

Proposed State Determined Performance Levels (SDPL) for 2024-2025

Postsecondary Perkins

With the conclusion of the 2020-2024 Perkins State Plan approaching on June 30, 2024, the United States Department of Education's Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTAE) has instructed recipient states to select one of two options:

Option 1: Submit a subsequent (new) four-year State plan covering FY 2024-27, or
Option 2: Submit annual revisions to establish State Determined Performance Levels (SDPL) for FY 2024 and a budget for FY 2024.

The New York State Education Department's (NYSED) Office of Career and Technical Education (CTE) and Office of Postsecondary Access, Support, and Success (OPASS) have selected Option 2. SDPL and budgets are due to OCTAE on May 1, 2024. Prior to that time, the state must provide a 60-day period for stakeholder feedback, and the state must respond in writing to any feedback it receives.

The table below provides New York State's postsecondary CTE students' actual performance for a two-year period; the averages of those two years, upon which OCTAE's Floors (baselines) are determined; New York State's postsecondary students' performance during a third year, 2022-2023, as well as the averages of those three years together; and New York State's proposed SDPL for the upcoming year, 2024-2025; followed by an explanation of those proposed SDPLs.

Core Indicator	2020-2021	2021-2022	2-year average	2022-2023	3-year average	USDOE's Floor	Proposed SDPL 2024-2025
1P1: Postsecondary Retention and Placement	35.93%	36.02%	35.98%	40.5%	37.48%	35.99%	37.00%
2P1: Earned Recognized Postsecondary Credential	52.39%	50.89%	51.64%	51.33%	51.54%	51.65%	51.00%
3P1: Nontraditional Program Enrollment	25.33%	29.60%	27.47%	28.81%	27.91%	27.48%	27.50%

Explanation of Proposed State Determined Performance Levels:

Public community colleges across New York State are currently in different stages of recovery and reorganization since the onset of the pandemic in March 2020. In the spring of 2020, colleges generally converted from mostly in-person instruction to exclusively remote instruction. During the Fall 2023 semester, some colleges converted back to in-person instruction, while others maintained a hybrid approach, with some coursework in-person and some online.

Additionally, many state community colleges have lost high numbers of administrators and instructors since the beginning of the pandemic, from people leaving to cover childcare needs; to individuals retiring during the pandemic or upon their return to work; to people dissatisfied with having to return to the office. These departures have reportedly exacerbated the colleges' capacity to recruit, support, and graduate students. Many community colleges have reported to OPASS that staff shortages and trying to usher in the necessary adaptations to the changing conditions at their colleges have had an impact on student outcomes such as those related to SDPL.

College administrators have reported that the extensive campus closures and COVID-related restrictions have had substantial and continuing impacts on college students. Since returning from the pandemic, many students have struggled with executive function, organizational skills, and focus. Instructors report that the social conditions around teaching and learning have changed rapidly due to differing expectations in both in-person and virtual learning environments. Administrators and stakeholders report that students now need more supplemental supports to adjust and succeed, and these include counseling and efforts to foster interpersonal skills. Mental and emotional health, time-management, and functional communication skills continue to be significant needs among students to ensure their retention and completion. As a result of all of these changes and the need for additional support for students, administrators anticipate more fluctuation in student performance, persistence, completion, and placement over the next few years.

As college instructors, administrators, and students continue to adapt to these changes, we expect to see further fluctuation in performance in the Core Indicators on the state level.

1P1: Postsecondary Retention and Placement

Since the height of the pandemic, New York State's public community college CTE programs have seen an increase in retention and placement, from 35.93% to 40.50%. As colleges continue their shift from virtual courses to a combination of virtual and in-person courses, we expect 1P1 performance to fluctuate somewhat, and then to continue to improve slowly.

A note about retention:

Colleges have reported that incoming students, who are recent high school graduates, have generally begun their college experiences less prepared than their pre-pandemic counterparts. Many of the new college students had later-year high school experiences full of unique challenges, including the sudden conversion from in-person classes to

virtual classwork, all while facing the uncertainties brought on by the pandemic. These students may lack some of the academic and/or social skills prior students may have brought with them to college. As a result, retention performance over the next few years may be at risk and is likely to fluctuate more than is typical.

A note about placement:

New York State's Office of Higher Education has dedicated additional resources over the last year to helping college administrators learn how to collect placement data more accurately and thoroughly. We anticipate that these resources will eventually contribute to a gradual improvement in statewide 1P1 performance, but this may not occur until a few years from now, after institutions have had time to implement new strategies and record more accurate placement data.

2P1: Earned Recognized Postsecondary Credential

New York State's public community colleges have experienced fluctuation over the last three years in 2P1: Earned Recognized Postsecondary Credential. Earned credentials dropped by 1.5% from 2020 to 2021, and then made a minimal recovery, rising by only .44% from 2021 to 2022.

The effects of the pandemic on students will likely have a more severe and lasting impact on this Core Indicator than on the other two Core Indicators. While retention and placement may certainly suffer in the wake of the pandemic, as might nontraditional enrollment by gender, we expect completion numbers to face greater drops and to take longer to recover.

New York was among the states hardest hit by the pandemic, with some of the highest rates of fatalities in the country. When adjusted for age and population size, New York State had the most Covid deaths in the nation in 2020 and the fourth most in 2021.¹ Overall, from the onset of the pandemic in March 2020 through October 2023, New York State has had the fourth greatest number of deaths.² As of November 2023, New York State still has the fifth highest rate of people hospitalized with Covid-19 in the nation.³

In New York City, where the population density was approximately 26,403 people per square mile, the virus caused severe disruption, resulting in more fatalities than in many cities across the country, and causing everyday life to change drastically for most citizens. College students suddenly found themselves without childcare, responsible for caring for elders, without public transportation on which they rely to get to work or school, and intermittently on lockdown, isolated at home, often with children and other family members in small spaces, trying to complete their college coursework remotely when they had never done so before.

During the pandemic many students left college, planning on postponing their education until the conclusion of the pandemic. Some have not yet returned. Out of necessity,

¹ https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/pressroom/sosmap/covid19_mortality_final/COVID19.htm

² <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/us/covid-cases.html>

³ <https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/2020/national/coronavirus-us-cases-deaths/?state=US>

others transitioned to taking fewer courses as they faced additional childcare or elder care responsibilities. While many of these students will eventually earn their degrees, certificates, or licenses, they may do so at a far slower pace than they had originally intended to.

Anecdotally, college administrators have reported that many students who were enrolled full-time prior to the pandemic are now enrolled part-time, are taking courses far more gradually, and some sparsely or occasionally as their schedules and finances allow. While these students may eventually graduate, they will likely take far longer to do so, and some may not graduate at all.

Some student support modalities, such as tutoring, may face even further delays in returning to normal because the tutors themselves are often college students. This may also be the case with student advisors.

Colleges are now offering more online courses and may need a lot more time to adapt to this, so additional online student support will continue to be necessary for them to recover.

Given this slowing down of graduation rates, New York State's postsecondary Perkins office proposes to drop slightly below the floor for 2P1, 51.65, to 51.00. It is believed that recovery of the three core indicators will occur first with 1P1, as hiring demand is stable or increasing over time, so graduates are expected to continue to experience placement success, despite pandemic effects. Next, as childcare options become more prevalent, more people who became responsible for childcare during the pandemic will be more able to participate in post-secondary career education, thus increasing the 3P1 measure of non-traditional career participation. Finally, it is expected that 2P1 will be the last core indicator to recover from pandemic effects, as students gradually increase their productivity, after the large reduction in academic productivity occasioned by the pandemic. These increases in student productivity are expected to be delayed, and not return to pre-pandemic rates of increase, until most or all pre-pandemic conditions return to normal on post-secondary campuses across the state.

3P1: Nontraditional Program Enrollment

Over a three-year period, New York State's 3P1 performance has increased and then fallen off slightly. The proposed target of 27.50% exceeds New York State's original 2020-2024 State plan target of 17% by a total increase of 10.50%.