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To: Senator Philip Baruth, Senate Education Committee Chair  
Representative David Sharpe, House Education Committee Chair  
From: Glenn Olson, Director  
Date: April 10, 2018  
Re: CTE Licensure

I have been in Technical Education for just four years now, but during my short stay I have seen the detrimental impact that the Praxis test requirement has had on our students. In the past three years we have lost two very good teachers and currently have two more who have not yet passed it after multiple attempts. One of these two is running out of time as she must pass it this year while the other has one more year to do so.

Both of the teachers that we lost were exceptional in their craft. Ironically, these two individuals taught more program-related math than most teachers in our building and did so quite effectively. One of these teachers had students win the Vermont Skills USA competition for their discipline three years in a row and took them to the National Skills USA competition where, although they did not medal, they performed well. Each of these teachers changed careers in their 50's and had not taken a math class since high school. As someone who considered majoring in math in college, I highly doubt that some 30 years later I could pass the Praxis math test.

In addition to losing quality educators, we are having an extremely difficult time hiring new teachers and know that the Praxis requirement is part of the problem. We have been advertising for two positions since December. For one of these positions we have two candidates and for the other we have three. Each position had one very strong candidate but they withdrew due to this test. One candidate stated that he has worked in his current position for close to twenty years and as much as he would like to teach, he does not want to risk giving up his current position only to lose his teaching position if he is unable to pass the Praxis math test.

This is not just a CTE issue but an issue for any individual looking to change careers later in life. Our district recently had an individual, not in CTE, who is highly skilled in their position but was unable to pass the Praxis math.

I do believe that all teachers must be competent in basic math and literacy skills; however, in many cases the standard in place in Vermont is doing more harm than good for our students.