

# Perkins Tech Prep Grant FAQs

## General Tech Prep Questions

### 1. What is Tech Prep?

Tech Prep links secondary and postsecondary vocational and technical education programs into a single continuous program so students can transition smoothly, avoid duplication, and successfully attain a postsecondary credential. The linkage is a formal written agreement made between the secondary and postsecondary institutions, called an articulation agreement. The federal definition requires secondary and postsecondary programs of two years each, and they must lead to a degree, certificate, or federally registered apprenticeship. Tech Prep programs also emphasize integrating academic and technical secondary studies to prepare students for postsecondary success. Tech Prep grants are available under the Carl Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Act of 1998 (more informally known as Perkins III). For a fuller description of Tech Prep, see the "Principles of Tech Prep" link at the CTE website:

<http://www.eed.state.ak.us/tls/CTE/techprep.html>

### 2. How can I set up a Tech Prep program at my school?

The state's current Tech Prep grantee, the Alaska Tech Prep Consortium, is committed to helping develop and assist Tech Prep programs throughout the state. One of their regional staff can provide technical assistance to persons wanting information about setting up a Tech Prep program. Consult the Consortium's web site to obtain the contact information of the staff member for your region: <http://www.alaska.edu/techprep/>.

### 3. Is Tech Prep another name for dual credit?

No. Dual credit is a term that encompasses a variety of courses and programs. For example, advanced placement academic classes are a form of dual credit, but they are not Tech Prep. In general, the defining feature of Tech Prep is the linking of secondary and postsecondary vocational and technical education programs. However, concurrent secondary and postsecondary credit is usually available within this context of program linkage. (For a fuller explanation of dual credit terms, see the CTE website's "Tech Prep Dual Credit Terms" at:

<http://www.eed.state.ak.us/tls/CTE/techprep.html>.)

Concurrent credit is earned in a Tech Prep program when a standards based secondary course awards postsecondary credit for successful students who choose to pay the associated fees. However, other methods of concurrent credit also can be used within a Tech Prep program, such as a course secondary students attend taught at the postsecondary institution. The agreement between the secondary and postsecondary institutions that links their programs will define the methods of earning concurrent credit within a Tech Prep program.

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### 4. Who Awards the Perkins III Tech Prep Grants?

Alaska's Department of Education and Early Development, in cooperation with the Alaska Workforce Investment Board office, award Carl Perkins III Tech Prep grant funds. Under the current Act, the awards are made on a competitive basis. The federal Department of Education allocates the Perkins III funds to the states.

### 5. When are Perkins III Tech Prep grants available?

A state level competition was held in the spring of 2004 and the award went to the Alaska Tech Prep Consortium. It is unlikely a new state-level competition will be held until Congress reauthorizes the Perkins Act. It is not clear at this time if Tech Prep will be retained as a funding stream in a reauthorization. If it is, administrators of eligible postsecondary institutions and secondary districts will be notified when a new competition is held.

6. Who is eligible to receive Perkins III Tech Prep grants?

Tech Prep grants are issued to a Consortium which consists of a secondary school district, or an area vocational and technical school serving secondary students, and a postsecondary institution that offers a two year associates degree, and/or a two year apprenticeship program. The Consortium also can include business, industry, and/or labor organizations.

7. If I don't have a Perkins III Tech Prep grant, can I set up a Tech Prep program?

Any cooperating secondary and postsecondary schools wishing to align programs, regardless of whether or not they have a Perkins Tech Prep grant, can develop a Tech Prep program. Several current consortiums are willing to share their experience and materials, and also are willing to accept new consortium members. Both secondary and postsecondary Perkins grant funds can be used for Tech Prep. Another potential source of support is industry and/or labor organizations, especially industries facing critical labor shortages. In addition, the Alaska Tech Prep Consortium makes mini-grants to districts or consortiums from its grant. Information about the mini-grants can be obtained at the Consortium's web site: <http://www.alaska.edu/techprep/>