

OCTAE Program Memorandum 24-6
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF CAREER, TECHNICAL, AND ADULT EDUCATION



Supporting Investments in Correctional Education through Adult, Career, and Technical Education

May 6, 2024

Dear Colleague:

The Biden-Harris Administration is committed to helping individuals impacted by the justice system to forge new beginnings that they have earned and to build a safer and more just society through strengthening correctional education. For example, on April 16, 2024, the U.S. Department of Education announced an additional path for borrowers who are incarcerated to exit default through consolidation, providing them access to better repayment options than ever before. Borrowers who had student loans before becoming incarcerated can now consolidate their loans to get out of default, allowing borrowers with certain types of loans – including Perkins Loans and commercially held Federal Family Education Loan Program loans – to gain access to income-driven repayment plans like the Saving on a Valuable Education (SAVE) Plan. Previously, this population of borrowers had to rehabilitate their loans to get out of default and did not have the option to consolidate. This change will allow many more individuals who are incarcerated to access correctional education. Expanding access to correctional education transforms lives, strengthens families, improves our workforce, and increases public safety by reducing recidivism.

Correctional education programs are offered in juvenile justice facilities, jails and detention centers, and most American prisons. Correctional education includes a range of educational programming for individuals who are incarcerated, from adult basic education to high school equivalencies and diplomas to English language learning to postsecondary education, with the unifying purpose of creating opportunity and economic mobility through education for individuals who are incarcerated. These programs help to raise the educational attainment of individuals who are incarcerated (who have disproportionately lower rates of educational attainment than the general public), improve the culture of correctional facilities, facilitate a smooth reentry for individuals leaving incarceration, and build our nation's workforce. In our tight labor market and growing economy, a focus on education for individuals who are incarcerated will help to develop America's talent pipeline and address employer needs by engaging individuals typically excluded from the economy. Our nation *needs* the workforce talent and potential that the hundreds of thousands of Americans who return home to our communities from incarceration each year have. We must better position correctional education to be part of a comprehensive workforce and economic development strategy at the State and local levels to address our nation's talent shortage, and we must ensure that the array of education and workforce offerings provided to individuals who are incarcerated are responsive to the demands of our employers and the dynamic changes in our economy.

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The Department of Education's mission is to promote student achievement and preparation for global competitiveness by fostering educational excellence and ensuring equal access.

The Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTAE) oversees federally funded career, technical, and adult education, which plays a critical role for individuals who are incarcerated. The correctional education provisions that are part of the *Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (Perkins V)*, and the *Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA)*, which is Title II of the *Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)*, can be valuable springboards to prepare students who are incarcerated for postsecondary education through the recent reinstatement of Pell Grants in [Prison Education Programs \(PEP\)](#) and for individuals' reentry into society.

Purpose of this Dear Colleague Letter

OCTAE administers and coordinates programs that support adult education and family literacy, career and technical education, correctional education, and community colleges. These programs span basic, secondary, and postsecondary education and provide pathways for individuals to obtain lifelong education and training in order to achieve rewarding careers with economic and social mobility, engage in their communities, and attain their personal goals. This is especially relevant for individuals who are incarcerated and who have likely encountered many challenges during their academic and educational journeys.

In this Dear Colleague Letter (DCL), OCTAE urges States and localities to allocate Perkins V and AEFLA funds to basic or secondary education programs in prisons; this will enable more people to benefit from the newly expanded Pell-funded [PEP's](#), including the already established [Second Chance Pell](#) pilot [sites](#). Expanding Pell to all who are incarcerated presents an enormous opportunity to offer second chances to an estimated 760,000 people while also reducing recidivism and improving public safety.¹ This DCL encourages States and localities to think holistically about adult education, career and technical education, and Pell-eligible degree programs as part of an educational continuum that prepares individuals who are incarcerated for secondary education and postsecondary education, and ultimately for a successful reentry. This letter summarizes applicable research and potential funding opportunities for States and localities. It also includes State data on AEFLA and Perkins V expenditures in correctional education as well as State examples.

The Importance of Correctional Education

There are more than 1.9 million individuals incarcerated in Federal, State, local, and Tribal adult and juvenile correctional systems.² About 1 in 3 incarcerated adults have less than a high school equivalency, either prior to or during incarceration, and only 15 percent of incarcerated adults earn a postsecondary degree or certificate either prior to or during incarceration.³ Only 42 percent of adults in Federal and State prisons complete additional education while incarcerated, with the greatest percentage of incarcerated adults (21 percent) completing a high school equivalency program.⁴ Just 7 percent of adults who are incarcerated obtain a certificate; 2 percent obtain an associate's degree; and fewer than 1 percent of adults obtain a bachelor's degree or higher.⁵ Almost three in five adults who are incarcerated complete no formal education during the period of their incarceration. Creating a range of educational pathways for individuals who are incarcerated to prepare them for postsecondary education, reentry, and the workforce is critical.

Research demonstrates that individuals who obtain their high school equivalencies while in prison increase their earnings by 24-29 percent within the first year of release.⁶ Research also shows that individuals who participate in postsecondary correctional education programs have 48 percent lower risk of recidivating than those who do not.⁷ Additionally, research estimates that for every dollar

invested in correctional education programs, taxpayers save four to five dollars from lowered recidivism rates, and public safety is enhanced.^{8, 9}

Improving completion of correctional education programs may also improve safety within correctional facilities for correctional officers and individuals who are incarcerated, alike.¹⁰ Education in prison can transform the overall culture and climate of correctional facilities, providing purpose, dignity, and positive engagement for incarcerated individuals.¹¹ The Biden-Harris Administration's implementation of the reinstatement of Pell Grants through the PEP framework is part of its broader effort to champion access to higher education for underserved populations. An important component of rethinking correctional education is incorporating the voices, experiences, and expertise of individuals who have been impacted by the justice system in the design and implementation of these PEP and other programs.

By 2031, 72 percent of jobs will require education or training beyond high school.¹² To meet this need, our country will need to dramatically increase the number of Americans who possess a postsecondary credential and take proactive steps to serve those who have traditionally been excluded from economic prosperity, including Americans who are incarcerated. With more than 90% of individuals who are incarcerated expected to eventually return home to our communities, we must ensure that we prepare them to succeed in the workforce of today and the future.¹³ The Biden-Harris Administration's [Investing in America](#) agenda is creating demand for workers that are critical to the clean energy economy, the semiconductor industry, and in driving a manufacturing boom across the country. Many of these associated occupations do not require a bachelor's degree, including advanced manufacturing technicians, biomedical technicians, and machinists. These occupations are accessible through federally funded integrated education and training, career and technical education, and PEP's.

Equipping individuals who are incarcerated with foundational skills and technical competencies will enable them to acquire valuable education and workforce credentials, increase employability upon reentry, and increase their ability to contribute to their families and communities in positive pro-social ways. By creating more Pell-eligible PEP's, aligning educational pathways to in-demand industries, and making greater, complementary investments to prepare individuals who are incarcerated for postsecondary education, States and institutions of higher education can put good jobs within reach of individuals who would otherwise be excluded from these opportunities.

How AEFLA, Perkins V, and Prison Education Programs Can Be Used to Support Correctional Education

Across the Federal government, there are a range of funding streams available to support correctional education. This DCL highlights three key funding streams for incarcerated individuals who are adults: **Perkins V**, **AEFLA**, and **Pell Grants**. These programs can provide valuable support for education programs that help individuals who are incarcerated develop the skills necessary for successful reentry and employment.

AEFLA authorizes States to use a portion of grant funds awarded to States to provide corrections education and education for other individuals who are institutionalized. Section 225 of AEFLA states that one of the purposes of the program is to assist individuals who are incarcerated in strengthening their knowledge and skills to promote successful reentry into society.

The U.S. Department of Education awards AEFLA funding directly to State eligible agencies, which administer the program. Under AEFLA, States can award up to 16.5 percent of the State's total AEFLA

allocation (up to 20 percent of the 82.5 percent of the funds that are made available for local grants and contracts under section 231 of AEFLA) for programs for corrections education and to serve other individuals who are institutionalized, such as those in mental health institutions or who are being civilly confined. That said, as shown in table 1, States currently only expend an average of 4.2 percent of their AEFLA grants for corrections education, with the percentage expended ranging from 0 to 13.2 percent across States. AEFLA contains eight categories of academic programs for which eligible agencies may use funds to carry out programs of corrections education.¹⁴

The U.S. PIAAC Survey of Incarcerated Adults found that nearly one-third of adults who are incarcerated did not have a high school credential.¹⁵ It also found that many of the adults who did have a high school credential had considerable foundational skill needs, with there being a statistically significant gap in literacy and numeracy skills between the U.S. general public and adults in U.S. Federal and State prisons that could prevent them from succeeding in postsecondary education.¹⁶ Without an on-ramp to further education and the coordination of AEFLA funds and services in correctional facilities, many incarcerated adults will be unable and unprepared to participate in Pell-eligible PEP's. AEFLA funds may also be used to create, expand, and support integrated education and training programs that blend adult education and literacy activities, workforce preparation activities, and workforce training activities for a specific occupation or occupational cluster. As shown in Table 1, however, in fiscal year (FY) 2021, no State spent the full percentage of AEFLA funds that could have been used for corrections education.

Nationally, 72 percent of all collateral consequences—the complex web of local, State, and Federal statutes and regulations that make it difficult for people with criminal records to rebuild their lives after incarceration—are employment-related.¹⁷ From accounting to plumbing, hundreds of fields and industries limit the ability of someone with a conviction to access employment opportunities that they may otherwise be qualified for. Section 225 of AEFLA states that one of the key purposes of the program is to assist incarcerated individuals through re-entry initiatives and other post-release services to reduce recidivism and public safety. Given that collateral consequences pose significant barriers to employment post-release, it is important that programs support a successful re-entry by assisting with expungement and records sealing opportunities when possible.

The Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act, which was enacted in 2018 and became effective in FY 2019, increased Federal funding authorized for career and technical education (CTE) through Perkins V and increased the percentage of Perkins V funds that could be used to serve individuals in State institutions, including State correctional institutions, juvenile justice facilities, and educational institutions that serve individuals with disabilities. Under section 111 of Perkins V, funds are distributed by formula to the 50 States, Washington, D.C. and the Territories and Outlying Areas. From the funds available under section 112(a)(2) of Perkins V for State leadership activities, section 112(a)(2)(A) authorizes States to allocate up to 2 percent of the State's Perkins V allocation (an increase from 1 percent under the previous version of the law, Perkins IV) to serve individuals in State institutions. Further, section 124(a)(1)(B) of Perkins V requires each eligible agency to support individuals in State institutions, such as State correctional institutions, including juvenile justice facilities, and educational institutions that serve individuals with disabilities.

Perkins V funds may be used to create and grow secondary and postsecondary CTE programs to serve as career pathways for students who are incarcerated. They may also be used to expand current PEP's so that they can serve more learners and can play a critical role in increasing the number of Pell-eligible PEP's by paying the costs of the curriculum, professional development, and equipment needed to stand-

up new postsecondary CTE programs that are Pell-eligible. It's important that States and localities view these funds as *additional* supports and not as a replacement for State and other funding, making sure to supplement and not supplant non-Federal resources (a requirement under section 211(a) of Perkins V).

As shown in Table 2, in fiscal year (FY) 2020, only 11 States spent more than 1 percent of the State's allocation for leadership activities to serve individuals in State institutions, and just five States are spending the full 2 percent available. More than two thirds of States spend less than 1 percent of their State leadership funds on CTE for individuals who are incarcerated.

Pell Reinstatement and expanded eligibility.

The [*FAFSA Simplification Act*](#) restored *Pell Grant eligibility* for confined or incarcerated individuals for the first time since 1994. The new law requires a confined or incarcerated individual to enroll in an eligible prison education program (PEP) in order to access a Federal Pell Grant. There are specific requirements for the approval, reporting, oversight, and evaluation of PEPs. For more information please visit: <https://fsapartners.ed.gov/knowledge-center/topics/prison-education-programs>.

The reinstatement of Pell Grants will allow for students who are incarcerated to pursue postsecondary education—and by some estimates, 760,000 individuals who are currently incarcerated are eligible for Pell Grants.¹⁸ This expanded opportunity will create a pipeline of students who will need the building out and buttressing of adult, career, and technical education pathways to prepare them for success in postsecondary education.¹⁹ A full array of educational services, supports, and opportunities in correctional institutions will lead to expanded educational continuums and the strongest outcomes for students at all educational levels.

Looking Forward: Some Bright Spots in Practice and State Data on AEFLA and Perkins Use in Correctional Facilities and a Call to Action.

OCTAE collects information from States and Territories that participate in AEFLA and Perkins V Formula grant programs. Disaggregating these data enables States to examine their current investment patterns to determine if alternative allocations will help them reach their goals of meeting vulnerable student groups. We encourage States, departments of corrections, local educational agencies, and institutions of higher education to examine their collective use of Perkins *and* AEFLA funds to see how they can serve individuals who are incarcerated, and how they might want to grow PEPs to enhance educational opportunities.

Perkins and Correctional Education

The Michigan Department of Corrections used Perkins V funds to update and expand career and technical education programs at correctional facilities across the State. Special attention was given to current textbooks, equipment, and related supplies for CTE classrooms to ensure classes provided the skill sets required in the current job market.

As a part of this expansion, the Michigan Department of Corrections leveraged Perkins V funds to help create Vocational Villages, an intensive, hands-on job training experience to prepare individuals who are incarcerated for high-demand careers. Skilled trades training programs with full days of training and classroom instruction mimic a workday and result in State and local CTE certifications. These [Vocational Villages](#) offer a host of programs including Computer Numerical Control Machine Tool and Robotics, Welding, Computer Coding, 3D Printing, and Commercial Truck Driving resulting in a CDL.

Michigan is investing more than \$6 million annually of State funding in these important CTE programs. Michigan is a promising example of how Perkins funding may be used to support students who are incarcerated as they seek to attain credentials and skills to prepare for their reentry into the workforce. Out of the 1,641 Vocational Village graduates who have been released on parole, 72 percent have found jobs.²⁰ Jobs are helping lower the rate at which the formerly incarcerated return to prison. The return-to-prison rate for Vocational Village grads is 12 percent — significantly lower than the state average of 22 percent.²¹

AEFLA and Corrections Education

Integrated education and training, or IET, provides adult education and literacy activities concurrently and contextually with workforce training and workforce preparation activities for a specific occupation or occupational cluster. IET programs allow learners to accelerate their progress along a career pathway by improving their foundational, employability, and occupational skills at the same time while earning workforce credentials.

The Indiana Department of Workforce Development (IDWD) partners with the Indiana Department of Corrections (IDOC) to deliver integrated education and training in correctional facilities. IDWD allocates \$775,000 to IDOC as part of AEFLA Section 225. This funding pays for dedicated IET instructors teaching Certified Logistics Technician and National Center for Construction Education and Research Introduction to Basic Construction Skills programs to incarcerated students. AEFLA funds are also used to support classroom technology and to support professional development alignment between the IDOC and the IDWD.

The Maryland Department of Labor, Maryland Department of Public Safety and Corrections, and Hagerstown Community College partnered to provide IET programs focusing on manufacturing and hospitality. The project targeted enrollment in the [Certified Production Technician IET program](#) to residents of the Hill Prerelease Unit, which serves men within 36 months of release. The Hill Prerelease Unit is located outside a prison and provided access to additional technology and equipment as well as a workforce instructor from the local community college.

OCTAE is funding a technical assistance initiative specifically geared towards growing IET in correctional education programs. The IET in Corrections Project has now worked with almost 30 jurisdictions across the country to help them implement or improve IET programs.

Find out more by reviewing the [Integrated Education and Training Corrections Companion Guide](#).

Significant progress to advance correctional education will not happen without concerted efforts from [Title I Part D](#),²² CTE, adult education, and higher education leaders to increase the options, breadth, and quality of education available to individuals who are incarcerated. The Department believes that every person deserves the opportunity to become the best version of themselves, and that education is transformational for individuals. Unfortunately, many individuals who are incarcerated are not afforded this opportunity. With your support, we can make a greater difference. I encourage you to draw inspiration from these examples and consider how your State can upend the status quo and leverage the tremendous potential of career pathways for students who are incarcerated.

Sincerely,

/s/

Amy Loyd, Ed.L.D.
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Table 1. State Expenditures of AEFLA funds for Corrections Education, Fiscal Year (FY) 2021

FY 2021 State or Other Area	Total AEFLA Expenditures	Total AEFLA Expenditures for Corrections Education	Percentage of Total AEFLA Expenditures Used for Corrections Education (Up to 16.5% of State Grant)
West Virginia	\$3,906,474.64	\$515,464.91	13.2%
Utah	\$3,855,993.96	\$420,596.18	10.9%
Alabama	\$10,153,583.00	\$1,091,753.92	10.8%
Nebraska	\$2,898,170.00	\$301,795.00	10.4%
Wisconsin	\$7,285,702.00	\$700,000.00	9.6%
California	\$108,376,766.00	\$10,356,098.00	9.6%
Minnesota	\$6,965,236.00	\$601,756.80	8.6%
District of Columbia	\$1,332,037.00	\$104,763.50	7.9%
Colorado	\$8,333,878.00	\$653,301.60	7.8%
Kentucky	\$9,537,659.00	\$745,683.76	7.8%
North Dakota	\$1,155,459.00	\$85,000.00	7.4%
Arkansas	\$6,107,801.00	\$448,814.00	7.3%
Missouri	\$9,579,630.00	\$703,727.04	7.3%
New Jersey	\$17,340,744.07	\$1,182,572.56	6.8%
Indiana	\$11,625,144.00	\$754,557.00	6.5%
Michigan	\$15,244,995.00	\$972,398.56	6.4%
South Dakota	\$1,391,195.00	\$77,210.92	5.5%
Montana	\$1,336,476.00	\$73,436.00	5.5%
South Carolina	\$9,929,397.00	\$538,123.81	5.4%
Hawaii	\$2,336,051.00	\$119,989.00	5.1%
Delaware	\$1,864,053.09	\$94,760.87	5.1%
Idaho	\$2,822,060.28	\$139,360.00	4.9%
Ohio	\$18,151,078.00	\$891,227.73	4.9%
Massachusetts	\$12,004,084.70	\$569,720.00	4.7%
Tennessee	\$13,238,331.00	\$595,558.35	4.5%
Oklahoma	\$7,485,459.99	\$329,746.19	4.4%
North Carolina	\$19,938,193.00	\$810,020.60	4.1%
Georgia	\$21,835,243.00	\$884,874.35	4.1%
Louisiana	\$10,464,053.46	\$403,316.74	3.9%
Florida	\$49,301,709.00	\$1,888,273.78	3.8%
Virginia	\$15,022,482.00	\$539,524.11	3.6%
Kansas	\$4,257,579.00	\$117,231.00	2.8%
Oregon	\$6,803,548.00	\$186,074.84	2.7%
Mississippi	\$7,028,632.00	\$189,758.51	2.7%
Illinois	\$22,939,345.00	\$547,857.04	2.4%
Pennsylvania	\$20,299,038.71	\$270,569.03	1.3%
New York	\$47,996,784.84	\$506,060.00	1.1%
New Hampshire	\$1,929,246.00	\$16,310.91	0.8%

Iowa	\$4,243,411.00	\$28,268.77	0.7%
Texas	\$71,326,078.00	\$274,228.66	0.4%
Arizona	\$15,554,531.00	\$25,261.92	0.2%
Alaska	\$1,104,050.00	\$0.00	0.0%
Connecticut	\$6,177,993.52	\$0.00	0.0%
Maine	\$1,884,393.00	\$0.00	0.0%
Maryland	\$10,992,359.00	\$0.00	0.0%
Nevada	\$7,313,469.00	\$0.00	0.0%
New Mexico	\$5,106,703.00	\$0.00	0.0%
Rhode Island	\$2,325,709.00	\$0.00	0.0%
Vermont	\$1,007,426.00	\$0.00	0.0%
Washington	\$12,238,779.00	\$0.00	0.0%
Wyoming	\$821,057.00	\$0.00	0.0%

Note: Section 222(a)(1) of the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA), title II of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, authorizes States to expend up to 20 percent of the 82.5 percent of funds available for distribution to local providers, or 16.5 percent of the State's total AEFLA grant, for corrections education. The table displays the total amount of AEFLA State grant funds expended by each of the 50 States and the District of Columbia for fiscal year (FY) 2021, the amount of FY 2021 State grant funds expended for corrections education under section 225 of AEFLA, and the percentage of total AEFLA State grant expenditures for FY 2021 used for corrections education. States and the District of Columbia are shown in descending order by the percentage of AEFLA State grant funds they spent on corrections education.

Source: Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education, U.S. Department of Education, Grantee Financial Reports, National Reporting System for Adult Education. Retrieved from: <https://nrs.ed.gov/>.

Table 2. State Expenditures of Perkins V Funds to Serve Individuals in State Institutions, FY 2020

FY 2020 State or Other Area	Perkins V Grant Allocation FY 2020	Total Perkins V Expenditures for State Institutions	Percentage of Total Perkins V Expenditures Used to Serve Individuals in State Institutions (Up to 2 percent)
Oregon	\$15,586,385	\$311,728.00	2.00%
Oklahoma	\$16,290,896	\$325,818.00	2.00%
District of Columbia	\$5,135,742	\$102,714.84	2.00%
Maryland	\$18,227,420	\$364,548.00	2.00%
Hawaii	\$6,247,167	\$124,943.00	2.00%
Louisiana	\$22,412,549	\$362,400.77	1.62%
Illinois	\$45,433,749	\$683,402.00	1.50%
Texas	\$113,619,515	\$1,689,534.00	1.49%
Idaho	\$7,719,069	\$104,610.12	1.36%
Florida	\$73,997,159	\$1,000,000.00	1.35%
Wyoming	\$5,135,742	\$58,320.00	1.14%
South Dakota	\$5,247,487	\$52,475.00	1.00%
Ohio	\$47,064,082	\$470,640.82	1.00%
Missouri	\$25,262,736	\$252,627.00	1.00%
Kansas	\$11,553,018	\$115,530.00	1.00%
West Virginia	\$8,952,942	\$89,529.00	1.00%
North Dakota	\$5,135,742	\$51,357.00	1.00%
New Jersey	\$25,793,385	\$249,397.28	0.97%
Maine	\$6,247,167	\$60,000.00	0.96%
Pennsylvania	\$45,114,979	\$406,035.00	0.90%
Nevada	\$11,435,099	\$102,276.51	0.89%
Washington	\$23,278,487	\$207,896.51	0.89%
Indiana	\$28,923,937	\$250,000.00	0.86%
Rhode Island	\$6,247,167	\$53,753.00	0.86%
Virginia	\$28,777,108	\$220,000.00	0.76%
Mississippi	\$14,329,166	\$109,344.55	0.76%
Massachusetts	\$20,908,948	\$158,057.08	0.76%
South Carolina	\$21,780,147	\$150,000.00	0.69%
Alaska	\$5,135,742	\$30,000.00	0.58%
Iowa	\$12,870,067	\$68,196.00	0.53%
Michigan	\$41,897,908	\$212,016.35	0.51%
Vermont	\$5,135,742	\$22,049.75	0.43%
New York	\$57,681,486	\$243,556.99	0.42%
Delaware	\$5,557,329	\$20,000.00	0.36%
Arizona	\$30,788,834	\$110,000.00	0.36%

Colorado	\$19,173,648	\$60,000.00	0.31%
Minnesota	\$18,999,181	\$50,000.00	0.26%
Arkansas	\$13,246,104	\$26,704.03	0.20%
Nebraska	\$7,335,723	\$14,032.51	0.19%
California	\$128,798,161	\$244,916.68	0.19%
Tennessee	\$27,353,102	\$45,000.00	0.16%
North Carolina	\$43,398,349	\$50,000.00	0.12%
Kentucky	\$19,665,870	\$21,696.00	0.11%
New Mexico	\$9,352,796	\$9,976.00	0.11%
Montana	\$6,018,158	\$6,018.00	0.10%
Utah	\$15,313,982	\$15,000.00	0.10%
Alabama	\$21,696,979	\$20,000.00	0.09%
New Hampshire	\$6,247,167	\$4,730.71	0.08%
Georgia	\$45,924,927	\$30,616.00	0.07%
Wisconsin	\$22,714,615	\$11,354.00	0.05%
Connecticut	\$11,010,617	\$0.00	0.00%
Total	\$1,241,173,477	\$9,347,883.82	0.75%

Note: Section 112(a)(2)(A) of the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (Perkins V) authorizes States to use a portion of the funds reserved by the State for State leadership activities to serve individuals in State institutions, such as State correctional institutions, juvenile justice facilities, and educational institutions that serve individuals with disabilities, in an amount equal to up to 2 percent of the State’s allocation. The table displays the total amount of Perkins V grant funds allocated to each of the 50 States and the District of Columbia for FY 2020, the amount of FY 2020 funds expended to serve individuals in State institutions, and the percentage of total FY 2020 Perkins V State grant expenditures used to serve individuals in State institutions. States and the District of Columbia are shown in descending order by the percentage of Perkins V funds they spent to serve individuals in State institutions.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Career, Technical and Adult Education, Perkins V Consolidated Annual Reports from the 50 States and the District of Columbia.

¹ Niloufer Taber and Muralidharan Asha, *Second Chance Pell: Six Years of Expanding Higher Education Programs in Prisons*. Brooklyn, NY: The Vera Institute of Justice, 2023. <https://www.vera.org/downloads/publications/second-chance-pell-six-years-of-expanding-access-to-education-in-prison.pdf>

² Mass Incarceration: The Whole Pie 2024. Prison Policy Initiative. <https://www.prisonpolicy.org/reports/pie2024.html> (accessed March 25, 2024)

³ Osiletu, Monique, “Equipping Individuals for Life Beyond Bars: The Promise of Higher Education & Job Training in Closing the Gap in Skills for Incarcerated Adults” *New America*, 2019 <https://www.newamerica.org/education-policy/reports/equipping-individuals-life-beyond-bars/>.

⁴ Highlights from the U.S. PIAAC Survey of Incarcerated Adults: Their Skills, Work Experience, Education, and Training: Program for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies: 2014 (NCES 2016-040). <https://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2016040>.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Darolia, Rajeev, Mueser, Peter, and Cronin, Jacob. Labor Market Returns to a Prison GED. IZA Institute of Labor Economics. <https://www.iza.org/publications/dp/13534/labor-market-returns-to-a-prison-ged>

⁷ Robert Bozick, Jennifer L. Steele, Lois M. Davis, and Susan Turner, “Does Providing Inmates with Education Improve Post-Release Outcomes? A Meta-Analysis of Correctional Education Programs in the United States,”

Journal of Experimental Criminology 14, no. 3 (2018), 389-428.

https://www.rand.org/pubs/external_publications/EP67650.html.

⁸ Lois M. Davis, Robert Bozick, Jennifer L. Steele, Jessica Saunders, and Jeremy N. V. Miles. Evaluating the Effectiveness of Correctional Education: A Meta-Analysis of Programs That Provide Education to Incarcerated Adults. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2013. http://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR266.html.

⁹ Timothy A. Hughes and Doris James Wilson, Reentry Trends in the United States. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2004, <https://bjs.ojp.gov/content/pub/pdf/reentry.pdf>.

¹⁰ Amanda Pompoco, John Woolredge, Melissa Lugo, et al., "Reducing Inmate Misconduct and Prison Returns with Facility Education Programs," Criminology & Public Policy 16, no. 2 (2017), 515–547, <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/1745-9133.12290>.

¹¹ Amanda Pompoco, John Woolredge, Melissa Lugo, et al., "Reducing Inmate Misconduct and Prison Returns with Facility Education Programs," Criminology & Public Policy 16, no. 2 (2017), 515–547, <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/1745-9133.12290>.

¹² Anthony P. Carnevale, Nicole Smith, Martin Van Der Werf, and Michael C. Quinn. After Everything: Projections of Jobs, Education, and Training Requirements through 2031. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce, 2023. <https://cew.georgetown.edu/Projections2031>.

¹³ U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics, "Reentry Trends in the United States," <http://www.bjs.gov/content/reentry/reentry.cfm>.

¹⁴ They are: (1) adult education and literacy activities; (2) special education, as determined by the eligible agency; (3) secondary school credit; (4) integrated education and training; (5) career pathways; (6) concurrent enrollment; (7) peer tutoring; and (8) transition to reentry initiatives and other post-release services with the goal of reducing recidivism. Under 34 C.F.R. §463.3, re-entry initiatives and other post-release services may include "educational counseling or case work to support incarcerated individuals' transition to re-entry and other post-release services. Examples include assisting incarcerated individuals to develop plans for post-release education program participation, assisting students in identifying and applying for participation in post-release programs, and performing direct outreach to community-based program providers on behalf of re-entering students. Such funds may not be used for costs for participation in post-release programs or services."

¹⁵ Highlights from the U.S. PIAAC Survey of Incarcerated Adults: Their Skills, Work Experience, Education, and Training: Program for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies: 2014 (NCES 2016-040). <https://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2016040>

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ After the Sentence, More Consequences: A National Snapshot of Barriers to Work. The Council of State Governments Justice Center, 2021. <https://csgjusticecenter.org/publications/after-the-sentence-more-consequences/national-snapshot/>.

¹⁸ Niloufer Taber and Muralidharan Asha, Second Chance Pell: Six Years of Expanding Higher Education Programs in Prisons. Brooklyn, NY: The Vera Institute of Justice, 2023.

¹⁹ Ibid. <https://www.vera.org/downloads/publications/second-chance-pell-six-years-of-expanding-access-to-education-in-prison.pdf>

²⁰ Bridge Michigan; Tight labor market helps Michigan's ex-prisoners find jobs <https://www.bridgemi.com/business-watch/tight-labor-market-helps-michigans-ex-prisoners-find-jobs>

²¹ Ibid.

²² While the focus of this Dear Colleague Letter is OCTAE-related opportunities, we would be remiss to not mention ED's Office of Elementary and Secondary Education Title I, Part D program, which provides additional funding to support the education of eligible children, youth, and young adults up to age 21 who are incarcerated in both State and locally operated facilities. The primary focus of this work is on supporting students in obtaining a regular high school diploma, but programs may also use funds to support dual enrollment opportunities, assistance with applying to colleges and completing the FAFSA, and in preparing students to transition to postsecondary educational opportunities. A [national technical assistance center](#) (NTAC) provides training and support.