

# Regional Planning Partnership Use of Funds

## June 2026

### Overview of Regional Planning Partnerships

Regional career and technical education planning partnerships (RPPs) were established to assist school districts in providing effective, efficient and economical means of delivering high-quality secondary career and technical education (CTE) programs. The main goals of RPPs are to:

- Promote career and college readiness through thoughtful career guidance and purposeful academic and technical planning practices;
- Promote high-quality, integrated career and technical education programming, including career academies and delivery of quality CTE programs by school districts comprised of secondary exploratory and transitory coursework to prepare students for higher-level, specialized academic and technical training aligned with labor market needs;
- Afford students the opportunity to access a spectrum of high-quality work-based learning experiences; and
- Afford all students equal access to programs and encourage participation of underrepresented student populations in CTE programming.

### Application Process

RPP applications should be completed in *Iowa Grants* and are due on October 15 each year. The following items need to be submitted as part of the application:

- RPP Bylaws
- Membership list, including identification of officers
- AEA/community college co-coordination assurance statement
- Multiyear plan
- Minutes with approval of multiyear plan
- Schedule of future meetings
- Schedule of program approvals
- RPP budget explanation and approval, including how the RPP plans to use RPP funds and how the RPP plans to use unspent RPP funds
- Justification of how the budget aligns with high-skill, high-wage and high-demand (H3) occupations
- Minutes approving the budget
- Previous fiscal year report/transaction details

### Use of RPP Funds

The use of funds by regional career and technical education planning partnerships is defined in [Iowa Code chapter 256\(136\)](#) and [Iowa Administrative Code \(IAC\) chapter 46\(10\)](#). The passage of [House File 2610](#) ensures that RPP expenditures align with high-skill, high-wage, and high-demand occupations.

**Iowa Code 256.136** A regional career and technical education partnership may use funds received from state sources on behalf of school districts and community colleges participating in the regional career and technical education planning partnership to convene, lead and staff the regional career and technical education planning partnership; to offer regional career and technical professional development opportunities; to coordinate and maintain a career guidance system pursuant to section 279.61; to purchase career and technical education equipment; and to purchase standard classroom

consumable supplies other than consumable supplies that will be made into products to be sold or used personally by students, teachers or other persons. The regional career and technical education partnership shall demonstrate that all expenditures are aligned with high-skill, high-wage and high-demand occupations as defined in section 256.125.

**Iowa Code 256.125(5A)** “*High-demand occupation*” means an occupation in which state, local, or regional labor market forecasting shows occupational demand exceeds overall state, local or regional employer demand metrics, including in openings, numeric change and growth.

**Iowa Code 256.125(5B)** “*High-skill occupation*” means an occupation with education or training requirements, including the completion of an apprenticeship program, an industry-recognized credential, a short-term college credential such as a certificate or diploma, a noncredit college credential or certification, an associate degree or higher, on-the-job training or on-the-job credential or certification.

**Iowa Code 256.125(5C)** “*High-wage occupation*” means an occupation for which at least three of five hourly wage or annual salary measurements for that occupation exceed the hourly wage or annual salary for all occupations in the state or region.

**281 IAC 46.10** *Secondary career and technical education funds.* An approved regional career and technical education partnership may use funds received from state sources on behalf of school districts and community colleges participating in the regional career and technical education planning partnership for the following:

- a. Staffing and resources to ensure the minimum duties and responsibilities assigned to the regional planning partnership under subrules 46.10(4) and 46.10(5) are satisfactorily executed. The partnership will ensure adequate staffing and resources are committed to these purposes prior to allocating funds for any use under paragraph 46.10(6)”b.”
- b. To offer regional career and technical education professional development opportunities; coordinate, maintain and support a career guidance system pursuant to 281-Chapter 49 and related work-based learning opportunities for students; and purchase career and technical education equipment and curricular resources to include standard classroom consumable supplies directly related to and necessary for the course curriculum, other than basic consumable supplies that will be made into products to be sold or used personally by students, teachers and other persons.

If you have specific questions regarding RPP use of funds, please contact Heather Meissen at [heather.meissen@iowa.gov](mailto:heather.meissen@iowa.gov) or Cale Hutchings at [cale.hutchings@iowa.gov](mailto:cale.hutchings@iowa.gov).

## Alignment with High-Skill, High-Wage, and High-Demand Occupations

For each of the approved use of RPP funds listed below, an RPP must be able to demonstrate that the expenditure aligns with high-skill, high-wage and high-demand occupations (see the spreadsheet on the [Iowa Department of Education's Workforce Pell webpage](#) for a list of these occupations). When showing alignment with H3 occupations, RPPs can show how the expenditure *eventually* leads to the high-skill, high-wage and high-demand occupation. For example, if an expenditure aligns with the occupation of Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA), which is only a high-skill and high-demand occupation, the RPP can demonstrate alignment with an H3 occupation by explaining how the CNA occupation is part of a pathway that leads to someone becoming a nurse, which is considered, high-skill, high-wage and high-demand (i.e., stackability of occupations).

## Implementation Plan

Starting in **FY27**, RPP coordinators will need to upload a justification showing how their budget aligns with H3 occupations. The justification must include all Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) code(s) associated with budget expenditures to demonstrate how RPP purchases for the current fiscal year will be aligned with H3 occupations.

Starting in **FY28**, RPP coordinators will need to add a SOC code(s) to each line item in the previous fiscal year report/transaction detail spreadsheet to demonstrate how each RPP purchase is aligned with an H3 occupation.

## Specific Use of RPP Funds

### Staff and Resources

RPP funds can be used for staffing related to RPP coordination. Funds cannot be used for any other type of staffing or salaries. For example, funds cannot be used for College and Career Transition Counselor (CCTC) salaries.

### CTE Professional Development Opportunities

#### Conferences

RPP funds can be used to cover the cost of professional development opportunities, including conferences. It is up to the individual RPP if they want to use RPP funds to cover additional expenses associated with the professional development opportunity, such as transportation, lodging and meals.

#### Education Organizations

RPP funds can also be used to pay for teacher memberships to state and national education organizations.

#### Teacher Credentialing

RPP funds can be used for professional development related to teacher credentialing, such as the full CTE Authorization, CTE Endorsement, Multioccupations (MOC) Endorsement, Work Experience Coordinator (WEC) Endorsement or WBL Supervisor Authorization. Courses that are not directly used for a teacher to earn one of these credentials cannot be purchased with RPP funds.

### Career Guidance System

RPP funds can be used for the purchase of a career guidance system, including career guidance systems that are also used in the middle and elementary grades. Money can be used to support and maintain the system, including the yearly costs associated with the system.

### Work-Based Learning Opportunities for Students

#### Work-Based Learning Activities

RPP funds can be used to support any type of work-based learning (WBL) activity defined by [Senate File 2411](#) offered to students. However, funds cannot be used to support career exploration, including travel to career exploration events.

#### Work-Based Learning Coordination

RPP funds can be used to pay community colleges and Area Education Agencies (AEAs) for WBL coordination. For example, districts can use funds to pay community colleges a fee-for-service for WBL coordination.

#### Career and Technical Student Organization Competitions

Since career and technical student organization (CTSO) competitions could potentially be considered work-based learning for students, RPP funds can be used to cover the cost of state and national CTSO

competitions for students. It is up to the individual RPP if they want to use RPP funds to cover additional expenses associated with the competition, such as transportation, lodging and meals. Travel, lodging and meals must follow state, local and institutional fiscal policies.

## Career and Technical Education Equipment and Resources

### General Career and Technical Education Expenses

RPP funds can be used to pay for any equipment and resources for CTE programs or career academies approved by the state. Additionally, funds can be used for teacher stipends or substitute costs during program review sessions.

### Industry-Recognized Credentials

RPP funds can be used to pay for industry-recognized credentials (IRCs) for students. The IRC does not have to be on the [state-approved IRC list](#), but the IRC does need to be aligned with a state-approved CTE course, program or career academy. RPP funds can also be used for the training necessary for instructors to allow them to administer an IRC. RPP funds can be used for an instructor to earn the actual credential as part of this training.

### Career and Technical Student Organizations

RPP funds can be used for equipment, supplies and materials related to CTSOs, including student uniforms that stay with the CTSO. Additionally, RPP funds can be used for individual student memberships and institutional affiliation dues. RPP funds cannot be used for advisor expenses such as stipends, salaries memberships, etc.

### Regional Centers

Since the intent of the RPP and regional centers is to increase access to high-quality CTE programs, districts can use RPP funds to pay community colleges for costs associated with career academies at regional centers. However, RPP funds cannot be used to pay for community college tuition for students.

## Use of RPP Funds in the Middle Grades

RPP funds can be used at the middle school level as long as the money is clearly connected to the goals, objectives and outcomes of the RPP and the funds used at the middle school level align with H3 occupations or occupations that stack into H3 occupations. The funds must be used for the items listed above and in Iowa Administrative Code chapter 46 (i.e., CTE professional development opportunities, career guidance systems, WBL, CTE equipment and curricular resources, etc.).

## Allowable Consumable Supplies

The use of RPP funds for the purchase of consumables is allowed. The intent of consumable purchases is to support high-quality state-approved career and technical education programs. Purchases of consumable supplies to be made into products to be sold or to be used personally by students, teachers or other persons, as well as purchases of materials to be used for a fundraiser, are not allowed.

## Perkins Supplanting

Money from The Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Act (Perkins V) may be used as a first-time funding source for a wide range of costs associated with CTE programming and evaluation. However, if at any time these costs are paid for with non-federal funding sources, such as RPP funds, the costs may not be paid for with Perkins monies in subsequent years. Please contact Amy Vybiral at [amy.vybiral@iowa.gov](mailto:amy.vybiral@iowa.gov) for more information.