

Corrections Education

The Community High School of Vermont
Vermont Correctional Industries
Work-Based Learning (VOWP)

Vision: Offenders will live, learn and work in their communities as self-supporting and productive members of the community

Mission: Corrections Education will provide learning environments for offenders based upon individual need to increase their skills in living, learning and working in order to reduce recidivism. Learning environments will utilize industry, education and corrections best practices to support offenders as students in educational and work settings through VCI, CHSVT and offender work programs.

Priorities:

- Continuous refinement and improvement of our programs to address the Living, Learning and Working needs of our students/workers
- Fully implement changes in structure and staff to respond to the living, learning and working needs of offenders, funding allocations, economic fluctuation in the business world, while maintaining the integrity of the three entities involved in this collaboration.

Responsibilities:

The Community High School of Vermont: Educational opportunities are provided that will address each individual's area of need (academic and criminogenic) and are intentionally planned with a choice of learning opportunities. Courses, classes and technical/career options are available for diploma seeking students and students wishing to increase their learning skills.

Vermont Correctional Industries: Internships, Apprenticeships and Industry training are available through Industry Shops based in the Facilities. Work opportunities address individual's area of need (work, academic and criminogenic). VCI and CHSVT partner to provide training to individuals in Safety Skills, Habits of Mind and on-the-job training.

Offender Work Programs: Currently being redefined and redesigned. This will be evidence based and in concert with case management and planning. This will 'marry' the academic, social and workplace skills that need to be attained. Facility jobs are being defined with job description, expectations and an evaluation system that mirrors the real world of work.

Gains for the Department of Corrections:

All three programs will work in concert to provide interventions that will increase the employability and educational levels of all participants.

Students will:

- Learn and practice positive workplace skills.
- Learn and practice positive communication skills with co-workers and employers.
- Increase their education, technical skills, and aptitude to support obtaining and sustaining employment.
- Gain support in transition, and time to get acclimated to new learning/work situations.
- Expanded opportunities to be with peers.
- Reintegration and intentional support in their local communities.

State will gain:

- The expansion of CHSVT/VCI/VOWP integrated learning models.
- Sharing professional knowledge and teaching among staff
- Sharing of organizational expertise – one management team
- Expanded learning opportunities for students/workers
- Sharing of technology resources/supports
- Integration and ownership by all staff of each individual's success
- Cost savings with shared resources, better equipped students/workers and a reduction in recidivism
- Students/workers with integrated learning plans that will serve students more completely in their learning and transition goals

Challenges:

- Enrollment is increasing in Corrections Education programs due to educational needs of individuals, changes in Programming within the Department of Corrections that dictate services and the awareness that education and increased job skills will reduce the rate of recidivism within the State.
- Continued pressure to provide hands on education and training at facilities that do not have the physical space to do so is a challenge that we are constantly discussing within the Department.