






MISSISSIPPI  
DEPARTMENT OF  
EDUCATION

Office of Career and Technical Education  
Extended Contract and Program Change Assurances Form • 1/24/24 • mdek12.org

## Program Change Request

This section acknowledges and attests to the submission of a request for a new program or a program conversion, hold, or termination, and certifies that the information submitted through Lotus Notes is true and correct to the best of the district’s knowledge and belief.

### New Program/Program Hold or Termination

Program	School #	Indicate Termination, Hold, or New Program
Welding (CIP Code 48.0508)	006	New
Electrical (CIP Code 46.0302)	006	New
Aquaculture (CIP Code 01.0303)	011	New
Sports Medicine (CIP Code 51.0000)	011	New

### Program Conversion

Current Program	School #	New Program

The local board of trustees of the district recommended the approval of the proposed program application(s) and agreed to provide adequate funds for operation.

Please answer the following questions.

Question #1: Describe the results of the comprehensive local needs assessment conducted in conjunction with business and industry partners and local/regional workforce development agencies.



The Jackson County School District conducted a Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment (CLNA) in collaboration with regional business and industry partners, program advisory committees, and workforce development representatives aligned to AccelerateMS Ecosystem 8. The review included Lightcast Q1 2026 labor market projections, employer consultation, credential attainment data, enrollment trends, and program capacity analysis.

The CLNA identified sustained workforce demand and documented skills shortages in advanced manufacturing, construction trades, healthcare, and agriculture sectors across the Mississippi Gulf Coast region.

Labor market data for Ecosystem 8 indicate:

- **Construction and Extraction Occupations:** 17,245 jobs in 2025 increasing to 17,489 by 2030, with 1,501 average annual openings and median annual earnings of \$47,793.
- **Production Occupations (Advanced Manufacturing/Welding):** 17,186 jobs in 2025 increasing to 17,470 by 2030, with 1,979 average annual openings and median annual earnings of \$46,286.
- **Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations:** 20,203 jobs in 2025 increasing to 21,133 by 2030, reflecting 929 net new jobs and 1,347 average annual openings with median annual earnings of \$65,814.
- **Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Occupations:** 1,428 jobs in 2025 increasing to 1,489 by 2030, with 233 average annual openings. Agricultural worker occupations specifically project growth from 678 to 732 jobs.

Industry partners in shipbuilding, construction, healthcare, and marine/aquaculture sectors confirmed ongoing difficulty in recruiting credentialed and work-ready employees. Advisory committee feedback emphasized the need for expanded credential attainment, increased hands-on training aligned to industry standards, and strengthened work-based learning opportunities.

The CLNA also identified strong student interest and enrollment growth in programs aligned to these sectors. During the 2025–2026 school year, the district self-funded the launch and expansion of Welding, Electrical, Aquaculture, and Sports Medicine programs in response to documented workforce needs. Enrollment demand for 2026–2027 further confirms these findings:

- 140 applications for 60 Welding seats
- Active waitlists in Electrical and Sports Medicine
- Aquaculture enrollment projected to double from the prior year
- Overall district CTE enrollment projected to increase by more than 100 students

The results of the CLNA demonstrate clear alignment between regional labor market demand, employer-identified workforce shortages, and sustained student interest in high-skill, high-demand career pathways.



Question #2: Describe how the eligible recipient utilized the results of the local comprehensive needs assessment to select the specific career and technical education program and activities to be funded.

The Jackson County School District utilized the findings of the Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment (CLNA) to prioritize funding for career and technical education programs aligned with documented regional workforce demand and identified program gaps.

The CLNA analysis of Lightcast Q1 2026 Ecosystem 8 labor market data identified significant annual openings in construction (1,501), production/advanced manufacturing (1,979), healthcare practitioners and technical occupations (1,347), and farming, fishing, and forestry occupations (233). Employer consultation and advisory committee input confirmed ongoing difficulty filling skilled trade, healthcare, and marine-related positions.

Based on these findings, the district prioritized funding for the following programs:

**Welding (48.0508)**

The CLNA identified sustained demand in production occupations with nearly 2,000 annual openings. Industry partners emphasized shortages in certified welders and fabrication professionals. Funding decisions were directed toward maintaining industry-standard equipment, increasing NCCER credential attainment, and supporting expanded program capacity in response to documented workforce need and 140 applications for 60 available seats for 2026–2027.

**Electrical (46.0302)**

Construction and extraction occupations reflect 1,501 annual openings regionally. Advisory committee members confirmed demand for licensed electrical professionals. Funding was prioritized to support instructional equipment, industry credentialing opportunities, and program expansion due to current waitlists and strong student demand.

**Sports Medicine (51.0000)**

Healthcare practitioners and technical occupations project 929 net new jobs by 2030 with 1,347 annual openings. The CLNA identified healthcare as one of the region’s highest growth sectors. Funding was directed toward strengthening certification opportunities, industry-aligned instructional materials, and work-based learning experiences aligned to allied health pathways.

**Aquaculture (01.0303)**

Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations project 233 annual openings with continued regional growth in marine and seafood industries. CLNA findings emphasized strengthening hands-on agricultural and aquaculture training aligned to Gulf Coast workforce needs. Funding priorities include instructional equipment and industry-aligned experiential learning resources.

Additionally, the CLNA identified enrollment growth, credential attainment expansion, and work-based learning as priority improvement areas across all programs. The district’s decision to self-fund these programs during the 2025–2026 school year demonstrated commitment to addressing workforce shortages prior to Perkins support. For 2026–2027, overall CTE enrollment is projected to increase by more than 100 students, reinforcing the alignment between labor market demand and student interest.



Perkins funds were therefore selected and allocated to support programs with:

- Documented high annual openings
- Verified employer demand
- Demonstrated student enrollment growth
- Identified needs for credential expansion and equipment modernization

These funding decisions directly reflect the results of the CLNA and ensure alignment between program investment, regional workforce shortages, and student career readiness outcomes.

## Assurances and Certifications

We certify that the purpose, objectives, activities, and budget represented in this application submitted through Lotus Notes along with all assurances and certifications herein are true and correct to the best of our knowledge and belief, and that funds have been budgeted and will be utilized for the successful operation of Career Technical Education (CTE) programs.

	Name (Blue Ink Only)	Signature (Blue Ink Only)	Date
Superintendent or President			
Local School Board Chair			
Business Manager			
CTE Director or CTE Contact	Steven Covington		3/4/26

Please sign, scan and upload to your district's Extended Contract and Program Change Request section in Lotus Notes

(Please make sure all signatures are in blue ink)

If there are any questions, please email Christy Todd at [ctodd@mdek12.org](mailto:ctodd@mdek12.org)

Office of Career and Technical Education Bureau  
of Compliance and Reporting

