



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

OFFICE OF VOCATIONAL AND ADULT EDUCATION

THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY

AUG 27 2008

Dear State Directors for Career and Technical Education:

The Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE), Division of Academic and Technical Education (DATE), is pleased to invite your state to participate in the first-ever web-based, “virtual” Data Quality Institute (DQI). This event will be held October 2–3, 2008.

This event will focus primarily on helping states develop and implement technical skill assessments at the secondary and postsecondary levels. As you are aware, technical skill assessments are the approach recommended by the Department for measuring student’s technical skill attainment (Perkins core indicators 2S1 and 1P1).¹ Also, states are expected in their Consolidated Annual Reports (CAR) to provide updates on their efforts to implement technical skill assessments in more program areas and for more students. This event will offer sessions on other areas in which state directors and accountability staff have indicated interest, including tech prep accountability, EDEN reporting, Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), and use of UI wage records.

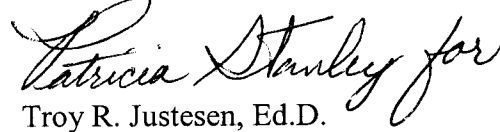
The event will feature video presentations by Federal staff and accountability experts, interactive webinars featuring promising state practices, and localized planning by state teams. Participants will have the opportunity to submit questions to DATE that will be answered during the event. Session content will be provided via web-based platforms (i.e., webcast and webinars), with an audio component accessible via teleconference.

In anticipation of this event, please identify appropriate state policy, program, and accountability staff—drawn from secondary and postsecondary sectors—to participate. You will also need to reserve computing equipment and conferencing space between 12:30 pm – 4:45 pm EDT on day one and 12:30 pm – 3:30 pm on day two. Our contractors at MPR Associates, Inc. and KAI Associates will send you an e-mail next week with information on registration and technical details for accessing sessions. A general review of the agenda will be provided on the upcoming *Next Steps Working Group* call, scheduled for September 4, 2008. Detailed DQI information and materials will be posted on PCRN at <http://www.edcountability.net/> as they become available.

¹ See the March 13, 2007, non-regulatory guidance document entitled, “Student Definitions and Measurement Approaches for the Core Indicators of Performance Under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (Perkins IV).”

State travel restrictions, federal and state resource constraints, and high transportation costs dictate that OVAE find new, cost-effective modes of delivering technical support. It is anticipated that the “virtual” DQI format will increase the number of individuals who are able to benefit from expert presentations and to participate in state planning activities. Thank you in advance for your patience and support as we plan for this exciting new approach to delivering technical assistance to states.

Sincerely,


Troy R. Justesen, Ed.D.

Enclosure