

**SECONDARY CAREER & TECHNICAL EDUCATION  
Frequently Asked Question**

**(Non-Perkins)**

1. Can a district build its own computers in lieu of purchasing from outside vendors?

Yes, with caution this is permissible. All required accounting guidelines must still be followed and kept on record for auditing purposes. Our caution would be that both state and federal guidelines require the Department to retain ownership of computers and computer equipment for five years. The district agrees to repair or replace that item during that time period if problems occur. Past experience with some districts that have done this has centered on both quality and longevity.

2. Is an office required for the agriculture teacher? Must it be private? Must it have a telephone? What if only one class of agriculture is taught in the building?

Yes, an office is required. No, it does not have to be private—multiple teachers may share it. We strongly encourage a telephone, but no law requires this. If only one agriculture class is taught in a particular building, there should be no need for an office or phone.

3. May students receive graduation credit for courses that neither follow the existing frameworks of the Department of Education or the Department of Workforce Education nor have been submitted as local frameworks to the appropriate department for approval?

After discussion with the Office of the Coordinator of Standards Assurance at the Arkansas Department of Education and upon review of current Arkansas standards, the answer to this question would be NO. All classes offered for graduation credit must follow existing frameworks of the Arkansas Department of Education or the Department of Workforce Education, or local districts must have submitted local frameworks to the appropriate agency and received approval for such classes.

4. Must all vocational, technical, or occupational courses offered to secondary students be approved by the Department of Workforce Education?

Yes. The responsibilities of the Department of Workforce Education as identified in Arkansas Code Annotated 25-30-107 include general control and supervision of all programs of vocational, technical, and occupational education in secondary institutions.

5. May a local district receiving new start-up funds for a Family and Consumer Sciences Child-care program, in which child-care students may complete work-based learning and shadowing, enter a cooperative agreement with a nonprofit or church-based organization to provide lab facilities and place the appropriate equipment in that facility?

The decision to enter this agreement with either a nonprofit or church-based group would be a local decision and must be decided within the confines of that district.

However, this partnership should exhibit the qualities of school and community collaboration in both planning and operation of the lab. Start-up equipment must be maintained and inventoried by the local education agency for seven years (five years for computer equipment) following the purchase with state start-up funds. The equipment must be utilized for the purpose of program instruction, and lab instruction should be under the direction of a certified program instructor. If the above lab is maintained for the purpose of that instruction and the school maintains ownership and control of the equipment, this arrangement would be permissible.

6. Must Cisco computer programs follow existing Microcomputer Systems Technology frameworks or receive local course approval by the Department of Workforce Education?

Yes, unless the class is offered to students for concurrent college credit only. Schools wishing to teach the Cisco curriculum should seek approval from the Department of Workforce Education even though the quality of instruction and the documented value of student learning delivered through this program is recognized by the Department. This has been exhibited by the Department's use of start-up funds to support Cisco-based Microcomputer Systems Technology programs. Because of this support and the cooperation existing between the Department and the Association of Two Year Colleges, it is our opinion that blanket course approval should be extended to all existing Cisco programs. This action should eliminate questions or concerns about the approval necessary to awarding course credit toward graduation. New Cisco programs started after May 2001 should meet the existing Microcomputer Systems Technology requirements; nonfunded Cisco courses should be submitted for approval.

Many existing Cisco-centered programs have already submitted and received approval for their programs. Beginning in the 2001-2002 school year, new Cisco programs should be submitted for approval prior to startup.

Advantages to this approval process are as follows:

1. Allows the awarding of supplemental start-up grants to add the two semesters of hardware experience required by our frameworks.
  2. Creates the permissible use of local Perkins funds for inservice training, inservice-related instructor travel, equipment for program improvement activities, and financial assistance.
  3. Supports the existing procedure for approval of non-degreed instructors following completion and passage of Cisco instructor certification with documentation of two years of computer-related work experience and completion within two years of nine hours or equivalent of assigned education-related courses.
  4. Supports the use of state staff for technical assistance.
  5. Supports a statewide training in leadership activity with scholarship awards available to outstanding students.
7. Does the existing EAST Lab program approved with technology grants from the Department of Education have significance to the programs offered by the Department of Workforce Education?

Yes. Although the EAST Lab class does not contain the traditional components of a Workforce Education career focus program of study (assessment, technical skills, and a sequence of identified learning), it does have tremendous value as a course in the delivery of the soft skills necessary for all career and technical students to succeed in the world of work. The soft skills taught in an EAST Lab are identical to those identified in the SCANS report and deemed valuable by business and industry. In addition, the EAST Lab does an outstanding job in providing these soft skills, which are also identified in the frameworks of our existing Workplace Readiness program. For this reason, the Department of Workforce Education encourages career and technical students in schools with existing EAST Lab programs to gain exposure to the EAST Lab experience for at least one semester. To encourage student enrollment by all career and technical students, the Department of Workforce Education financially supports the expansion and upgrading of the existing local EAST Lab programs when such an action is endorsed by state EAST Lab staff.

8. Is an advisory committee required for the general Family and Consumer Sciences program of study?

No. It is recommended but not required. An advisory committee is required for the occupational FACS programs of study of Childcare, Facilities Management, and Food Production.

9. Is a career and technical student organization(CTSO) required?

Yes. To be an approved program, there must be an active affiliated CTSO if one is available. The CTSOs are FFA (Agriculture), FCCLA (Family & Consumer Sciences), DECA (Marketing), FBLA (Business), SkillsUSA (Technical and Professional), and HOSA (Medical Professions). Note: Medical Professions may join SkillsUSA.