

Testimony on H.919---4/12/2018

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Thank You for this opportunity to participate by phone in discussions regarding H.919

As a Career Technical Education teacher with nearly 30 years in a Vermont Technical Center I offer my thoughts through this testimony and the Video link and related materials I sent yesterday.

I must begin this testimony with an acknowledgement that I and other CTE teachers only recently became aware of the legislation being proposed for CTE. Subsequently my initial video and materials were developed this past Sunday. As noted, that testimony focused primarily on changing CTE Teacher licensing regulations, which I understand is currently being discussed in House Education and not this committee.

I was asked to provide testimony on H.919 yesterday.

In the last 24 hours preparing my remarks; I was reminded of two quotes by Stanford professor David F Labaree in a paper titled How Dewey Lost: The Victory of David Snedden and Social Efficiency in the Reform of American Education (Exhibit B)

“But the pedagogical progressives, with their focus primarily on teaching and learning in classrooms, had to rely on individual teachers to adopt their vision and implement it one class at a time. Not only were teachers in a weak organizational position to bring about the Deweyan vision, but they found themselves trapped within an organizational and curricular structure of schooling that was shaped by the administrative progressive vision of social efficiency.” (Page 18-19)

“The contest over competing visions of schooling is not judged according to the rules that govern formal debate, such as rigorous logic and solid evidence. Instead, reform ideas win or lose according to the way they resonate with a particular social context, attract or repel particular constituencies, and respond to the social problems that are seen as most salient at the time.” (page 1)

To be perfectly candid, in reading section 3 Career Pathways of H.919; I couldn't help but to think of the educational initiatives fondly referred to as “bandwagons” by many of us in the trenches. These initiatives have been documented By Jamie Vollmer in his book “Schools can't do it alone” (List Exhibit A3)

Yesterday I posed a question to many on this committee: Ultimately the question the legislature needs to answer is; what is Career Technical Education in Vermont?

Education or Job Training?

Education (Dewey) for example, the auto program does not merely teach kids to fix a car but uses the experience of repairing a vehicle to build foundational academic/ technical skills which are transferable across multiple educational/career paths...

“Education through occupation not for occupation”

or

"Task" oriented "Job" specific “Training” (Snedden) In this model, students (often from low socioeconomic or culturally and linguistically diverse populations) become human capital to meet the short term labor needs of business.

After cogitating on this for 24 or so hours (not sure if they were dreams or nightmares); I was reminded of a recent legislative report “State workforce Development System Report of Findings” (Exhibit AA)

The quote from the report combined with the percentage of students entering college that actually earn a degree in 6 years should concern us all...

“The Vermont education system faces a challenge intrinsically related to Vermont’s overall demographic realities. Our state has a declining K – 12 population, and our higher education continuation rate is near 50%; that is, nearly half of our high school graduates do not go on to further their education. This means that approximately 1/2 of our high school graduates do not seek advancement through college education immediately beyond high school. More alarming is that while 34% of our high school graduates have had some participation in career technical education (CTE), only 20% have had CTE as a core academic pursuit (i.e., CTE concentrators), rather than CTE participants.”

“The majority of these young Vermonters graduating from high school with no post-secondary plans are unprepared to qualify for many jobs that are available and are therefore unable to provide for a sustainable income to support themselves and/or a family. **Most of them stay in Vermont and many are immediately destined to poverty.**” (Page 21)

Now let’s look at the graduation rate for the 50% who go onto college from the Chronicle of Higher Education:

“Graduation rate is the percentage of a school's first-time, first-year undergraduate students who complete their program within 150% of the published time for the program. For example, for a four-year degree program, entering students who complete within six years are counted as graduates.” Look at the spending per completion #'s

<http://collegecompletion.chronicle.com/>

Check out the screen shot for VT colleges (Exhibit AA1)

I believe that it is really important for the committee to reflect upon the difference between Education and Job training and ensure there is a complete understanding of the history of CTE in education.

In reading H.919, reflecting on the current data and considering we are awaiting a new Secretary of Education; I would strongly recommend this committee push the pause button. Consider a summer study committee reviewing the history of CTE. Begin the process by reading "Toward a Better Living in Vermont through Vocational Education" released under Governor Proctor 1945-47 (Exhibit A)

Interesting to consider how funding was envisioned: **"There should be no tuition Charge** (Page 16) See also pages 36,37

As many in the legislature know, current funding of CTE creates a disincentive for schools to send students. Legislators in the game awhile know there have been discussions of other options. \$50m categorical grant, independent districts, per pupil transfer regardless of attendance.....

Next, I would also suggest reading "Career ready why the nation needs to let go of that myth" (Exhibit A1)

In regard to proposing things like "The Agency of Education, in partnership ____ shall promote policies"....

Please refer to the AOE organizational Charts (1993 Exhibit H and 2015 Exhibit I)

Frankly, we don't have the horses in the AOE Barn

Finally, Please consider digging up a copy of VT's Action planning Guide (Exhibit C) and most importantly the rating tool Exhibit D

I hear the students knocking on the door, time to change the world.....

This was a first draft subsequently; please excuse any typo's or grammar errors...

I'll be available to take questions over the phone. See Exhibit list on next page

Regards

Bob Church

Exhibits in order of reference:

H.919 Church Testimony Exhibit B How Dewey Lost

H.919 Church Testimony Exhibit A3 Schools Can't do it alone the-list

H.919 Church Testimony Exhibit AA VT workforce W_Jessica Gingras_S.135 State Workforce Development System Report of Findings and Recommendations_1-30-2018

H.919 Church Testimony Exhibit AA1 VT Colleges graduation rate 2018

H.919 Church Testimony Exhibit A VT CTE Toward a Better Living in VT Through Voc Ed

H.919 Church Testimony Exhibit A 1 'Career ready' out of high school_ Why the nation needs to let go of that myth-

H.919 Church Testimony Exhibit C VT AOE Action planning Guide cover

H.919 Church Testimony Exhibit D VT AOE Action plan rating tool 1999

H.919 Church Testimony Exhibit H 1993 DOE CTE organizational chart

H.919 Church Testimony Exhibit I 2015 AOE CTE organizational chart

Others:

H.919 Church Testimony Exhibit K Lake Champlain Region Technical Education Pilot Proposal 1998

H.919 Church Testimony Exhibit L Legislative Report Career and Technical Education 2003

H.919 Church Testimony Exhibit L1 RTA Project Chronology

H.919 Church Testimony Exhibit L2 RTA The Vision

H.919 Church Testimony Exhibit L3 RTA The Need

H.919 Church Testimony Exhibit M Regional Technical Academy RTA Audit Report

H.919 Church Testimony Exhibit O legislature letter re tech centers

H.919 Church Testimony Exhibit P CTE interim-report-brief

H.919 Church Testimony Exhibit Q VT CTE 2020 CEDS-1

H.919 Church Testimony Exhibit R VT CTE edu-legislative-report-act51-career-technical-education