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## 1.0 ARTICLE 1 - INTRODUCTION

### 1.01 Rationale

The Valley Education for Employment System (VALEES) was established through an Intergovernmental Agreement approved June 30, 1986. A subsequent revision to the Intergovernmental Agreement was approved October 5, 1999 and the current Intergovernmental Agreement is dated September 13, 2022. The Career and Technical Education System exists to deliver high-quality Career and Technical Education programs and services which are efficiently operated and accessible to all students through an integrated delivery system that makes effective use of public schools, area career and technical centers, regional education centers, postsecondary institutions, and the employment sector.

## 1.02 Purpose

The principal purpose of the Valley Education for Employment System is to provide skills and knowledge necessary for life-long career success for students in participating districts by fostering Career and Technical Education pathways that:

- A. Align Career and Technical Education programs to current and projected future industry and community needs.
- B. Support students in navigating and completing a personalized pathway based on their interests and goals.
- C. Combine rigorous classroom and career-connected learning opportunities to build students' technical and essential employability skills.
- D. Integrate academic and technical knowledge and skills through alignment with the State standards or competencies.
- E. Identify equity gaps in CTE access and outcomes across groups and provide targeted supports with a focus on meeting the needs of members in special populations to close those gaps.
- F. Incorporate multiple entry and exit points to progressively advance through higher levels of education, training, and employment success.

## 1.03 Intergovernmental Cooperation Legal Status

The Intergovernmental Cooperation Act provides that school districts may enter into contract with other school districts or public institutions of higher education to establish any type of educational program which local school districts may establish individually. Those school districts which enter into joint agreement shall be empowered to employ a chief executive officer and other professional staff.

Authority for governance of the System is derived from the Illinois Constitution and Statutes and the regulations of the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE).

The VALEES Coordinating Council is the policy-making body of the System and serves within the framework provided by terms of the Intergovernmental Agreement.

## 2.0 ARTICLE 2 - ORGANIZATION AND OPERATION

### 2.01 Membership

Membership shall consist of:

Batavia Public School District 101	Batavia, IL
Earlville Community Unit School District 9	Earlville, IL
East Aurora School District 131	Aurora, IL
Fox Valley Career Center	Maple Park, IL
Geneva Community Unit School District 304	Geneva, IL
Hinckley-Big Rock Community Unit School District 429	Hinckley, IL
Indian Creek School District 425	Shabbona, IL
Indian Valley Vocational Center	Sandwich, IL
Kaneland Community Unit School District 302	Maple Park, IL
Leland Community Unit School District 1	Leland, IL
Newark Community High School District 18	Newark, IL
Paw Paw Community Unit School District 271	Paw Paw, IL
Plano Area Special Education Cooperative	Plano, IL
Plano Community Unit School District 88	Plano, IL
Sandwich Community Unit School District 430	Sandwich, IL
School District 308	Oswego, IL
Serena Community Unit School District 2	Serena, IL
Somonauk Community Unit School District 432	Somonauk, IL
West Aurora School District 129	Aurora, IL
Yorkville Community Unit School District 115	Yorkville, IL

#### 2.01.01 Adding members

Membership is limited to public school districts and area career centers who derive their authority from school code 10.22.28 in the state of Illinois. A school district seeking to join the System must submit an application to the Coordinating Council, before September 1 of a given year, prior to becoming a Member in the subsequent Fiscal Year. If approved, Membership would become effective the following July 1. A school district may be admitted as a Member only upon recommendation by a 2/3 vote of all the Coordinating Council Members and approval by 2/3 of the current Member boards of education and the board of education of the school district seeking Membership. A school district seeking Membership must also meet the following conditions:

- A. A new Member shall agree to be bound by the terms of the Intergovernmental Agreement.
- B. A new Member shall execute a Resolution to Form Cooperative Agreement.

#### 2.01.02 Membership term

Membership shall be continuous, and member districts shall be bound from year to year unless any member district executes the withdrawal provision contained in 2.01.03 of this manual.

#### 2.01.03 Withdrawal

Members may withdraw from participating in the System effective as of the end of the last day of any fiscal year. To withdraw, a Member must give written notice to the Coordinating Council and the System Director of its intention to withdraw. This written notice must be given no later than eighteen (18) months preceding the effective date of the withdrawal. The withdrawing Member also must provide written notice to ISBE and all other Members no later than twelve (12) months preceding the effective date of withdrawal. If a Member gives written notice of withdrawal, that Member is to continue participation and financial obligation until the effective date of the withdrawal. If a district withdraws, all of the equipment purchased by the System remains with the System.

Payment on Withdrawal or Termination. Withdrawn and terminated Members shall continue to be liable for their prorated share of program costs for the period during which they were a Member. Withdrawing and terminating Members shall forfeit any interest in System assets (funds or property) unless the terms of a related grant provide otherwise.

#### 2.01.04 Termination

The Coordinating Council of the System may terminate the Membership of any Member for substantial deviation from the provisions of this Agreement. A proposal to terminate a Member's Membership must be initially approved by a 2/3 vote of all Coordinating Council Members. After an initial vote by the Coordinating Council approving a proposal to terminate Membership, the Coordinating Council shall notify the Member for which it is proposing termination, and all other Members, of such proposed termination. The Member for which termination is proposed may request an informal hearing before the Coordinating Council. Subsequent to any such hearing, the Coordinating Council will take a final vote. Termination must then be approved by an affirmative vote of 2/3 of all the Coordinating Council Members. The Coordinating Council shall provide notice to ISBE and all Members of final action to terminate a Member at least twelve (12) months prior to the date on which the termination is to become effective. Termination of Membership shall become effective on June 30. The decision of the Coordinating Council shall be final. If a district is terminated, all of the equipment purchased by the System remains with the System.

Payment on Withdrawal or Termination. Withdrawn and terminated Members

shall continue to be liable for their prorated share of program costs for the period during which they were a Member. Withdrawing and terminating Members shall forfeit any interest in System assets (funds or property) unless the terms of a related grant provide otherwise.

#### 2.01.05 Membership Rights

Nothing in this Agreement shall prevent the Members from maintaining programs/courses separate from the System. It is recognized that Members may offer programs/courses not included as part of the System; such programs/courses are not subject to the terms of this Agreement.

## 2.02 Organization

### 2.02.01 Structure

VALEES shall have as its structure a number of Sub-Regions connected by the Intergovernmental Agreement into a Career and Technical Education System. Sub-Regions shall be composed of school districts which have a community of interest.

Indian Valley Sub-region includes the Members: Earlville, Hinckley-Big Rock, Indian Creek, Indian Valley Vocational Center, Leland, Paw Paw, Plano Area Special Education Cooperative, Plano, Sandwich, Serena, Somonauk and Yorkville.

Fox Valley Sub-region includes the Members: Batavia, Fox Valley Career Center, Geneva, and Kaneland

River Valley Sub-region includes the Members: East Aurora, SD308 and West Aurora

Each Sub-Region and member district reserves the right to establish policy that relates to its own programs and services.

### 2.02.02 Service

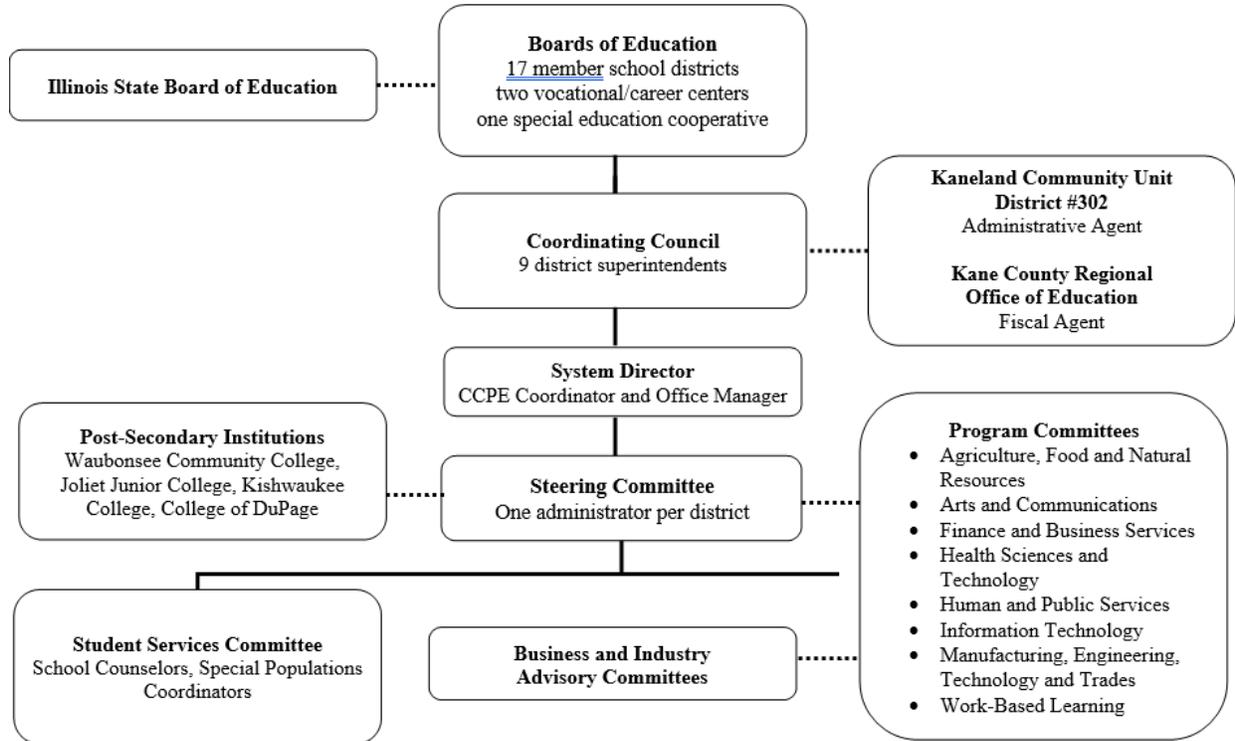
Career and Technical Education and related student services provided by VALEES, Sub-Regions, and member districts shall be planned, coordinated, evaluated and improved under the administration of a governing board (Coordinating Council) and an executive director.

### 2.02.03 Bylaws

The provisions of the Intergovernmental Agreement and this policy manual shall constitute the By-laws by which VALEES shall be governed.

2.02.04 Administrative Chart

**Valley Education for Employment System  
Administrative Chart**



2.03 Governance and Operation

2.03.01 Coordinating Council

The Coordinating Council shall be composed of three (3) superintendents and/or designated representatives from each Sub-region, with each having one vote, one non-voting representative from Waubonsee Community College, and a non-voting representative of the fiscal agent. Regional Superintendents (other than the fiscal agent) and Directors of Educational Service Centers serving VALEES schools are also invited to be ex-officio non-voting members. Voting alternates may be designated in writing to attend in the absence of the superintendent.

### 2.03.02 Election

The board of each Sub Region shall in the spring of each year elect from its membership three (3) superintendents and/or designated representatives to the Coordinating Council. Representatives should be chief school officers or their designees. Terms of all representatives shall be three years. Representatives shall take their seat on the Council in the August following the election. Should a representative be unable to complete the term, the Sub Region shall appoint a replacement to fill the remainder of that term.

### 2.03.03 Voting

Each voting member of the Council shall have one vote. Votes shall be by a voice vote of “Yes” or “No” or “Abstain” and the votes shall be recorded.

On all questions involving expenditures, or transfer or dismissal of personnel, a roll call vote shall be taken and yeas, nays, and abstentions entered in the minutes of the Coordinating Council. Any member of the Council may request a roll call vote on any issue.

Each motion voted upon shall be recorded in the minutes with the record of voting and the chairperson's ruling as to the disposition of the motion.

### 2.03.04 Quorum

A quorum of the Council shall be a majority of voting Council members. There are nine (9) voting Council members and a majority is five (5) voting Council members. All resolutions and motions shall require a majority of the votes cast for passage.

### 2.03.05 Officers

The Council shall elect its own chairperson and vice-chairperson annually; the term of office to commence July 1. The chairperson and vice-chairperson shall carry out the functions inherent in those positions. The Council may appoint a recorder to provide minutes of its meetings and perform other duties as may be required.

### 2.03.06 Meetings

The Coordinating Council shall meet quarterly. Special meetings of the Coordinating Council may be called by the Chairperson, or upon request of any three (3) Coordinating Council Members. Notice of special meetings shall reach all Coordinating Council Members at least forty-eight (48) hours prior to the meetings. Such notice shall contain time, place, and purpose of the meeting. Emergency meetings may be called in accordance with the Illinois Open Meetings Act, 5 ILCS 120/1 et seq. Notice of all such meetings shall be in accordance with said Act.

All regular and special meetings of the Coordinating Council shall be public and open unless by a majority vote the Council adjourns to a closed session to discuss matters expressly allowed by the Open Meetings Act.

All meetings shall be conducted by the latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order.

An agenda shall be prepared by the director with input from the chairperson of the Coordinating Council in advance of each regular meeting and shall be submitted to the Council members at least two (2) days before such meetings. Agendas shall set forth orders of business and shall be accompanied by supporting information.

Agendas for regular business meetings shall include:

- A. Call to order
- B. Roll call
- C. Consent agenda
- D. Old business
- E. New business
- F. Informational
- G. Motion to adjourn

#### 2.03.07 Minutes

Records of all official actions of the Coordinating Council shall be set forth in the minutes. The minutes are official after the Coordinating Council meets and approves them. The minutes shall be retained as permanent, official records. The recorder shall act as custodian of the minutes and shall make them available to any citizen desiring to examine them.

Duplicated copies of the minutes shall be prepared promptly after each meeting and shall be distributed to each Council member and each district's chief executive officer.

#### 2.03.08 Powers, Duties, Responsibilities of the Coordinating Council

The Coordinating Council shall:

1. Establish an annual operating budget for the System.
2. Adopt procedures and policies for the operation of the System.
3. Review and approve annual budgets and financial matters of the System.

4. Recommend and approve amendments to the Intergovernmental Agreement by the Members pursuant to Section 8.2 of the Intergovernmental Agreement.
5. Employ staff and engage in collaborative discussion regarding performance of System Director to improve regional operation.
6. Assessment and evaluation of the System including directing the completion of applicable needs assessments necessary to meet the requirements of Part 256 and Perkins V .
7. Perform any other functions designated elsewhere in this Agreement.
8. Establish and define the authority of standing and ad hoc committees as appropriate, including, but not limited to, a Bill Listing Committee.

## 2.04 Employees

### 2.04.01 Hiring, Salary and Working Conditions

The Coordinating Council may employ the personnel as may be required to achieve the purposes and goals of the Career and Technical Education System.

Personnel employed will be paid a salary determined annually by the Coordinating Council.

Conditions of employment including, but not limited to, working hours, tenure, and fringe benefits shall be governed by the established policy of the Administrative District.

### 2.04.02 Equal Employment Opportunity

VALEES shall provide equal employment opportunities to all persons regardless of their race; color; creed; religion; national origin; sex; sexual orientation; age; ancestry; marital status; arrest record; military status; order of protection status; unfavorable military discharge; citizenship status provided the individual is authorized to work in the United States; work authorization status; use of lawful products while not at work; being a victim of domestic violence, sexual violence, gender violence, or any other crime of violence; genetic information; physical or mental handicap or disability, if otherwise able

to perform the essential functions of the job with reasonable accommodation; pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions; credit history, unless a satisfactory credit history is an established bona fide occupational requirement of a particular position; conviction record, unless authorized by law; or other legally protected categories. No one will be penalized solely for his or her status as a registered qualifying patient or a registered designated caregiver for purposes of the Compassionate Use of Medical Cannabis Program Act, 410 ILCS 130/.

Persons who believe they have not received equal employment opportunities should report their claims to the Kaneland Community Unit School District 302 Nondiscrimination Coordinator and/or a Complaint Manager for the Uniform Grievance Procedure. No employee or applicant will be discriminated or retaliated against because he or she initiated a complaint, was a witness, supplied information, or otherwise participated in an investigation or proceeding involving an alleged violation of this policy or State or federal laws, rules or regulations, provided the employee or applicant did not make a knowingly false accusation nor provide knowingly false information.

#### 2.04.03 VALEES Director

The Coordinating Council shall employ a regional executive director. Current Illinois State Board of Education required qualifications for employment as a Career and Technical Education System Director shall be followed.

Major Duties and Activities of the VALEES Director (job description of current Director)

1. Keep, or cause to be kept, the records and accounts of the System as required by the VALEES Coordinating Council, the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), and the administrative district and any other funding agency.
2. Prepare for approval of the Coordinating Council grant applications, sub-grant allocations, budgets, revenue and expenditure reports, and other reports as necessary.
3. Maintain administrative relationships with the ISBE to prepare documents such as grant applications, grant amendments, budgets, sub-grant allocations, expenditure reports, the joint agreement budget, and contracts.
4. Maintain a close, working relationship with Career and Technical Education administrators, counselors and instructors in VALEES member

school districts, including Waubensee Community College, for the purpose of program planning, curriculum articulation and professional development.

5. Initiate and/or direct the development and revision of policies for the approval of the Coordinating Council.
6. Develop and execute procedures necessary for the implementation of the policies of the Coordinating Council.
7. Assume primary responsibility for initiation and planning of regular meetings of the VALEES Coordinating Council and Steering Committee.
8. Maintain, or cause to be maintained, all pertinent records, equipment inventories, and reports in collaboration with member school districts within the System.
9. Plan and facilitate professional development and regional in-service programs for CTE instructors, counselors and administrators in coordination with VALEES Program Specialist, and in collaboration with Waubensee Community College and other regional partners.
10. Maintain the fiscal relationship between the Fiscal Agent and the Coordinating Council.
11. Maintain current knowledge of all pertinent rules and regulations affecting Career and Technical Education System programs and services in accordance with the ISBE.
12. Maintain membership and participate in professional organizations devoted to the advancement of Career and Technical Education.
13. Review and approve Career and Technical Education course and program changes for member districts to ISBE for funding approval.
14. Review and monitor member district Career and Technical Education student and course enrollments using ISBE's Student Information System.
15. Other duties as assigned.

#### 2.04.04 Travel

Reimbursement for professional travel will be made to staff and others, where appropriate, according to prevailing rates of the State of Illinois and are subject to Coordinating Council approval.

All out-of-state travel for VALEES employees or for member district staff using VALEES grant funds requires prior approval by the Illinois State Board of Education.

### 2.05 Steering Committee

#### 2.05.01 Membership, Purpose, Officers

The Steering Committee shall be composed of the high school principal, assistant/associate principal, Area Career Center Director, Career and Technical Education Department/Division Chair, or other district designee.

The Steering Committee shall assist the Coordinating Council and the Director in carrying out the objectives and policies of the System and shall make recommendations to the Council through the Director.

The officers shall include a chairperson and a vice-chairperson elected by the Steering Committee. The recorder of the committee shall be the VALEES Office Manager.

#### 2.05.02 Meetings

The Steering Committee shall meet three times per year with the schedule of meetings established by the first meeting of each year.

An agenda shall be prepared and provided to members at least two (2) days in advance of the meeting. The Director shall prepare the agenda with input from the chairperson. Minutes shall be available upon completion.

#### 2.05.03 Duties and Responsibilities

The Steering Committee shall:

1. Meet as scheduled with the Director to consider any business needed to fulfill the purposes of the System.
2. Serve as partner to the Director in deciding matters of procedure where no policy that is the province of the Coordinating Council prevails.
3. Aid the Director in organizing and facilitating the activities of Advisory Councils, Program Committees, and ad hoc groups.

4. Aid the Director in completing the Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment and the required grant reporting.

## 2.06 Program Committees

### 2.06.01 Membership

The members of each program committee shall consist of all the instructors in the courses making up the program or any other interested instructors from all the member districts, including the community college.

### 2.06.02 Meetings

Each committee will meet on a schedule established by its members and approved by the Director. An agenda for each meeting shall be prepared. Minutes shall be available upon completion.

### 2.06.03 Duties

Each committee will follow the Illinois State Board of Education guidelines including size, scope and quality, continuous quality improvement models, and best practices to plan, establish and monitor programs.

### 2.06.04 Business and Industry Advisory Committees

Each program committee will establish a program advisory committee for persons who are currently working in an occupation for which training in its program is provided. See section 2.08 for additional information.

## 2.07 Student Services Committee

### 2.07.01 Membership

Membership shall be composed of counselors and special populations personnel, at least one from each member institution, as well as representatives from service agencies, special education cooperatives, Waubensee Community College, workforce development organizations, and any other community-based organization.

### 2.07.02 Meetings

The committee shall meet three times per year. An agenda shall be prepared by the Director. Minutes shall be available upon completion.

### 2.07.03 Duties

The Student Services Committee shall develop, maintain, and implement a Student Services program which provides for career exploration, college and career counseling, and placement for all VALEES students, including special populations students. It shall assist in the implementation of the System's Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment.

## 2.08 Business and Industry Advisory Committees

### 2.08.01 Membership

Membership shall be composed of representatives of business, industry, labor and service organizations from throughout the VALEES region. Representatives on the committees shall be persons having experience in or knowledge about the occupation.

### 2.08.02 Meetings

Business and Industry Advisory Committees shall meet at least one (1) time per school year. The Director will prepare an agenda for each meeting.

### 2.08.03 Duties

The Business and Industry Advisory Committees shall serve in an advisory capacity only. It will advise on the interests of the employment community, develop and offer career exploration activities including work-based learning for VALEES regional students, advise on the goals and objectives of the program, and promote the program.

## 3.0 ARTICLE 3 BUSINESS AFFAIRS

### 3.01 Fiscal Agent

The Fiscal Agent (Kane County Regional Office of Education) shall act within the authority and responsibility of the System to receive and disburse funds within funding source guidelines. The Fiscal Agent may be any agency legally entitled to serve in such a capacity. A memorandum of understanding between the Fiscal Agent and the Coordinating Council shall reflect the provisions of the Intergovernmental Agreement.

#### 3.01.01 Term of Fiscal Agent

The Fiscal Agent shall be designated by a majority vote of the Coordinating Council with the mutual consent of the named agent. If either the Fiscal Agent or the Coordinating Council wishes to break the terms of the memorandum of understanding, written notice must be sent to the other party at least six (6) months prior to the end of the fiscal year currently in progress. The term shall then cease at the end of that fiscal year.

### 3.01.02 Services Provided

The Fiscal Agent shall act within the authority and responsibility of VALEES to receive and disburse funds within funding source guidelines and the budget approved by the Coordinating Council. The Fiscal Agent shall submit to appropriate agencies all necessary or required reports or information.

### 3.01.03 Contracting with Other Agencies

The Fiscal Agent may contract with any other legally qualified and competent agency to provide fiscal and administrative services. The contract for services shall be mutually agreed upon by the majority of the Coordinating Council, the Fiscal Agent, and the agency providing the contract services. If either the Fiscal Agent or the contracting agency wishes to break the contract, written notice must be sent to the other party at least six (6) months prior to the end of the fiscal year currently in progress. The contract shall then be terminated at the end of that fiscal year.

### 3.01.04 Investing

The Fiscal Agent shall make such investments of funds as are necessary and proper. Interest earned on these investments will be budgeted for and expenditures approved by the Coordinating Council, including, but not limited to, program improvement, research, evaluation, or returned to member districts.

## 3.02 Administrative Agent

### 3.02.01 Duties of Administrative Agent

The Administrative District (Kaneland CUSD 302) shall receive and implement the decisions of the Coordinating Council. The Administrative District's responsibilities for portions of System programs and services may be delegated to any Member with the consent of the Coordinating Council and the district delegated.

Services provided by Administrative District:

1. Employ System personnel as the legal and hiring agent for the System. This will include enrolling System personnel on the Administrative District's payroll and providing personnel with employment benefits. Payments and costs associated with the employment of System personnel beyond the Administrative District's expenses and costs as a Member shall be reimbursed by the System.
2. File all appropriate reports and claims as required by the State for employing System personnel.

3. Implement the employment decisions of the Coordinating Council for System personnel.
4. The Administrative District shall be responsible for only those expenses and costs arising from its participation in the System as a Member. The Administrative District shall not be liable for any expenses and costs it would not have incurred had it been anything but a Member.

#### 3.02.02 Change of Administrative Agent

The Administrative District may be changed or altered by an affirmative vote of 2/3 of all Coordinating Council Members and accepted by the Board of Education of the proposed Administrative District. The effective date of any change of designation of the Administrative District shall be July 1 of the Fiscal Year. A vote to change the designation of the Administrative District must occur prior to March 31 in order to be effective for the upcoming Fiscal Year. After a vote to change designation, the Coordinating Council, with agreement of the Administrative Districts (existing and proposed), may agree to accelerate or postpone the effective date of the change.

### 3.03 Fiscal Affairs

#### 3.03.01 Fiscal Year and Budget

The fiscal year shall run from July 1 - June 30. The Coordinating Council shall cause to be prepared and shall adopt an annual Joint Agreement Budget in accordance with the School Code of the State of Illinois.

The budget shall be prepared and presented to the Coordinating Council which shall approve the budget prior to September 30.

The Coordinating Council shall not cause expenditures to exceed revenues. Should a deficit develop, the Coordinating Council shall take necessary steps to reduce expenditures to accommodate the shortfall.

#### 3.03.02 Operational Expenses and Documents

Staff shall be responsible for monitoring the accounts of the operational expenses and maintaining documents of the System in auditable form. Staff shall prepare or cause to be prepared all fiscal reports, keep necessary records to adequately control the financial transactions of the system, prepare financial statements, and make such documents

available to members and individual institutions on a quarterly basis. All financial statements will be prepared in compliance with the Illinois Program Accounting Manual.

#### 3.03.03 Audit

An annual audit shall be conducted in accordance with the School Code of the State of Illinois.

#### 3.03.04 Sub-grants

Member districts delivering Career and Technical Education programs that meet the Illinois State Board of Education size, scope and quality definition for Career and Technical Education program approval and that are approved by VALEES in the Illinois State Course System shall receive sub-grant funding.

Annually the Coordinating Council shall direct the System Director to prepare an allocation table describing the distribution of funds to Members.

The System Director shall follow all applicable guidance provided by ISBE in their funding memo and concerning the calculation and distribution of funding to Members.

#### 3.03.05 General Policy Statement on Grant Funds

It is the policy of VALEES that all grant funds received and expended by VALEES and all sub-grant funds received and expended by Member Districts are used in accordance with ISBE grant requirements, in accordance with Illinois Accounting standards, and in accordance with the Illinois Grant Accountability and Transparency Act (GATA).

#### 3.03.06 Equipment

VALEES and member districts will adhere to the Illinois State Board of Education rules regarding purchase, use, record-keeping and disposal of equipment.

System and Member equipment purchases shall follow the guidelines described in the ISBE Funding and Disbursements: State and Federal Grant Administration Policy, Fiscal Requirements and Procedures.

Equipment purchased by Members with System grant funds remain the property of the System and cannot be disposed of or transferred without prior approval from the System Director in accordance with the System equipment policies and the ISBE Funding and Disbursements: State and Federal Grant Administration Policy, Fiscal Requirements and Procedures.

Member Districts are required to maintain and submit to VALEES annually an inventory of equipment purchased with grant funds and to tag that equipment with VALEES provided inventory tags.

#### 3.03.07 Administrative Cost Revenue

Administrative costs shall be defined as the funds necessary to employ and support central staff who are hired by the Coordinating Council to perform centralized functions which benefit all member districts after all revenues for administration have been applied.

While not a current practice of VALEES, if grant funds were not available for administrative costs, VALEES Coordinating Council can charge an administrative cost. Administrative cost shall be prorated as a percentage of District's 9-12 enrollment as reported on the previous year's fall housing report.

Charges for administration fee shall be made to the districts or institutions twice yearly, once in July and once in January. Payment shall be made to VALEES within sixty (60) days of receipt of charges.

#### 3.03.08 VALEES Activity (External) Account

The purpose of the account is to record the expenditures and revenues not provided for in grant budgets if they meet audit requirements.

#### 3.03.09 Travel and Consultant Policy

Travel and Consultant expenses incurred through regional activities will be reimbursed at established state rates or rates that are reasonable and necessary and approved by VALEES Administration.

Expenses incurred through locally directed activities will be reimbursed at the established local district rates unless the local district requests rates that are reasonable and necessary and approved by VALEES Administration.

#### 3.03.10 Food-Related Expenditures

Food-related expenditures must be budgeted and requested in the original funding application or through the amendment process. Costs associated with food-related expenditures must be reasonable and necessary to achieve the intent of the grant and must follow the allowability guidelines of the Illinois State Board of Education.

Food-related costs for events which are primarily social, including receptions, open houses, and banquets are not permitted. Expenditures for alcoholic beverages are not permitted. Food-related costs for students as part of their regular in-class functions are not permitted.

VALEES and member districts making expenditures for food-related purchases must maintain appropriate records and other documentation to support the allowability of food-related costs.

### 3.04 Disbursements

The disbursement of all revenues is governed by the Coordinating Council according to its Intergovernmental Agreement, this Policy Manual, its approved budget, and guidelines from the Illinois State Board of Education.

#### 3.04.01 Allocations

Annually the Coordinating Council shall direct the System Director to prepare an allocation table describing the distribution of grant funds to Members. The System Director shall follow all applicable guidance provided by ISBE in their funding memo and concerning the calculation and distribution of funding to members.

#### 3.04.02 Limitations

Any percentage of grant funds to be reserved for shared programs or service shall be determined by the Coordinating Council each year.

### 3.05 Procurement

All purchasing shall be the responsibility of the Director under the authority of the Coordinating Council. All purchases shall be done by official purchase order authorized by the Director. Any exceptions shall be only in emergency situations or for small miscellaneous items.

#### 3.05.01 Micro- and Small Purchases

Micro-Purchase - a purchase of supplies or services, the aggregate amount of which does not exceed the micro-purchase threshold. Micro-Purchase Threshold is \$3,000. (State of IL, GATA, ICQ FY22)

Micro-Purchase Requirements - formal procurement methods are not required. Informal purchase procurement methods to expedite the completion of transactions and minimize the associated administrative burden and cost are permitted (2 CFR 200.320).

To the maximum extent practicable, VALEES will distribute micro-purchases equitably among qualified suppliers.

Small purchases - the acquisition of property or services, the aggregate dollar amount of which is higher than the micro-purchase threshold (\$3,000) but does not exceed the simplified acquisition threshold (\$25,000).

Small purchases require price or rate quotations to be obtained from a minimum of three qualified sources.

### 3.05.02 Simplified Acquisition Threshold Purchases

Simplified Acquisition Threshold - when the value of the procurement for property or services award exceeds \$25,000 formal procurement methods are required. (2 CFR 200.320 and ILCS 5/10-20.21 Contracts). Bids will be required for all contracts over \$25,000 except for those situations specified in School Code or 2 CFR 200.320

Sealed Bids - All competitive bids must be sealed by the bidder and must be opened by a member or employee of the Coordinating Council at a public bid opening at which the contents of the bids must be announced. Each bidder must receive at least 3 days' notice of the time and place of the bid opening.

Advertising for Bids - Appropriate advertisement for bid requires at least one (1) public notice at least ten (10) days before the bid date in a newspaper published in the district, or if no newspaper is published in the district, in a newspaper of general circulation in the area of the district. (ILCS 5/10-20.21 Contracts)

Bid Review Committee—The Coordinating Council chairperson may appoint a Bid Review Committee composed of Council members or Business Managers from member districts to assist the Director in evaluating and recommending successful bidders to the Council.

Discrimination—Qualified suppliers or vendors may not be denied an opportunity to bid on any item or service.

Selection Criteria—The selection of a successful bidder shall be based on:

- A. Adherence to bid specifications.
- B. Price bid.
- C. Service provided for installation, maintenance, repair, guarantee of product, and promptness of each service.

D. Quality of the product or service.

**Bid Rejection**—The Coordinating Council reserves the right to reject any or all bids and parts of bids.

3.05.03 Receiving Goods

Goods shall be received at the VALEES office or at a learning site if more appropriate.

3.05.04 Invoices

The invoice shall be checked and the cost of each purchase charged against the proper account. No invoice shall be paid until payment has been authorized by the Coordinating Council Bill Listing Committee.

The Director may approve payment of any invoice for regularly contracted goods or services when failure to pay the invoice would result in the loss of a discount or the imposition of a penalty. The Director shall present a list of such payments to the Coordinating Council at each regular meeting.

3.06 Limited Contractual Obligations

Except to the extent of the limited financial contribution to VALEES, no district or institution agrees to be responsible for any claims of any kind against any other district or institution. The districts' intent in creating VALEES is not to create among the districts any relationship, partnership, surety, indemnification or liability for the debts of or claims against another district or institution.

3.07 Sub-grant Monitoring and Management

VALEES shall monitor and manage the use of grant funds by requiring reporting of all purchases made by sub-grantees using grant funds.

At least annually, VALEES shall remind the school districts of the management and reporting requirements they are required to comply with. The management and reporting requirements will include the following:

1. Timely submission of a grant budget proposal, in accordance with awarding agency
2. deadlines and which complies with all grant regulations such as:
  - a. providing descriptions of the planned purchases
  - b. providing reasonable budget amounts for each purchase or service
  - c. ensuring that salary caps for use of grant funds are obeyed

- d. ensuring that funds are only used for goods and services for programs which are part of an approved Career and Technical Education program.
  - e. ensuring that all purchases of goods and services comply with ISBE and grant procurement standards
3. Provide quarterly expenditure reports on the purchases made with grant funds
  4. Timely submission of annual program activity reports
  5. Timely submission of annual goals reports
  6. Annual submission of equipment inventory
  7. Taking any necessary action to revise any of the student data reported to ISBE following an annual review by VALEES

VALEES will conduct an on-site review of the school district premises at least once every five years to ensure that:

1. The programs reported by the school district are taking place
2. The equipment purchases made by the school district are correctly accounted for in terms of serial number identification, location, use, and condition.
3. The appropriately qualified staff are conducting the programs reported by the school district

The protocol for such an on-site review will be communicated to the district prior to the review.

Following an on-site review:

1. Reports shall be issued detailing the results of the review and identifying any deficiencies
2. A corrective action plan shall be determined if necessary
3. Procedures shall be determined to ensure implementation of the correction action plan

VALEES shall monitor the independent audits of the school districts in order to evaluate the risk posed by the district. After reviewing the school district audit, VALEES will determine if specific conditions are required to enhance monitoring of the use of grant funds.

VALEES shall be reviewing:

1. Any remedial decisions or actions are required following any GAGAS findings
2. If any repayment of grants is required through discovery of disallowed costs and spending
3. If a corrective plan is needed, monitoring the district in the future to ensure that the corrective plan has been actioned

### 3.08 Monitoring for Fraud, Waste and Abuse

VALEES employees shall be responsible for ensuring that all reasonable actions are taken to prevent waste of materials and supplies purchased with grant funds.

The VALEES Director shall annually participate in the ethics training. In turn, the Director will train all other VALEES employees in ethics and standards of conduct training. Ethics training shall cover such issues as:

- Conflict of interest
- Grievance procedures
- Fraud, waste and abuse procedures

VALEES employees are protected by the Whistleblower Act 740 ILCS. It is the responsibility of the Director to ensure that all employees understand the principles and protections of the Whistleblower Act. The Executive Director must also ensure that all employees understand the action they can take when they witness any fraud, waste or abuse of materials, products and services purchased using grant funds.

### 3.09 Fund Balances

It is recommended that the Director may maintain fund balances adequate to ensure the System's ability to maintain levels of service and pay its obligations in a prompt manner in spite of unforeseen events or unexpected expenses. The System seeks to maintain year-end fund balances no less than the range of 10 percent of the annual expenditures each fund.

## 4.0 ARTICLE 4 INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS

### 4.01 Program Approval

All Programs offered by the System, the sub-regions, or by Members for which reimbursement is sought shall go through the ISBE's approval process in the Illinois State Course System and shall meet all applicable state requirements including those of the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Perkins V) for size, scope and quality.

### 4.02 Categories of Programs

#### 4.02.01 Shared Programs

Special high cost/low incidence programs may be developed, operated and offered to sub-regions and Members if approved by the Coordinating Council.

#### 4.02.02 Sub-Regional Shared Programs

Two or more member districts or institutions may collaborate to offer programs according to terms of existing or newly developed agreements. Sub-regional programs approved by the sub-regional Board of Control and the Coordinating Council as part of the Local Application shall receive grant funds according to the State formula. Grant funds shall follow programs.

Students within a sub-region desiring a particular program shall attend the program within their sub-region if it is offered, unless this requirement is waived by the sub-regional board. If the desired program is not offered within the student's home sub-region, students shall be able to participate in the program offered by another sub-region if space is available.

#### 4.02.03 Approved Local Programs

Programs offered by individual Members which are part of the Local Application as approved by the Coordinating Council shall receive grant funding.

#### 4.02.04 Independent Programs

Individual Members reserve the right to offer program/courses that are not part of the Local Application. These independent programs are not eligible for grant funding.

### 4.03 Equitable Access

The System recognizes the importance of equity, diversity and inclusion throughout all aspects of a student's educational experience. The System will

- provide equitable access for all students beginning in fifth grade and continuing throughout their schooling career exploration, career preparation, and academic and social support;
- provide targeted support services, informed by evidence-based practice, for special populations;
- provide evidence-based professional learning and resources to support Member programs in collecting and using data to improve activities and services for those who are members of special populations, which will benefit all students;
- collaborate with community-based organizations, the workforce development system, business partners and families to build partnerships that support students, create programs that ensure equitable access and supports, create opportunities for work-based learning and ensure access to high quality programming.

### 4.04 Career and Technical Student Organizations

VALEES supports and encourages member district development of CTSOs and student involvement in appropriate student organizations.

## 4.05 Articulation Agreements with Post-Secondary Institutions

### 4.05.01 Articulation Agreements

An agreement shall exist between VALEES and post-secondary institutions establishing the procedures for articulation of programs between the two education levels.

### 4.05.02 Articulation Information and Records

VALEES is responsible for publishing articulation information annually, communicating articulation processes to Members, and maintaining articulation records.

## 5.0 ARTICLE 5 STUDENTS

### 5.01 Equal Educational Opportunities

Equal educational and extracurricular opportunities shall be available for all students without regard to color, race, nationality, religion, sex, sexual orientation, ancestry, age, physical or mental disability, gender identity, status of being homeless, immigration status, order of protection status, actual or potential marital or parental status, including pregnancy. Further, VALEES will not knowingly enter into agreements with any entity or any individual that discriminates against students on the basis of sex or any other protected status.

### 5.02 Student Records

According to procedures established by each member district; and in accordance with the Federal Student Rights to Privacy Act, a parent or guardian, or any person designated by the parent or guardian, shall have the right to inspect and copy all student permanent records of that parent's or guardian's child. A student shall have the right to inspect and copy his/her permanent record. Access shall also be granted to the following parties.

- A. The official records custodian of another school in which the student has enrolled or intends to enroll, upon request of such official or student.
- B. Any person for the purpose of research, statistical reporting or planning, with the permission of the State Board of Education or an authorized official of such board, provided no student or parent can be identified from the information released.
- C. Any person specifically required by State or Federal law.
- D. Any person, such as a potential employer, who has written consent of the student and/or parent/guardian.

## 6.0 ARTICLE 6 MISCELLANEOUS

### 6.01 Public Relations

VALEES will keep the public informed by:

- A. Preparing informational materials, including a Website, newsletters, and articles for newspapers and/or radio releases to disseminate information to the region.
- B. Participate with civic and parent organizations, Chambers of Commerce, business organizations and other interested groups.

### 6.02 Adoption, Ratification, Amendment or Suspension of Policies

#### 6.02.01 Ratification

Current policies and procedures of the Coordinating Council will be reviewed annually and changes presented for a vote by the members of the Coordinating Council.

#### 6.02.02 Emergency

In the event of an emergency not covered by established policy, the Coordinating Council may act accordingly and request adoption of new policies at a regular or special meeting.

#### 6.02.03 Suspended Policy

The operation of any section(s) of Coordinating Council policy not established by law or contract may be temporarily suspended by a majority vote of the Coordinating Council members present at a regular or special meeting.

#### 6.02.04 Policy Decisions

Policy recommendations, whether changes in present policy or additions to established policy, will be presented for a first reading and discussed at a Coordinating Council meeting. Each member shall be furnished with a copy which shall be voted on at the next regular meeting or at a special meeting called for the purpose of adopting policy.

#### 6.02.05 Conflicts

Policy adopted by the Coordinating Council shall not restrict or conflict with policy established by a Sub-Region or individual institutions when the subject matter applies only to the Sub-Region or an individual institution. If there is a conflict in matters covered by both VALEES policy and Sub-Region or individual institution policy, grant policy including GATA provisions take precedent.

#### 6.02.06 Validity

In the event any part of this Policy Manual shall be declared by a final judgment of a court of competent jurisdiction to be unlawful, unconstitutional or invalid, the lawfulness, constitutionality or validity of the remainder of this Manual shall not be deemed affected.

### 6.03 Distribution of Policy Manual

Distribution—The Coordinating Council shall make Policy Manuals and amendments available to:

- A. Each member of the Coordinating Council.
- B. Each member district or institution.
- C. Each member of the Steering Committee.
- D. Any person with an interest in VALEES who requests one.
- E. Any resident of a member district, upon written request.
- F. Other copies as determined by the Coordinating Council.