Year One Program Evaluation

Perkins Innovation and Modernization Grant

PR/Award Number: V051F230142

Mexico Public Schools 59, Mexico Missouri

Program Evaluator

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Introduction

In 2024, the United States Department of Education Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education awarded the Perkins Innovation and Modernization Grant to the Mexico Public School District 59 in Mexico, Missouri. The grant, award number V051F230142, provides a performance period from February, 2024 through February, 2027. Implementation of the grant began immediately after receiving the GAN. The grant began making a tangible impact in the school community during the 2024-2025 school year.

As stated in the initial grant application, the community in Mexico still struggles from the closing of two major employers: a firebrick company and a regional hospital.

> *Dozens of barriers and challenges impact Mexico, Missouri's children, youth, and families. Specifically, in Mexico, more than one in four households with children are economically disadvantaged; nearly 77% of students in our district qualify for free/reduced price meals; and our students attend an under-performing school where the portion of students deemed proficient in all subject areas is significantly lower than the state average. Nearly 80% of our students meet one or more risk factors that identify them as a high-need or "priority" student. We have identified characteristics ranging from poverty to chronic absenteeism to first generation college goers and more.*

To mitigate the challenges faced by its students, Mexico 59 partnered with two organizations to implement the grant. Partners for Rural Impact, a non profit organization focused on providing opportunities for rural students, is named as a sub grantee of the award.

Tyron Lue's Commitment to Community, a local affiliate of PRI, is also instrumental in the work. Tyron Lue, a Mexico native, is a three time NBA champion and coach of the USA Olympic basketball team. Lue provides a living example to Mexico students of what can be achieved with hard work. His support is immeasurable.

Grant Description and Objectives

The stated objectives of the Perkins Innovation and Modernization grant program is "to identify, support, and rigorously evaluate evidence-based and innovative strategies and activities to improve and modernize career and technical education (CTE) and ensure workforce skills taught in CTE programs funded under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (Perkins V), align with labor market needs."

Mexico 59 organized its implementation of the grant according to four keys to career-connected high schools identified by the U.S. Department of Education.

Key 1: Navigating Pathways

Students will be provided time and support to explore career pathways.

Students will be provided time and support to set and evaluate their post secondary plans.

Key 2: Dual Credit Eligibility

All students will be supported in their efforts to enroll in, and complete, courses for college credit while in high school. Financial and other barriers will be mitigated.

Key 3: Work-based Learning Experiences

Students will be provided opportunities to engage in work-based learning experiences to assist their development of real word job skills.

Key 4: Industry Recognized Credentials

Students will be supported in their efforts to gain industry recognized credentials. Financial and other barriers will be mitigated.

Evaluation Methodology

As stated in the grant application, the evaluation of the first year of implementation for the PIM grant included "a mixed methodology, integrating quantitative and qualitative data." Survey tools were developed and interviews were conducted to capture important data points. Data was collected, analyzed, and coded in keeping with methodology prescribed by Creswell (2014). Additionally, internal documents such as calendars and emails were analyzed. Press releases documenting important milestones which were shared with the community were also reviewed.

Findings

Primary Initiatives:

A review of internal documents, calendars, and press releases found Mexico Public Schools 59 engaged in a variety of initiatives, which were funded by the PIM grant. The initiatives are detailed in Figure 1.

Figure 1

Primary Initiatives	
Key Objectives	**Initiatives**
Key #1: Navigating Pathways	Hiring of project manager and career navigator. Implementation of manufacturing tour, find your path event, and college fair.
Key #2: Dual Credit	Tuition support for students enrolled in dual credit. Tuition support for teachers earning dual credit credentials. Support for computers for students enrolled in dual credit classes.
Key #3:Work based learning experiences	Adoption of MOU with the Mexico Area YMCA apprenticeship program for students interested in education or human service careers. Implementation of apprenticeship program with the district technology department for students interested in careers in technology.
Key #4: Industry recognized credentials	Financial support for the cost of cosmetology kits for students enrolled in the cosmetology program at Hart Career Center. Tuition assistance for instructors earning CTE credentials.

Key 1: Navigating Pathways

A review of internal documents demonstrates the PIM grant supported students in navigating career paths with the placement of a project manager and career navigator at Mexico High School. These positions are staffed by PRI employees. Additionally the grant supports the work of a project analyst who is employed by Mexico Public Schools. Three events were held which allowed students to explore career paths. Over 80 college and post secondary organizations participated in a college fair which allowed students to interact with representatives. The event was held at Mexico High School on September 19, 2025. On October 3, 2024, Mexico High School students toured five local manufacturing companies who serve as major employers in the area: True Manufacturing, Spartan, Zenith Aircraft Company, Continental Products, and Fluid Power Support. On November 14, 2024, Mexico High School hosted the Find Your Path Career Exploration Fair, which featured 50 local employers. Employers in fields such as manufacturing, banking, health services, construction, and government services were present.

Quantitative Data

A survey tool captured perceptual data of key stakeholders who were asked to evaluate the effectiveness of the PIM grant in supporting the efforts of students in developing, aligning, and revising career navigation plans. Results of the survey are detailed below.

Very effective: 45.5%

Effective: 36.4%

Ineffective: 18.2%

Very ineffective: 0%

Qualitative Data

A review of qualitative data collected by the survey tool demonstrates stakeholders are pleased with the opportunities the grant provides, but they also acknowledge the work supported by the grant has potential to grow.

One respondent shared, “The PIM grant has been very helpful by providing resources to students and teachers.” Another respondent offered, “We are still in the developing stages of implementing the PIM grant, so some of the responses should be qualified as ‘not effective, yet.’ There’s lots of potential here, we just need to get the people on board and doing the work.”

Key 2: Dual Credit Eligibility

A review of internal data demonstrates dual credit support has been a highlight of the work associated with the PIM grant. In the fall of 2024, the district supported all students enrolled in dual credit classes with financial assistance, which totaled 131 students enrolled in 647. According to the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, over 70% of students in the Mexico Public School District 59 receive free or reduced lunch, and the support was well received. A district press release quoted Dominique Carpenter, a student who received support. “This allows me to focus on my assignments in Mr Schenewerk’s class and keep learning without the burden of financial stress on me or my mom. It’s a fantastic opportunity, and I couldn’t be more grateful!” In the spring semester of 2025, the PIM grant supported any student who was in his or her first six hours of dual credit. In addition to supporting students with tuition assistance, the grant funded tuition reimbursement for two high school teachers who are working toward credentials that will allow them to teach dual credit classes at Mexico High School. The district also purchased laptops for students enrolled in dual credit programs with PIM funds.

Quantitative Data

A survey tool captured perceptual data of key stakeholders who were asked to evaluate the effectiveness of the PIM grant in supporting students in their dual credit efforts. Results of the survey are detailed below.

- Very effective: 44.4%
- Effective: 55.6%
- Ineffective: 0%
- Very ineffective: 0%

Qualitative Data

A review of qualitative data collected reveals stakeholders are impressed with the program's ability to expand the number of students who enroll in dual credit programs. One respondent stated, "More students have been able to take dual credit courses due to the financial assistance." Another respondent felt the impact of the PIM grant as a parent and a teacher, stating, "I teach classes where students are benefiting from dual credit tuition assistance, and I am currently taking courses in order to teach dual credit and have benefited from tuition reimbursement. I feel this grant has had a positive impact on my students, my own efforts to improve my teaching, on my family's opportunities, and on the community as a whole."

Key 3: Work-based Learning Experiences

A review of internal data demonstrates the district has engaged with one employer in the community to initiate a paid apprenticeship program for Mexico High School students, the Mexico Area YMCA. Sixteen students will facilitate after school educational programs for elementary students. Students were selected from a pool of students who are interested in pursuing careers in education or human services. The agreement to support the apprenticeship

program was outlined in a Memorandum of Understanding between the Mexico Area YMCA and the Mexico Public School District 59 in the November, 2024, school board meeting. Additionally, the district began a paid apprenticeship program in its technology department. Two students who are interested in careers in computer information technology were selected. The placement of students in the workforce directly addresses the common criticisms of CTE programs identified by Imperatore and Hyslop (2017) that students are not exposed directly to the demands of employers.

Quantitative Data

A survey tool captured perceptual data of key stakeholders who were asked to evaluate the effectiveness of the PIM grant in supporting work based learning experiences. Results of the survey are detailed below.

- Very effective: 36.4%
- Effective: 45.5%
- Ineffective: 18.2%
- Very ineffective: 0%

Qualitative Data

A review of qualitative data collected from stakeholders demonstrates a degree of enthusiasm around the work-based learning opportunities. One stakeholder shared, “This opportunity has enabled us to provide more workers in the childcare and youth development space, thus resulting in more impactful connections, increased program offerings and natural student to student mentorship. This grant will allow us to serve more students at a higher level.” The district’s technology director stated, “I have enjoyed working with the two students in the

technology field at Mexico Public Schools. I feel that they have gained real-world experience that would not have been possible without the PIM grant funding."

Key 4: Industry Recognized Credentials

A review of internal documents demonstrates 31 students benefited from the district's use of PIM grant funds to support their support of industry recognized credentials. The district implemented financial supports to cover the cost of cosmetology kits for students earning their CA-Hairdressing and Manicuring License at Hart Career Center. Additionally the district implemented a tuition assistance program for teachers who are earning credentials to teach career and technical education classes. Four teachers benefited from the program.

Quantitative Data

A survey tool captured perceptual data of key stakeholders who were asked to evaluate the effectiveness of the PIM grant in supporting student access to industry recognized credentials. Results of the survey are detailed below.

- Very effective: 20%
- Effective: 70%
- Ineffective: 10%
- Very ineffective: 0%

Qualitative Data

A review of qualitative data collected from respondents demonstrates stakeholders appreciate the support for the cosmetology program. One respondent stated, "The help to the cosmetology program has helped the students achieve their goal." Another shared, "The PIM grant has been very helpful by providing resources for students and teachers. In particular, the

help with the cosmetology kits removed a barrier for several of our students and enabled them to pursue their career path.”

Mexico 59 PIM Grant Quick Facts

PIM Supported Actions:

- College fair at Mexico High School- 80 institutions represented
- Manufacturing day- Mexico High School students toured five manufacturers
- Find Your Path Career Day at Mexico High School- 50 employers represented
- 131 students received tuition assistance to take dual credit courses
- 2 teachers received tuition assistance to earn dual credit credentials
- 2 employers hired 18 students to engage in paid work-based learning experiences
- 31 students received financial assistance for cosmetology kits
- 4 teachers received tuition assistance to earn CTE credentials
- Project manager, career navigator, and analyst positions established

Financial Analysis

To date the district has drawn $142,000 of the available PIM funds.

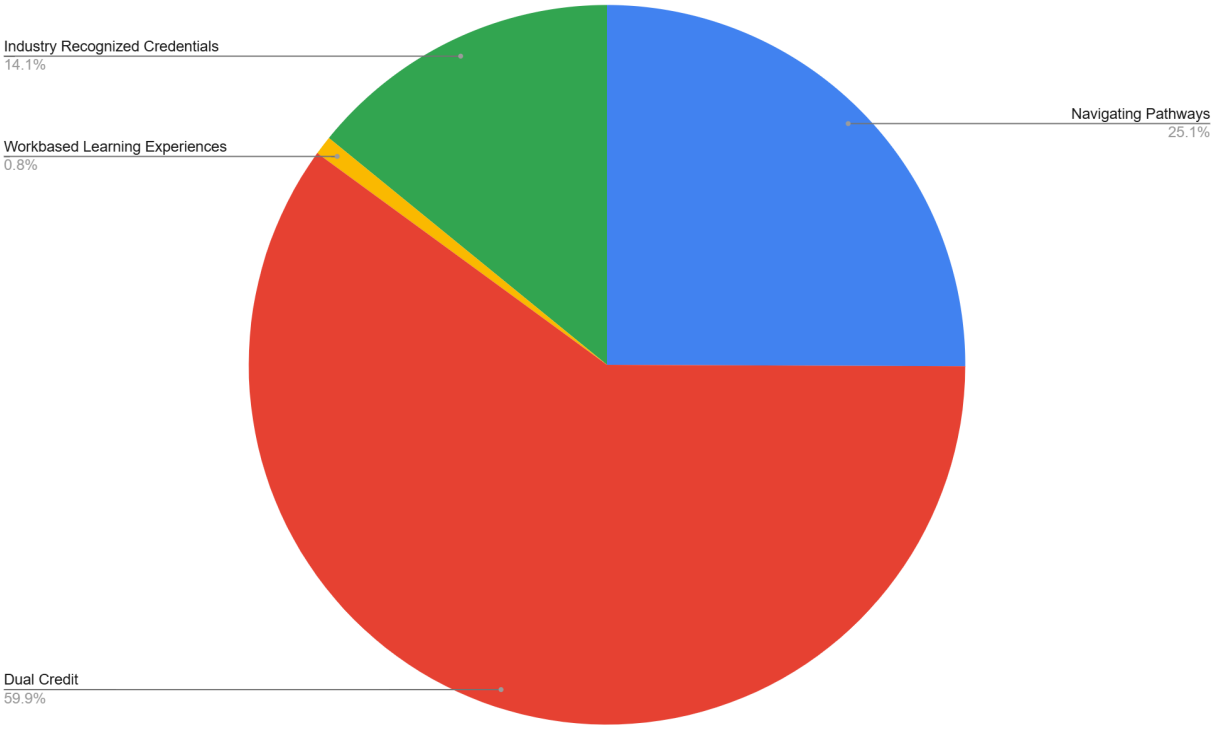
Navigating pathways: $35,595.56

Dual Credit: $85,118.80

Work-based Learning Experiences: $1,200.64

Industry Recognized Credentials: $20,085.00

Figure 2



Conclusions

A review of all available data indicates that Mexico High School Students benefited from the Perkins Innovation and Modernization Grant. The primary financial investment has been in dual credit support. Stakeholders see dual credit support and support for industry recognized credentials as the grants biggest successes. Work-based learning experiences are not perceived by stakeholders as being as successful; however, it should be noted the work based learning experiences did not fully begin until second semester. The team leading the work supported by the PIM grant work includes the project manager, career navigator, and district's project analyst. The project manager did not start in the role until midway through the first semester of the school year. The career navigator assumed the position at the beginning of the spring semester of 2025. As the team works together, additional successes are likely.

Sources

Creswell, J. (2014). *Research design* (4th ed.) Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

Imperatore & Hyslop (2017) CTE Policy Past, Present, and Future. *Peabody Journal of Education.*

Innovation and Modernization Program. Perkins Collaborative Resource Network. https://cte.ed.gov/grants/innovation-and-modernization-grant-program

Supporting Documents

Exhibit 1

Memorandum of Understanding

The purpose of this document is to outline the agreement between Mexico Public Schools and the Mexico Area Family YMCA regarding work-based learning experiences funded through the U.S. Department of Education's PIM grant (V051F230142). Mexico Public Schools will utilize funds designated for work-based learning experiences in the Mexico School District Perkins Innovation and Modernization Grant Federal Budget Narrative, submitted October 4, 2024, to support this work. Mexico Public School students interested in careers in education will be provided paid internship positions in the Mexico Area Family YMCA's expanded Afterschool Program. Mexico Public Schools will reimburse Mexico Area Family YMCA for expenses up to $25,000 from January 1, 2025 through June 30, 2025.

Mexico Area Family YMCA Responsibilities:

- Students will be employed solely by the Mexico Area Family YMCA at a rate of $13.75/hour.
- Mexico Area Family YMCA will be solely responsible for supervising and evaluating the performance of student interns.
- Mexico Area Family YMCA will be solely responsible for all IRS and MODOR payroll requirements.
- Mexico Area Family YMCA will be solely responsible for conducting background checks.
- Mexico Area Family YMCA will commit to interviewing any Mexico Public School student who is interested in a career in education.
- Mexico Area Family YMCA will provide all requested payroll information for the time period invoiced for reimbursement to the Mexico Public School District.
- Mexico Area Family YMCA will submit reimbursement requests via email to acctpayable@mexico.k12.mo.us by the 5th day of each month.
- Mexico Area Family YMCA will provide a W-9 to be kept on file for the Mexico Public School's business operations department.

Mexico Public Schools Responsibilities:

- Mexico Public Schools will pay all invoices within 20 days of receipt.
- Mexico Public Schools will be solely responsible for ensuring expenditures are allowable expenses in the grant guidelines.
- Mexico Public Schools will be solely responsible for submitting pay requests to the U.S. Department of Education to cover the costs of the work-based learning experiences with the Mexico Area Family YMCA.

Conditions:

- This agreement may be terminated by either party with 30 days written notice.
- This agreement expires June 30, 2025.
- Representatives from both entities will meet prior to June 1 to evaluate the renewal of the MOU.

Date of agreement: _____

Mexico Area Family YMCA designated official/title:_____

Mexico Public Schools designated official/title: _____

Exhibit 2

Institutions Participating in Mexico High School College Fair

Air Force Reserve	Norwich University
Air National Guard	Ozarks Technical Community College
American Welding Academy	Paul Mitchell the School Missouri Columbia
Army	Principia College
Army National Guard	Quincy University
Central Christian College of the Bible	Ranken Technical College
Central Methodist University	Southeast Missouri State University
Central Methodist University (School of Health Professions)	Spurgeon College
Central Ozarks Private Industry Council / Missouri Job Center	St. Louis Job Corps
Cleveland University	State Fair Community College
Columbia College	State Tech
Culver-Stockton College	Stephens College
Department of Higher Education and Workforce Development	Tarleton State University
Dept of Higher Ed & Workforce Development	The Darr College of Agriculture at Missouri State University
Dogwood Dental Assisting School	The United States Merchant Marine Academy
Drury University	The University of Central Missouri
Emery Sapp & Sons	Truman State ROTC
Evangel University	Truman State University
Evangel University	U.S. Army JAG Corps (Fort Leavenworth OSJA)
Graceland University	United States Air Force
Grand River Welding Institute	United States Coast Guard
Great Lakes Maritime Academy	United States Marine Corps
Hannibal-LaGrange University	United States Navy
Hult International Business School	Universal Technical Institute
LINCOLN TECH	University of Illinois Springfield
Lincoln University Army ROTC	University of Missouri - College of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources
Lincoln University of Missouri	University of Missouri - College of Education & Human Development
Lindenwood University	University of Missouri - Kansas City
Lyon College	University of Missouri Engineering
Marion Military Institute	University of Missouri-College of Health Sciences
Millikin University	University of Missouri-Columbia
Mission University	University of Missouri-St. Louis
Missouri S&T Army ROTC	University of Missouri-St. Louis
Missouri Science and Technology	University of Saint Mary
Missouri State University	Upper Iowa University

Missouri Welding Institute	Wartburg College
Missouri Welding Institute	WashU
Missouri Western State University	Webster University
Moberly Area Community College	Western Illinois University
North Central Missouri College	Westminster College
Northwest Missouri State University	

Exhibit 3

Employers Participating in Mexico High School Find Your Path Event

Audrain Ambulance District	IBEW L.U. 257
Audrain County	Job Finders
Audrain County Crisis Intervention	Kingdom Telephone
Audrain County Emergency Management	KXEO/KWWR
Audrain County Juvenile Office	MACC
Audrain County Road & Bridge	Mexico Animal Hospital
Audrain DD Services	Mid America Carpenters Regional Council
Bank of Missouri	Missouri Department of Corrections
Boone Health	MO Veterans Home
Capital Academy	MU Healthcare
Central Bank of Audrain County	MU-RPDC: Career Pathways
City of Mexico	National Guard
City of Mexico ParkRec	People's Bank
City of Mexico Public Safety	POET
CMCA	Realty 365
Consolidated Electric	Roofers Local 20
Construction Craft Apprenticeship Program	Septagon
Continental Products	SMART Local 36
COPIC - Missouri Job Center	State of Missouri: Office of Administration
Department of Social Services	True Manufacturing
Emery Sapp & Sons	United Credit Union
Gallaher Insurance	United States Army
Gold Crest	United States Marines
Home Bank	YMCA (Mexico)

Exhibit 4

Press Release Regarding Dual Credit Assistance

All Mexico High School students enrolled in dual credit (DC) courses for fall semester had their classes paid for by the Perkins Innovation & Modernization (PIM) Grant through the US Department of Education and attained by C2C.

In total, the PIM grant covered 131 MHS students enrolled in 674 dual credit courses.

Dominique Carpenter was sitting in the library when she received word that her balance due for her American History dual credit course was zero. The first person she texted was her mother.

“This allows me to focus on my assignments in Mr. Schenewerk’s class and keep learning without the burden of financial stress on me or my mom. It's a fantastic opportunity, and I couldn't be more grateful!” Carter registered for the class because several upperclassmen shared with her to enroll in college credit courses; she also enjoys American History.

Senior Dylan Reid is enrolled in dual credit Composition I, online with Mrs. Galloway, and American Government, instructed by Mr. Senor. He spent the summer saving up so he could pay for half of the classes and alleviate the expense from his mom. “When Mrs. Yancey told me no payment was due, I thought she was kidding. The first person I told was my mom, and it was a huge relief off our shoulders.”

Dylan plans to attend Missouri State University in Springfield to major in Music Education and minor in English. “I enrolled in Dual Credit classes so that I could get a headstart on my general education credits that most colleges require.”

DC classes at MHS include College Biology, Physics, American Government, and American History to 1865. Comp I and a dozen other online options are offered through Moberly Area Community College (MACC).

The PIM Grant gives students academic and workforce opportunities and provides more options for students following graduation. This initiative also emphasizes broadening access and opportunities for disadvantaged students, ensuring that every student has the chance to succeed.

An application process for student assistance with dual credit courses called *Clearing the Path* is already in place at MHS. Bright Futures Mexico covers the cost of the dual credit classes for students who need assistance with registration costs. Since 2019, Bright Futures has awarded several scholarships, ranging from $1,500 to $10,000 a semester.

When the applications were received and reviewed this semester, the committee realized PIM grant monies may be able to help even more students. As the class assistance was calculated, Superintendent Troy Lentz requested PIM funds for all the students enrolled. “I am so excited about how this grant allowed us to support our students and our families. I’m thankful for the partnership our district has with PRI and with C2C. Their efforts made this possible.”

In September when the registration monies were due, parents of students enrolled in the dual credit courses received a message from Mexico High School sharing the good news, “The district has also been notified that **all** students enrolled in a dual credit course at MHS this semester will not be charged for the class due to a U.S. Department of Education grant attained through C2C.”

Senior mom Leah Webber shared, “My daughter is enrolled in 14 credit hours this semester. We were shocked that it was paid for! We are very appreciative. Thinking about how many other parents and students this helped, having their first semester classes paid for, may allow students to enroll in more next semester! Thank you, C2C and MPS!”

As part of the PIM grant, C2C and the district continue to actively explore other avenues for students and staff, including supporting staff members who would like to attain dual credit teaching certification and expanding access to career-connected high school programs that align with the local labor market.

C2C is a collaboration of The Tyronn Lue Fund and Partners for Rural Impact (PRI). C2C is committed to improving cradle-to-career outcomes in the community and builds on Lue’s ongoing philanthropic efforts in Mexico. For more information on C2C, visit their website at c2cmexmo.org.

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Read: Mexico Public Schools secures PIM Grant, February 2024

Exhibit 5

Communication to Cosmetology Students Regarding Financial Assistance for Cosmetology Kits

January 30, 2025

Dear Cosmetology Students and Parents:

As part of our work in the community with Tyron Lue and C2C, the Mexico School District received the Perkins Innovation and Modernization (PIM) Grant for the 2024-2025 school year. Funds from this grant are being used to increase opportunities and remove barriers to education for students in Mexico and the surrounding area.

In order to ease the financial burden relating to participation in Cosmetology, PIM funds have been approved to cover all remaining kit payments for current HCC Cosmetology students. Your kit is now considered “Paid in Full.”

Please remember that a student must successfully complete the program in order to receive their kit.

If you have any questions, please contact me.

Chris Denham
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573-581-5684