

From: Jeanne Smith [jeannehs@hotmail.com]

Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2015 11:18 AM

To: Mitzi Johnson; Kathleen Keenan; Albert Pearce; Eileen Dickinson; Theresa Utton; Daniel Connor; Corey Parent; Dustin Degree; Carolyn Branagan

Subject: VT constitutional right to an education

Attachments: The constitutional right to an education in Vermont.docx

We have to remember the many young people age 24, 25, 26, 27, 28,29, 30,31 and beyond.....
many have children.

Education in an integral piece of the DOC Case Plan - goal is to reduce recidivism.

Thank you everyone, Jeanne

Here is the language from the Brigham decision regarding the constitutional right to an education in Vermont:

We now turn to the chief contention of this dispute, namely whether the disparities in educational opportunities outlined above violate Vermont law. We find the law to be unambiguous on this point. Whether we apply the "strict scrutiny" test urged by plaintiffs, the "rational basis" standard advocated by the State, or some intermediate level of review, the conclusion remains the same; in Vermont the right to education is so integral to our constitutional form of government, and its guarantees of political and civil rights, that any statutory framework that infringes upon the equal enjoyment of that right bears a commensurate heavy burden of justification.

Sent by Jeanne Smith – St. Albans

VIT Testimony from Jeanne Smith*, CHSVT teacher from the Northwest State Correctional Facility. 2/10/15

Note: I was the last one waiting to testify in St. Albans on 2/9/15, although I did not get the opportunity. Below is a somewhat revised testimony in order to convey some new information.

TOPIC: CAREER and TECHNICAL EDUCATION at Community High School of VT

Throughout all CHSVT campuses, career and technical training is provided. Students create a Living, Learning, Working Portfolio where they include a career plan, resume, and references. Some have a long way to go, but many others do not. Courses are offered throughout our campuses in culinary arts, horticulture/master garden from UVM extension, welding, automotive and small engine repair. (see list, below). At the Northwest (NWSCF) campus where I work, we service state vehicles and equipment such as the lawnmowers used in the state parks. We do this at no additional cost to the state. Doesn't this make more sense than spending thousands and thousands of dollars to ALL outside vendors?

Education is an intrinsic part of the Department of Corrections case plans. The goal of case plans are to reducing recidivism. Recidivism cost 4-5X more than education, so how is eliminating education reducing costs? Those individuals who return to incarceration are not all under 23 where the mandate to complete high school cuts off. They are 24, 25, years olds and many young fathers up to their early 30s and beyond. What will be saved when recidivism rates rise and what will the costs be for their children? Doesn't it make more sense to education them with technical and career skills at no additional cost to the state and help them become tax payers instead of drainers?

There are other ways to balance the budget rather than the currently proposed budget – the obvious and the more creative approaches – please consider a different route where more Vermonter will benefit, and where we can help make our state better.

I began my career in education while an undergrad student working with the Mayors Commission on Literacy on Philadelphia. And that's **adult literacy. Back then I saw first-hand how illiteracy and lack of education re-creates cycles of poverty crime and human degradation stemming from the lack of skills necessary to maintain adequate employment.*

Reference: CHSVT students have the opportunity to pursue the following Industry Recognized Credentials (IRC's): OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Administration), First Aid/CPR/AED, Solid Works, Master Cam, NCCER (National Center for Construction Education and Research), ASE (Automotive Service Excellence), ServSafe, Pro Start, Manage First, Master Gardener, and American Welding Society. During the 2013-14 school year, over 330 Industry Recognized Credentials were awarded to CHSVT enrollees

