2026	Final progress report (C-1-25-C) reflecting the months of January through June are due.
On or before 60 days after the grants ends	A final project evaluation (see evaluation section) must be received by MSDE on or before 60 days after the grant end date, June 30, 2026.

Grant Application Timeline

This funding opportunity, including all attachments and updates, can be downloaded from the [MSDE Office of Grants Administration and Compliance website](#).

Date	Timeline Event
June 16, 2025	The Grant Information Guide and the application for participating are released.
June 25, 2025	MSDE will hold a virtual customer service support session for interested applicants.
July 2, 2025	MSDE will hold a virtual customer service support session for interested applicants.
July 7, 2025	MSDE will hold a virtual customer service support session for interested applicants.
July 31, 2025	The grant application period closes.
August 1, 2025	MSDE begins reviewing applications for completeness and minimum requirements.
August 2, 2025 – August 22, 2025	MSDE Review Committee will evaluate proposals.
August 25, 2025	MSDE will notify applicants of the award status.
July 1, 2025	The grant period begins.
June 30, 2026	The grant period ends.

Non-Discrimination Statement

The Maryland State Department of Education does not discriminate on the basis of age, ancestry/national origin, color, disability, gender identity/expression, marital status, race, religion, sex, or sexual orientation in matters affecting employment or in providing access to programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. For inquiries related to Department policy, please contact:

Equity Assurance and Compliance Office**Office of the Deputy State Superintendent for Finance and Operations**

Maryland State Department of Education
200 W. Baltimore Street - 2nd Floor
Baltimore, Maryland 21201-2595

410-767-0123 - voice

410-767-0431 - fax

Deaf and hard of hearing use Relay.

The General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) Sect 427

Each application must develop and describe the steps the applicant proposes to take to ensure equitable access to, and equitable participation in, the project or activity to be conducted with such assistance, by addressing the special needs of students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries to overcome barriers to equitable participation.

[Section 427 of the GEPA Form](#)

[Section 427 of the GEPA Notice to All Applicants](#)

☐ Check here if previously submitted with the Local Consolidated ESSA Program application.

☐ Check here if the program is *not* being funded with federal funds. GEPA is a requirement for federally-funded programs.

If one or both boxes are checked, GEPA is not required for the applicant.

Customer Service Support Sessions

MSDE will hold three customer service support sessions for interested applicants. During these sessions, MSDE personnel will provide an overview of the application process. The sessions will be on:

Wednesday June 25, 2025

2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Video call link: <https://meet.google.com/qhq-dtyy-cke>

Wednesday July 2, 2025

10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Video call link: <https://meet.google.com/vct-pmsn-yqd>

Monday July 7, 2025

11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Video call link: <https://meet.google.com/fri-uovs-kvd>

MSDE staff will also be available to provide technical assistance throughout the grant application process. If you have questions about the application or the process, please contact:

PROGRAM CONTACT**Megan Cameron**

Manager of Grants and Finance

Division of College and Career Pathways

Phone: (410) 767-6581

Megan.Cameron@maryland.gov

This funding opportunity, including all attachments and updates can be downloaded from the [MSDE Office of Grants Administration and Compliance website](#).

Attachment

CTE Reserve Grant and FYXX Application for Funding