Florida Department of Education
Career and Adult Education

Quality Assurance and Compliance
Virtual Desk Monitoring Review
for
Career and Technical Education

Polk State College

March 15 – 19, 2021

Final Report

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**Polk State College
Career and Technical Education
Quality Assurance and Compliance Monitoring Report**

I.   INTRODUCTION

The Florida Department of Education (FDOE), Division of Career and Adult Education (division), in carrying out its roles of leadership, resource allocation, technical assistance, monitoring and evaluation, is required to oversee the performance and regulatory compliance of recipients of federal and state funding. The Quality Assurance and Compliance (QAC) section is responsible for the design, development, implementation and evaluation of a comprehensive system of quality assurance including monitoring. The role of the quality assurance system is to assure financial accountability, program quality and regulatory compliance. As stewards of federal and state funds, it is incumbent upon the division to monitor the use of workforce education funds and regulatory compliance of providers on a regular basis.

II.   AUTHORITY

The FDOE receives federal funding from the U.S. Department of Education (USDOE) for Career and Technical Education (CTE) under the Carl D. Perkins (Perkins) Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act, and for Adult Education (AE) under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014. FDOE awards sub-grants to eligible providers to administer local programs. FDOE must monitor providers to ensure compliance with federal requirements, including Florida's approved state plans for CTE and Adult Education/Family Literacy. Each state shall have procedures for reviewing and approving applications for sub-grants and amendments to those applications, for providing technical assistance, for evaluating projects and for performing other administrative responsibilities the state has determined are necessary to ensure compliance with applicable statutes and regulations pursuant to 34 CFR 76.770, Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) and the Uniform Grant Guidance (UGG) for grant awards issued on or after December 26, 2014. The Florida Department of Education, Division of Career and Adult Education, is required to oversee the performance of sub-grantees in the enforcement of all laws and rules (Sections 1001.03(8) and 1008.32, Florida Statutes).

Additional citations noting pertinent laws and regulations and authority to monitor are located in the 2020-21 Core Monitoring Guide, which is still under review.

III.   QUALITY ASSURANCE CORE MONITORING GUIDE

The Quality Assurance Policies, Procedures and Protocols manual was discontinued after the 2019-20 program year. The Quality Assurance and Compliance section will now operate from the Core Monitoring Guide (CMG). The guide provides a summary of each Core Activity and objective of the monitoring design and process.

IV.   PROVIDER SELECTION

Various sources of data are used throughout the implementation of the quality assurance system. The monitoring component of the system is risk-based. Risk assessment is a process used to evaluate variables associated with the grants and assign a rating for the level of risk to the department and the division. A risk matrix, identifying certain operational risk factors is completed for each provider. The risk matrix for

each program monitored is located in Appendix A. The results of the risk assessment process and consideration of available resources are used to determine one or more appropriate monitoring strategy(ies) to be implemented.

The QAC section may apply any specific monitoring strategy to any federal or state-funded provider at any time. There may be circumstances that may warrant onsite monitoring, desk monitoring review or other strategies regardless of a provider's risk matrix score.

The monitoring strategy for Polk State College (PSC) was determined to be a virtual desk monitoring review (VDMR). Notification was sent to Dr. Angela Garcia Falconetti, president, Polk State College on December 1, 2020. The designated representative for the agency was Dr. Orathai Northern for PSC VDMR.

The representative of the division conducting the VDMR was program specialist, Mr. Orion Price, of the Quality Assurance and Compliance section.

V.   Polk State College

ENROLLMENT:

Fiscal Year (FY) 2018-19
CTE (possible duplication at program level): Secondary – 8,087

The provider was awarded the following grants for FY's 2018-19, 2019-20 and 2020-21:

Finance*

FY 2018-19

Grants	Grant Number	Grant Amount	Unexpended
Post-secondary	532-1619B-9CP01	$ 503,762.00	$ 10,211.72

FY 2019-20

Grants	Grant Number	Grant Amount	Unexpended
Post-secondary	532-1610B-0CP01	$ 561,471.00	$ 5,118.70

FY 2020-21*

Grants	Grant Number	Grant Amount	Unexpended
Post-secondary	532-1611B-1CP01	$ 422,555.00	$ N/A

* Final project disbursement reports not available at the time of this writing.

Additional information about the provider may be found at the following web address:
https://www.polk.edu

VI.   MONITORING ACTIVITIES

The monitoring activities included pre and post-visit planning, an entrance and exit conference, records review and interviews with administrators when necessary.

Onsite Visits
No onsite visits were made during the VDMR process.

Entrance and Exit Conferences
An introductory teleconference for PSC was conducted on March 15, 2021. The exit teleconference was conducted on March 19, 2021. The participants are listed below:

Name	Title	Entrance Conference	Exit Conference
Dr. Orathai Northern	VP,Workforce Education and Economic Development	X	X
Teresa Vorous	District Director, Business Affairs and Budgeting	X	X
Dr. Andy Oguntola	Interim Dean of Workforce Education and Economic Development	X	X
Dr. Allen Bottorff	VP, Business Administration and Finance/ Chief Business Officer	X	X
FDOE Monitoring Team			
Orion Price	Program Specialist, QAC, FDOE	X	X
Charles Davis	Program Specialist, QAC, FDOE	X	X

Interviews
PSC administrators were available via teleconference for interviews, if necessary.

Records Review
Program, financial and administrative records were reviewed. A complete list is provided in section VII, item F. Policies and procedures were reviewed and discussed at various times during the visit.

VII.   RESULTS

A.   **ADMINISTRATION:** refers to the management and/or supervision of programs, structure of programs and services, grant oversight and other administrative areas.

- The CTE Grants for PSC are managed by Dr. Orathai Northern.
- PSC has established policies and procedures required to be observed within all approval processes that occur prior to all grant applications being submitted to FDOE.
- Dr. Northern (CTE director) works with her Grant Managers, financial director, advisory committees and district finance staff to ensure needs of the programs are met. Once those needs are addressed/included in the grant applications, they are reviewed and approved by all parties before being submitted to the FDOE.
- Once approved by FDOE, the CTE grants for PSC are distributed by Dr. Northern; however, all program areas follow the same procedures for financial tracking and oversight.
- The comprehensive local needs assessment (CLNA) included in the PSC Perkins grants required consultation with numerous community and business leaders. These stakeholders include: teachers; local business owners; community leaders; and other educational specialists that all meet annually. In addition, PSC has an advisory board for all individual

programs offered at the school, ensuring strong communication between professionals in the field and PSC. This enables the grants budget team to maintain top-level equipment based on ever changing career fields.

- PSC offers ample opportunities for professional development. CTE and administrative staff participate in conferences within their program areas. The college's annual conference is called Professional Development Day (PDD), where all staff and faculty have an opportunity to attend workshops and forums. FDOE sponsored training events and webinars such as the Florida Association for Career and Technical Education (FACTE) conference are also attended.
- Staff is well trained on mental health, financial responsibilities, and in addition, job title duties to help with retention.

B.   **DATA AND ASSESSMENT:** refers to all the components of the data and assessment system, including test administration, test security, data collection and entry and reporting, as well as procedures. The use of data in program decision-making is also explored and commented upon.

- PSC utilizes the Genesis® (Integrow) system for the student information system (SIS) and management information system (MIS).
- Trainings are provided to staff for data collection procedures at initial employment, and during any updates to data entry system and other pertinent areas of the MIS. Administrative staff also participate in FDOE trainings and PDD.
- All of the data elements required of their local MIS were included in the screenshots of the MIS system and verified during the VDMR.
- District registration forms include student "release of information" clauses as required by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).
- Program staff verify student data prior to the records being uploaded to the SIS. Data is then run through edit reports within the SIS to ensure accuracy prior to submission to the state.
- The college has internal controls that ensure each individual has access to a specific part of the MIS needed to complete tasks to prevent too many people from being able to view sensitive student data.
- Samples of the CTE student data was reviewed and verified for accuracy as part of the VDMR. All student records were provided by PSC and were in good standing.

C.   **CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION:** refers to those elements that contribute to student learning and skill acquisition.

- The college provides resources such as CareerSource Polk, partnerships with local business owners, and certifications available for multiple careers needed according to the CLNA. Staff has a strong understanding of what careers are growing in the local area.
- No reasonable services and accommodations are denied to those students who self-declare a disability. They refer to disabled students as exceptional and have extensive policies and procedures on identifying and accommodating needs.
- CTE students have the opportunity to participate in multiple Career and Technical Student Organizations (CTSO), internships, and other work-based learning.
- PSC has multiple memorandums of understanding (MOUs) through the Polk State College Student Internship to include the following: Polk County Medical Examiners Office (Polk County Morgue), Salt Lake County Criminal Justice Services, and The Department of Corrections. See itemized in section H.
- New teachers have a two-day orientation with a learning curve of one year, which includes, hands on mentorship, ensuring the teacher is comfortable with all processes involving

policies and procedures within the college. Faculty are also required to do a project in their first year.

D.   **TECHNOLOGY AND EQUIPMENT:** refers to a review of the technology and equipment used by students and instructors in the classroom; addresses access, availability, innovation, use and condition.

- All inventory criteria set forth by EDGAR and the UGG is included within the inventory management system. The inventory management system was verified during the VDMR.
- Photographic evidence of inventory was reviewed as part of the VDMR process.
- PSC has an extensive technology plan that includes policies on new equipment requests, equipment safety/storage and disposal of old inventory.
- There have been no reports of stolen or lost equipment over the previous three fiscal years.

E.   **ACCESS AND EQUITY:** refers to compliance with the requirements of federal non-discrimination laws as relating to recruitment, enrollment, participation and completion of programs.

- The Office of Equal Educational Opportunity (OEEO) for school districts is responsible for monitoring and overseeing civil rights compliance obligations. Should you have any questions or concerns, please contact the OEEO at 850-245-0511.

F.   **RECORDS REVIEW:** refers to a review of the records and documents that evidence compliance with federal and state rules and regulations. Samples of financial and programmatic records are reviewed.

- Size, scope and quality review
- CLNA
- MIS data quality checklists
- College policies and procedures for finance and procurement
- College technology plan
- Student and employee handbooks
- Inventory records
- Procurement records
- Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) and articulation agreements
- Advisory committee records – agendas, sign in sheets, etc.
- College professional development and training records – agendas, sign-in sheets, training materials, etc.
- CTE student data review

G.   **FINANCIAL:** refers to aspects of the federal fiscal requirements that providers must meet when expending federal funds, including financial management, procurement, inventory management and allowable costs.

- PSC has financial policies and procedures to ensure the efficient management of CTE funds that filter through multiple staff at the college to ensure no errors. The final overseer is Dr. Orathai Northern.
- PSC has detailed and thorough procedures for the procurement of equipment and inventory that is funded by its federal grants. The approval process is very stringent and thorough as

evidenced by no errors on the grant budget analysis completed by the monitor team prior to compliance monitoring.

- Program directors and administrative staff meet quarterly to review expenditure reports and to determine a grant's current financial standing. Budget amendments are submitted to FDOE when required to move funds between object codes. Dr. Northern works with the financial director directly on all financial matters within the budget scope.
- PSC has a firm understanding of the needs of object codes on approved grants matching the DOE 399 final expenditure at year end. The team works together as a unit and demonstrates knowledge of budget, money allocated, and unexpended funds. All amendments were submitted in a timely manner and reflect on DOE 399s.

H. **COLLABORATION:** refers to the collaborative agreements, partnerships or memoranda of understanding (MOU) that are in place to benefit an agency's programs and students.

- PSC has numerous collaborations and MOUs within the local community. They often offer additional educational and job experiences to students within the district. The current partners are:
  o CareerSource Polk
  o CareerSource Heartland

- PSC has multiple Student internships they coordinated within the local community that serve as on the job training. The current partners include:
  o Polk County Medical Examiner
  o Salt Lake County Criminal Justice Services
  o Department of Corrections

VIII. REQUIRED RESOLUTION ACTIVITIES

CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION
1. Corrective Action Plan – PSC is not required to complete a CTE Corrective Action Plan.

IX. SUMMARY

Once the VDMR is completed, including receipt of additional requested information when applicable, a preliminary report is forwarded to the provider for review. Comments are accepted and will be considered at the discretion of the FDOE monitoring team lead. Once the final report is approved, it will be forwarded to the agency head with a copy sent to the provider designated contact person. The final report will be posted on the department's website at the following address: http://fldoe.org/academics/career-adult-edu/compliance.

Finally, the division issues a closure letter to the agency head and designated contact person. This letter indicates that all outstanding resolution items have been completed, when applicable, and that no further action is required. This letter will officially end your monitoring process.

On behalf of the department, the monitoring team extends its appreciation to all participants in the Polk State College virtual desk monitoring review. Special thanks is offered to Dr. Orathai Northern for her participation and leadership during this process.

Polk State College
Career and Technical Education
Risk Matrix

Risk Scores Matrix for Colleges Receiving Career and Technical Education (CTE) Carl D. Perkins Grants					
Agency Name: **POLK STATE COLLEGE** Program Type: **CTE** Target Year: **2018-2019** Monitoring Year: **2020-2021**					

Metric	Scaling	Point Value	Points Assigned	Weight	Total Metric Points
Number of Years Since Last Monitored	7 or More Years	7	7	X 10	70
	5-6	5			
	3-4	3			
	0-2	1			
Total Budget for all Perkins Grants Combined	Upper Quartile	7	3	X 8	24
	Upper Middle	5			
	Lower Middle	3			
	Lower Quartile	1			
Number of Perkins Grants	4 or More	7	1	X 8	8
	3	5			
	2	3			
	1	1			
Change in Management Information Systems (MIS) from Previous Fiscal Year	Yes	7	0	X 6	0
	No	0			
Agency CTE Program Director Change from Previous Fiscal Year	Yes	7	0	X 6	0
	No	0			
Unexpended Funds from all Perkins Grants Combined	Upper Quartile	7	5	X 4	20
	Upper Middle	5			
	Lower Middle	3			
	Lower Quartile	1			
	0	0			
Number of Findings from the Office of the Auditor General	Upper Quartile	7	1	X 4	4
	Upper Middle	5			
	Lower Middle	3			
	Lower Quartile	1			
	0	0			
				AGENCY RISK SCORE:	**126**

Data sources used for calculations: Prior to July 1, 2019

POLK STATE COLLEGE

POLK STATE COLLEGE

Polk State College is proud to be Polk County's largest institution of higher education, serving over 15,000 degree-seeking students and 9,000 individuals seeking workforce training each year.

The College's dedication to providing access to affordable, quality associate and baccalaureate degree programs and certificate and workforce training opportunities is a commitment to building and enhancing the local community. Over 70 percent of Polk State graduates remain in Polk County following graduation, serving as public safety and healthcare professionals, teachers, entrepreneurs, andcommunity leaders.

Some examples of why Polk State is Polk County's first choice in higher education are provided below.

Guided Pathways

Polk State uses the *Guided Pathways Model* developed by the American Association of Community Colleges and students are invited to explore the *Pathways* available to them at the College as they enroll for classes. This program provides step-by-step direction toward completing personal academic and career goals through degree attainment using an organized process that keeps students on time and on budget.

With more than 80 tracks under eight *Pathways*, students have access to specific course-based outlinesor "program maps" that provide term-by-term completion sequences to achieve degrees, certifications,and the prerequisites necessary for transferring to other institutions. Individuals can learn more about *Pathways* during the College's open house events.

In addition to the *Pathways Program* and identifying academic maps, students are familiarized with resources including Career Coach and Handshake, which provide career forecasts and networking.

The College also promotes its articulation agreements with the University of South Florida, University of Central Florida, and Florida Polytechnic University for their ease of transfer to specialized programs via pre-established pipelines. While Florida's state colleges enjoy a 2+2 articulation agreement with the State University System that guarantees any student with an Associate in Arts degree admittance to a state university, articulation agreements with specific universities offer students benefits such as guaranteed admittance into specific programs and access to university resources. In October 2020, PolkState and USF renewed their *Memorandum of Understanding* for the FUSE Program, which provides transfer pipelines for those seeking to enter Behavioral Health and Health Sciences fields.

Career Pathways

Polk State, in partnership with the Polk County School District, has established career pathways for

students enrolled in Career and Technical Education courses at the district career academies or technical colleges. Students who complete courses, earn industry certifications, and/or pass stipulated exams may articulate that completion or earning into college credit toward a respective Associate in Science degree at the College.

Furthermore, Polk State is a member of the Tampa Bay Career Pathways Consortium that enables individuals who completed a career or technical program from a selected county to articulate credit toward a program at Polk State.

Establishing Leaders in Teacher Education (ELITE)

In 2018, Polk State College in partnership with Polk County Public Schools launched an initiative to address the statewide teacher shortage by creating a pathway from high school to college to employment for aspiring educators.

The Establishing Leaders in Teacher Education (ELITE) program allows students to earn associate degrees in high school and seamlessly transition into Polk State's Education baccalaureate program. Graduates will be immediately eligible to teach with Polk County Public Schools – Polk County's largest employer. Students at Ridge Community, Haines City, and Bartow high schools have the opportunity to dual enroll through the ELITE program and earn associate degrees at no cost to them. This puts them on a fast track to earning their bachelor's degrees from Polk State two years after graduating high school, making them eligible to teach by the time they are 20 years old.

Career and Technical Education Licensure Pass Rates

Polk State prides itself on providing quality higher education and workforce training, and this is evident in the success of its students and graduates.

Polk State Nursing graduates, for example, achieved a 100 percent pass rate on the National Council Licensure Examination – Registered Nurse (NCLEX-RN) compared to the 76 percent state pass rate and 89 percent national pass rate in the first quarter of 2020.

Polk State Radiography boasts a 100 percent employment rate and Polk State Respiratory Care holds a 100 percent credentialing success rate.

Polk State Emergency Medical Services Paramedic graduates have a 100 percent licensure pass rate and Emergency Medical Technician graduates have a pass rate of 95 percent.

Polk State Kenneth C. Thompson Institute for Public Safety (KCTIPS) Basic Law Enforcement Academy graduates have achieved a 100 percent pass rate on the State Officers Certification Exam (SOCE) since 2017. Additionally, for the 2019-2020 Academic Year, KCTIPS students have demonstrated a 98 percent pass rate on their first attempt on the state exam, the second highest average in the state of Florida.

Supporting Students During the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency

Polk State College temporarily suspended on-campus courses and services at the onset of the COVID-19 public health emergency and quickly shifted to providing all academic and student support services in the remote environment.

Recognizing the critical importance remote learning would play for the duration of the crisis, the College

determined it was critical to assess and quantify students' barriers to remote learning, determine solutions, and develop a system to provide continuous technical and academic support.

The College launched a Student Technology Survey to determine how many enrolled students did not have access to the internet or technology-based tools. Nearly 3,000 students responded to the survey in the first 24 hours.

Over 4% (129) of respondents indicated they did not have access to a computer, webcam, or internet service. Some respondents had a laptop but no webcam, which was required to run Honorlock, the College's online test proctoring system. An additional 1% of respondents only had access to a smartphone.

In response to the needs identified in the survey results, the College's IT department purchased 250 Chromebooks and 100 webcams and developed a technology loan program. They also collaborated with local partners to expand available public Wi-Fi hotspots throughout Polk County.

The College also created an Academic Support Line, a phone line that students could call to reserve technology and for support with online learning.

The Academic Support Line has served over 600 students to date and technology has been loaned to 393 students over three academic terms. Eighty-three percent of program participants were retained for one or more terms, bolstering retention, and promoting student success and degree completion.

Polk State College Foundation

The Polk State College Foundation works hand-in-hand with the College to fulfill the mission of providing access to affordable, high quality higher education. Since 2010, the Foundation has received nearly $37.4 million in grants to support the College's academic programs and student services. Additionally, the Foundation awards over $1 million in student scholarships annually, providing the opportunity for more than 1,500 students to pursue their higher education goals each year.