

State Scholars Initiative (SSI)

The Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (Perkins IV) envisions that all students will achieve challenging academic and technical standards and be prepared for high-skill, high-wage, or high-demand occupations in current or emerging professions in the 21st century global economy. To this end, Perkins IV requires each state to offer career and technical education programs of study, which must incorporate secondary and postsecondary elements and include coherent and rigorous content aligned with challenging academic standards and relevant career and technical content in a coordinated, non-duplicative progression of courses. Each local recipient of Perkins funds must implement at least one career and technical education program of study.

The Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE) implemented the State Scholars Initiative (SSI) to help states develop and implement career and technical education programs that incorporate rigorous academic standards. SSI is a national program that uses business leaders to motivate students to complete a rigorous course of study in high school that would give them a boost towards succeeding in college and their careers. Scholars programs are implemented in selected school districts by state-level business-education partnerships. The program trains business people to make presentations to eighth graders right before they select their high school courses. The presentations highlight various career options and the monetary benefits of taking rigorous courses. The OVAE selected the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE) in the fall of 2005 to administer the SSI. WICHE provides technical assistance, monitoring, oversight, and cost reimbursements to the state-level business-education partnerships.

Scholars Core Course of Study

Includes at least:

- Four years of English
- Three years of mathematics (algebra 1, algebra 2, and geometry)
- Three years of lab science (biology, chemistry, and physics)
- Three and one-half years of social studies (U.S. and world history, geography, economics, and government)
- Two years of the same foreign language

Financial support has been granted to 24 states through the SSI: Arizona, Arkansas, Connecticut, Indiana, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, Nebraska, Oklahoma, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Tennessee, Utah, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, and Wyoming.

Reports and Tools You Can Use

- A Web site with information and resources for students, schools, business leaders, and the media.
- Evaluation reports containing data on student outcomes.
- A 17-minute DVD entitled, "Do the Math," that makes a vivid, riveting, and compelling case to eighth graders for taking a rigorous high school curriculum.

Timeline September 2005 – March 2009

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Web Site WICHE - www.wiche.edu/statescholars