**Section 254.310 General Application**

a) Each eligible recipient, as a prerequisite to obtaining vocational education funds allocated by the State Board of Education for the support of programs of instruction in vocational education, shall submit a general application to the State Board of Education in the form and manner prescribed in this Subpart.

b) The State Board of Education's policy on education for employment is intended to ensure that vocational education and other education for employment programs will be provided to youth and adults through a regionally organized delivery system that makes effective and efficient use of public schools, area vocational centers, postsecondary institutions, and the employment sector.

c) There will be a three-year implementation phase for identifying regions, developing formal agreements, and submitting regional plans.

1) By July 1, 1986, public school districts receiving federal and state assistance shall become participants in a regional system organized through a cooperative agreement. In most instances, regional systems will coincide with educational service regions. Public schools in Cook County will form regional systems within the context of the community college district(s). Public schools throughout Illinois, including Cook County, may elect to join together in consortia outside of these educational structures (e.g., combination of educational service regions or community colleges and a group of districts who have a history of cooperative vocational education programs) if they are demographically aligned into units that can best support a regional program.

2) By July 1, 1987, regional secondary systems and the community college(s) must define articulation agreements cooperative arrangements to be addressed in the local plan for education for employment as a condition for state approval of plans and programs pursuant to Section 254.390. Agreements will provide for: program alignment and continuity in a given occupational area between secondary and postsecondary institutions; transition of the student without unnecessary delay or duplication of effort from one institution to another in those occupational areas provided by both secondary and postsecondary institutions; consideration of joint use of facilities, equipment, and staff; and cooperative efforts in continuous planning, evaluation, and improvement of programs to serve both youth and adults as well as the area's economic needs.

3) By April 30, 1988, each regional system and each community college will submit a Plan for Education for Employment that includes: descriptions of the characteristics which form the basis for high-quality programs; identified program outcomes; staff development needs; related student services; business, industry, and labor involvement in the regional system; program improvement efforts; valid cooperative agreements and articulation agreements; administrative and program staffing; provision for vocational student organizations; and equipment-facility needs. Information in relation to these areas shall be provided as required in Section 254.340. Community colleges' participation in programs and services may be included, at their election, through the college's existing system or, where community colleges have entered into cooperative agreements as equal partners in an education for employment system, the college may be included in the local system plan.

(Source: Amended at 13 Ill. Reg. 8459, effective May 22, 1989)