

Montana Carl D. Perkins Policy and Procedures Manual

Subject: Programs of Study
Policy: Review and Approval
Effective: July 1, 2007
Revised: Not Applicable

Perkins Policy:

The Montana State Plan for Career and Technical Education, in accordance with the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act of 2006 requires each local grant recipient to offer career and technical programs of study (based on the 16 Career Clusters), known as **Big Sky Pathways** in Montana, as an option to students and their parents when planning for and completing future coursework.

These programs, at a minimum, must:

- Incorporate and align secondary and postsecondary education elements,
- Include academic and CTE content in a coordinated, non-duplicative progression of courses,
- Offer the opportunity, where appropriate, for secondary students to acquire postsecondary credits, and
- Lead to an industry-recognized credential or certificate at the postsecondary level, or an associate or baccalaureate degree.

Utilizing the [design framework for Career and Technical Programs of Study](#) developed by the Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE), Montana is incorporating the ten framework components into their procedures for developing Big Sky Pathways.

Procedures:

Each high school will collaborate with a college partner in reasonable proximity to craft a minimum of one Big Sky Pathway specific to the high school. Each Big Sky Pathway team will consist of at least one secondary pathway-specific teacher, one secondary counselor, one pathway-specific college faculty member, and a college advisor. The college may designate either the advisor or the faculty member as the articulation coordinator. To raise counselors' awareness and understanding of programs of study, school districts are encouraged to engage more than one counselor in consortium efforts.

The BSP Team will collaborate to produce the following documentation of a program of study/Big Sky Pathway. These products must be completed by June 15th annually and submitted to OPI as per the instructions on the approval document.

- A completed [BSP Template](#)

- The template courses are loaded into the [Montana Career Information System \(MCIS\)](#)
- The [Big Sky Pathway Approval agreement](#) is completed and any changes to the template and MCIS information have been made.

The Big Sky Pathway templates and approval documents will be reviewed by the Big Sky Pathway Advisory Committees. The committees represent Career Fields, which divide the clusters into Montana groupings of two or more Career Clusters that have similar foundational knowledge and skills. See the graphic below for more detail. These BSP Advisory committees are comprised of Office of statewide business and industry representatives, teachers, counselors and faculty from around the state, Public Instruction Specialists, and Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education Grant Managers. The committees will provide guidance for pathway enhancements and will identify strategic opportunities for pathway development.

