

## PREFACE

The State of California submitted its Perkins State Plan seven years ago. Since then, the need for a comprehensive statewide career technical education (CTE) system has continued to grow in response to the changing demands of the state's workforce needs and the globalization of the world's economy. High school students now must meet higher academic standards, young adults are expected to have the essential knowledge and transferable skills to match rapidly shifting workforce needs, and incumbent and re-entering workers have to continuously update proficiencies to secure or retain employment. Given these imperatives, CTE — with its focus on rigorous and engaging curricula, supportive relationships, and demonstrated outcomes — has become critical to the preparation of all students for career and academic success, postsecondary education, and adult roles and responsibilities.

California is required by the federal government to submit a state plan in order to gain eligibility for federal funding under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act of 2006 (Perkins IV). In crafting this plan, California has attempted to go beyond the requirements of the federal legislation and present a document that will serve as the cornerstone for a comprehensive state plan for CTE, workforce development, and education reform. The view that education and career development are lifelong, and that CTE can begin as early as elementary school and span high school through postsecondary education and on-the-job training is infused throughout the plan. The notion that strong CTE improves academic learning, and, conversely, that infusing or reinforcing inherent academic content can strengthen CTE, girds the plan as well. Equally important is ensuring that the system is "demand-driven"; that is, continuously responsive to the ever-changing needs of a complex global workplace, as well as to the needs of increasingly diverse learners, and of a democratic society that requires all of its citizens to be critical thinkers and problem solvers. As one stakeholder commented, "nothing short of our democracy is at stake." Finally, this plan is intended to serve as a point of departure for the eventual development of a more comprehensive statewide CTE plan, one that would strategically link Perkins-funded programs to the myriad other CTE efforts underway or in development.

The body of this plan is presented in five main chapters, preceded by an Introduction. Supportive information and required assurances and certifications are contained in the Appendices. The Introduction describes the Perkins and state CTE priorities and the process used in developing the plan. Chapter One provides background information about the state's current CTE structure and enrollment status. Chapter Two is a brief overview of the state's demographic, economic, political, and educational contexts. A solid understanding of these contexts is essential to the development of a CTE plan that affects and is affected by state trends. Chapter Three describes the vision, mission, principles, and goals of an ideal statewide CTE system, as well as the characteristics of an effective, high-quality CTE system. Embedded within the discussion of each of 11 "system elements" are additional details about current structures, practices, and initiatives. Chapter Four contains the Perkins plan narrative and responses to the Perkins statutory requirements in seven key areas: planning, coordination and collaboration prior to state plan submission; program administration; provisions of services to special populations; accountability and evaluation; Tech-Prep programs; financial requirements; and EDGAR certifications and other assurances. Chapter Five provides state policy on state education agency (SEA) and local education agency (LEA) administration and use of the Perkins IV Title I Part C funds.

Developing the new State Perkins Plan has been a massive undertaking. Without the

knowledge, skills, vision, and commitment of many hundreds of students, educators, business and industry professionals, and policymakers, it would not have been possible. Thank you to all. Special acknowledgments are extended to some of the most critical and hard-working players. First, thanks go to California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, State Superintendent of Instruction Jack O'Connell, and the members of the California State Board of Education and the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges for their unwavering belief in the importance of high-quality CTE and their leadership in bringing it to the fore of statewide discussion. Very special thanks are extended to the 52 members of the CTE plan resource group, which brought valuable and essential views on how CTE could be strengthened in classrooms and "real-world" businesses and industries. Among these, 13 industry representatives shared their invaluable perspectives on the needs of the California workplace. A list of resource group members is in Appendix C.

Agency staff worked collaboratively and diligently, and wove together a plan to prepare students from all walks of life to succeed in K-12 classrooms, postsecondary institutions, and work and to seek learning as a lifelong endeavor. From the California Department of Education (CDE), special thanks go to Patrick Ainsworth, Cindy Beck, Charley Cartwright, Mary Gallet, Corlene Goi, Dennis Guido, Paul Gussman, Debra Jones, Lloyd McCabe, John Merris-Coots, David Militzer, Clay Mitchell, Cliff Moss, Lee Murdock, Karen Shores, Hilary Steinmetz, Russ Weikle, and Barbara Weiss. From the California Community College Chancellor's Office, special thanks go to Robin Harrington, Jose Millan, John Prentiss, Ron Selge, Dean Smith, Catherine Swenson, Chuck Wiseley, and Sharon Wong. In addition, a special thanks to Dennis Petrie, of Workforce Services with the California Employment Development Department, and Jeff Thompson, of Learning Programs and the Early College High School Initiative with the Foundation for California Community Colleges, for facilitating the resource group meetings.

Finally, the biggest thanks are offered to the incredibly dedicated educators who work where the "rubber meets the road" — the CTE professionals who teach, mentor, and support students in classrooms, through career exploration and internships, and in actual job placements and career opportunities, so that today's students become California's world-class workforce of tomorrow.