

Perkins Reserve Grant Recipients FY 2026

The Perkins Reserve Grant supports local education agencies in testing or expanding innovative solutions to barriers in achieving key goals under *The Blueprint for Maryland's Future*. The Maryland State Department of Education collaborated with the Governor's Workforce Development Board's Career and Technical Education (CTE) Committee to create this grant program. The Maryland State Department of Education advertised and administered the Perkins Reserve Grant in FY 2026, while the CTE Committee used data and findings from site visits by the CTE Expert Review Team to create high-leverage strategies to inform the proposals.

This grant program asked applicants to focus on establishing or expanding Registered Apprenticeships or quality pre-apprenticeship programs that lead directly to a Registered Apprenticeship within a Maryland public school district. The goal was to utilize the apprenticeship model to prepare students for Maryland's high-demand priority sectors or other sectors with high regional demand. The FY 2026 Perkins Reserve Grant recipients focus on fulfilling this goal through scalable, data-informed solutions.

Calvert County Public Schools, Award Amount: \$180,000

Calvert County Public Schools will launch the Calvert Culinary Career Collective, a pre-apprenticeship consortium expanding access to culinary Registered Apprenticeships in a region currently lacking postsecondary culinary programs. The project will install commercial-grade kitchens and add staff in four high schools to provide hands-on instruction aligned with industry-recognized credentials. Partners—including No Thyme to Cook, the Tri-County Council of Southern Maryland, and the Calvert County Minority Business Alliance—will collaborate quarterly on work-based learning, employer recruitment, and curriculum design. This countywide initiative addresses equity gaps, removes transportation barriers, and positions Calvert County as a model for scalable apprenticeship growth in the hospitality sector.

Harford County Public Schools, Award Amount: \$117,769

Harford County Public Schools will expand its Registered Apprenticeship program in IT and cybersecurity, growing participation from 4 to 8 students annually through its partnership with Defense Interns as they seek Maryland Department of Labor registration. Although Harford County Public Schools supported 330 apprentices last year, none were in Registered Apprenticeships. Guided by a comprehensive local needs assessment, this initiative addresses CTE performance gaps by emphasizing credential attainment, equity for special populations, and secondary-to-postsecondary transitions. This effort will expand peer mentorship, stackable credentials from the state-approved industry-recognized credential list, and work-based learning. Through these strategies, the program aims to improve student outcomes, advance economic development, and expand access for special populations.

Frederick County Public Schools, Award Amount: \$68,831

Frederick County Public Schools will serve students across 10 high schools, the Career and Technology Center, and an alternative school, with a focus on special populations. The project introduces a Mobile Safety Lab delivering training to simulate real-world scenarios, increase student engagement, and build workplace readiness. The training will align with industry-recognized credentials and OSHA 30-hour training requirements. Integrated into CTE programs, the lab expands equitable access to hands-on instruction and supports credential attainment. With industry partners shaping content, mentoring, and hiring pipelines, the initiative strengthens apprenticeship preparation, employer confidence, and long-term workforce development.

Montgomery County Public Schools, Award Amount: \$124,513

Montgomery County Public Schools will establish an equitable “Apprenticeships by Pathway” model that leads to Registered Apprenticeship and career pathways for students. This includes, but is not limited to, students who are economically disadvantaged, emergent multilingual learners, students with disabilities, and nontraditional students. Through MD Works, Montgomery County Public Schools partnered with Kuder Navigator to establish one platform all students use to apply to apprenticeships and monitor related instruction and employment training progress. The barrier now is access to nontraditional Pre- and Registered Apprenticeships; therefore, the focus will be on expanding Registered Apprenticeship pathways in Healthcare and Education, while introducing a Life Sciences Apprenticeship pathway in Biotechnology to increase Registered Apprenticeship retention by 5%.